

# What Is the Role of the Nation of Israel Today from a Biblical Perspective?

While that question could be answered from a geopolitical perspective, highlighting Israel as the only free democracy in the Middle East, and its importance for security in the region and the whole world, here are some thoughts from a Biblical perspective.

The current nation's role is to uphold the Jewish people's right to return to their ancestral homeland, which is consistent with Scripture. It will also be the physical place where Jesus will return to establish the Millennial Kingdom. The Millennial Kingdom is the phrase used to describe the 1,000-year reign of Christ from Jerusalem, as mentioned in Rev 20:1-6. Many of the prophecies made by the Hebrew prophets will come to pass during that period.

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As it was in his own day, Jerusalem may not be recognizable as a place where everyone wants to honor Christ today. Nevertheless, it is the location He returns to and is recognized by the Jewish religious leaders (Luke 13:35). Of the remaining prophecies yet to be fulfilled by Christ, all of them are integrally related to the land of Israel.



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Three of the most significant examples are Isaiah 2 (repeated in Micah 4, Joel 3:10, Hosea 2:18), Isaiah 11, and Zechariah 14. In these passages, God is reigning through the Messiah.

Here are some summary features of each to take notice of:

### **Isaiah 2:1-4**

- Jerusalem is preeminent and world-renowned ()
- All nations flowing to it and wanting to be ruled by its King ()
- The Law and His word are ruling from Jerusalem (v. 3)
- He settles disputes between the nations and ushers in a lasting rule of peace between them (v.4)
- Abolishes the need for warfare (v.4)

### **Isaiah 11**

- Description of the Messiah ()
- Complete peace and safety in Jerusalem between all living things ()
- The Lord's reign extends all over the earth ()
- The nations come to seek the Messiah in Jerusalem ()
- The Lord will regather the remnant of Israelites back to Israel ()
- The united tribes of Israel will defeat the nations who attack her ()
- Obstacles preventing the regathering of the remnant will be removed and people restored ()

### **Zechariah 14**

- All nations come against Jerusalem for battle (v.2)
- The Lord fights against them (v.3)
- The Lord stands on the Mount of Olives (v.4)
- Unique day: no day or night, light in the evening (v.6)
- The Lord is King over all the earth (v.9)
- Jerusalem will never be attacked again ()
- Plagues against those who try and attack Jerusalem ()
- Worship in Jerusalem will be required for the nations at

that time ()

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In view of these future realities, prayer for Jerusalem's peace and restoration are two goals that the church can support in good faith, despite the fact that only the Messiah can bring them about in their finality. In the same way that it was significant to Jesus, Paul, and the earliest disciples, it ought to be significant to all Christians. Whereas eternal salvation can only be found in the name of Jesus the Messiah, Jerusalem is part of God's covenant with Israel and will be the eternal inheritance of the saints.

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## **The Shocking Bible Verse Revealing the Mystery of the Dragon**

Is there a verse in Scripture which reveals the darkness behind the dragon?

In an interview with Charisma Media, Perry Stone discussed the importance of Revelation 12, and how the keys to the end times and the mystery surrounding the dragon are described in this

part of the Bible.

“Chapter 12 of Revelation deals with a time frame, which is the middle of the tribulation period,” Stone says. “And it talks about a dragon with seven heads and 10 horns. Now the word ‘dragon’ actually a Greek word that means ‘a serpent.’ It actually can be translated into ‘I saw a seven-headed serpent.’”

Stone says that the word serpent for Christians especially acts as a signpost back to Satan in the Garden of Eden as described in Genesis. Stone makes the point that the empires which rose against Israel and the ones still to come against them can be seen as the heads of this dragon. The empires which have struck Israel in the past also have prince spirits seeking to devour God’s people.

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“These same prince spirits of previous empires are still on the earth today and are still working to control governments, for example, to pass legislation against God, against God’s people and so many other things. And so that’s what the Scripture alludes to in Revelation 12 on the seven heads of the dragon and the 10 horns,” says Stone.

Evangelist Daniel Kolenda also spoke to Charisma Media about what the dragon means for believers, right now during the present time.

“In the context of our own lives, you think about things like drug addiction or pornography ‘s some big dragon that you’re battling with that you’re fighting with. Those things always start out very small, and when they start, they very rarely seem to us to be the dragons that they ultimately become,” Kolenda says.



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Kolenda says many of times, these are issues that could have been dealt with when they were small with repentance and the shutting of a door quickly. However, when we allow small sins to stay, they continue to grow.

"...they were very lenient with it. They coddled it. They didn't pay much attention to it, but over time, those things begin to grow," he continues.

Rabbi Jonathan Cahn just released his latest book, "The Dragon's Prophecy: Israel, the Dark Resurrection, and the End of Days." In this mind-blowing new book, Cahn unveils the mysteries surrounding the dragon and its relation to the book of Revelation.

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Cahn told Charisma Media how the dragon is known for being at war with Israel as described in Revelation.

"The dragon is mentioned in Revelation 12 and onward, and the dragon is at war with a woman. The woman has a crown of 12 stars. That's Israel, the 12 tribes. The woman gives birth to Messiah. That's only Israel," says Cahn.

Cahn also points to the fulfillment of Revelation 12 taking place once Israel is the focus around the world again.

"It focuses on the beginning of the age and the end of the age, when the woman gives birth," Cahn says, "First century to now at the end times. So, it happens when Israel is back in the world. That's when it kicks in."

As we continue to see more references to dragons around us each and every day during these last days, we need to delve into Scripture and hold fast to the Word of God for all areas of our lives.

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***Abby Trivett is content development editor for Charisma Media.***

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## **In the Church's Silence, Others are Speaking Out**

For too long, too many in the American Christian church have remained silent as culture and society drifted away from God.

Content to preach uplifting sermons that ensure their congregants do not feel uncomfortable or convicted, depending on how you look at it, churches have focused on a “seeker-friendly” model to keep seats full and ensure tithes keep pouring in.

So what happens when God's period of permissive patience runs out and those who were meant to fulfill the Great Commission and spread His Word refuse to do so in an increasingly dark and sinful world?

He raises up new voices who will not leave out or alter what the Bible says and preach it with a courage and fervor that has been sorely missing for years. And many of these voices may come from rather unexpected places.

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Enter perhaps the most shocking, yet refreshingly deep and authentic voice pushing a relationship with Jesus Christ as the answer to all of life's problems: Russell Brand.

The irreverent comedian, former drug addict, New Age practicing, sexually deviant Englishman made a life-altering decision to be baptized in the River Thames on Apr. 28, 2024. Since then, he has consistently posted updates on his growing faith in Jesus Christ, while searching in the Bible the deeply philosophical reasons behind justification by grace through faith.

He is also speaking out at great length against the evil in the world he once took part of, and is countering this by sharing the light of Jesus to massive audiences around the world.

Recently, Brand was the special guest for Tucker Carlson's live tour in Phoenix, Arizona, where they discussed the myriad events affecting society today, and the manipulative practices being forced onto the citizenry of the United States by those in power to achieve desired outcomes. Mainly, control.



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Yet it is Brand's still relatively new understanding of what the Bible explains as the spiritual forces behind the "satanic force" of totalitarian practices being conducted in the world today that he is speaking about.

Brand is shining a very bright light on the very thing the apostle Paul warns Christians about in Ephesians 6:12:

*For our fight is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, and against spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.*

Sharing with Carlson that it is only through “the grace of our Lord God and my personal Savior Jesus Christ” that he has been able to overcome the challenges of life, such as the emergency heart surgery his at the time 12-week-old son needed, the imperfect Brand never ceases in pointing the millions who hear his voice back to Jesus.

What Brand is doing, and is drawing a major target on his back, is fulfilling what Jesus says in Matthew 10:32:

*Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven.*

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This is exactly what Brand does throughout the event with Tucker, but most prominently at the end, when he gets down on his knees in prayer at Carlson’s request before the millions who have already viewed the video.

*...I pray in Your name [Jesus Christ] that the forthcoming election be an opportunity for unity for America and for Americans. For forgiveness and for grace. That the dark and demonic forces that appear to operate at the level of the state, the Deep State, and the corporate and global world experience Your light, Lord. That we are guided. That You guide all of our tongues and all of our words and all of our hearts. That we feel Your forgiveness and that we feel Your grace.*

*Thank You Lord for the many gifts that You have bestowed upon us. Thank You for the glory of consciousness itself in which we can experience You and live You. Thank You for the beauty of nature in which we see Your wisdom and Your creativity and Your infinite glory. Thank You Lord for the many leaders and thank You Lord that You were born and died that we may be*

*forgiven and that we may have eternal life not through merit or anything that we have individually achieved for surely all of us are fallen, but in Your holy name we are forgiven. By Your act of redemption, by Your sacrifice, in Your name we pray. Amen.*

There will always be a remnant who profess the Lordship of Jesus Christ, and its members often come from unexpected places. Was Gideon not the least of his tribe? Was Rahab not a harlot? Were Peter, James and John not mere fishermen? Was Paul not a murderer?

The enemy will never truly snuff out the Word of God, no matter how hard he tries. But he is able to silence many who are called to preach the Gospel using fear and worldly comfort. In those moments, God will raise up voices who are not afraid to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ, regardless of how they are viewed by organized religion.

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***James Lasher is staff writer for Charisma Media.***

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## **Megachurch Pastor Claps Back at Critics of Large Churches**

Texas-based Pastor Ed Young believes those who think megachurches are “just too big” are hypocrites.

The founder and senior pastor of the multi-site Fellowship Church in Grapevine issued the bold statement in a video shared to his Facebook page. Young’s church, for

context, reported a weekly attendance of 24,000 in 2020. The preacher noted in his video many have told him his congregation “is just too big,” but asserted it’s unfair to criticize the sizes of churches in places with large populations.

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“Your church is just too big,” Young said, quoting what he’s heard from critics of Fellowship Church. “I’ve heard people tell me that a lot: ‘It’s too big. It’s a megachurch.’ Well, that’s got to be one of the most hypocritical statements someone can make, because the person making the statement goes to massive concerts. They would go to a game – a football game. They would go to a massive mall, and they never really say that about those entities.”

According to the Hartford Institute for Religion Research, a megachurch is a church averaging 2,000 or more weekly attenders. There were roughly 1,170 megachurches in the U.S. in 2023, a decrease from the 1,750 megachurches reported by the Hartford Institute in 2020.

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Young went on to boldly assert, “Hey, if you think the church is too big, then you’re not going to like Heaven, because Heaven is going to be a big place. If a church is around a lot of people, it should be big in the context of being big.”



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In 2020, a Lifeway Research study found the average church in the U.S. seats roughly 200 people, but the median weekly

attendance is 65 worshipers. Megachurches, it should be noted, only make up about 0.5% of churches across the country, serving about 4 million weekly congregants.

*To read the full story, visit our content partners at Faithwire.*

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## **Taylor Swift is Summoning Demons in New Footage**

Taylor Swift is back at it again when it comes to summoning in the demonic realm.

On X, footage of Swift watching a Chiefs football game has gone viral. However, if you look closely, the necklace she is wearing isn't just another piece of jewelry.

"Pay close attention to Taylor Swift's 'jewelry'! What do you notice?" Matt Wallace posted on X sharing footage of Swift wearing the necklace.

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Josette Caruso also posted an image of the necklace with the caption, "Occult inspired black hole necklace!"

Vogue covered Taylor Swift's outfit, stating that the necklace

is a coin pendant, styled from the 1970s by the company For Future Reference. A similar necklace by Future Reference online ranges anywhere between \$5,000 to nearly \$11,000 dollars.



The same brand also designs a ruby and diamond ring engraved to look like snakes that costs \$2,200.



However, this isn't the first time that Swift's jewelry has been questioned. Just a couple of weeks ago, Swift was seen wearing a pendant with a goddess inscribed on it.

According to Hello! Canada, Swift was seen wearing a pendant with Rhiannon, the Welsh goddess on it. Britannica defines Rhiannon as the goddess who was "accused of killing her infant son, and in punishment she was forced to act as a horse and to carry visitors to the royal court."

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If you're skeptical of Swift's jewelry choices, more footage has come out from her concerts which show blatant Satanic rituals being performed in the middle of the show.

"Taylor Swift performs a satanic ritual during one of her concerts," one commentator wrote on X.

The video highlights people wearing full black robes swaying from side to side during the performance. The music itself also has an eerie tone to it.

"Wait for the signal. They'll meet you after," Swift sings before the dancer in the robes start moving cryptically with fire behind them, lifting up lanterns as she sings.



*To pre-order John Ramirez's book, "Exposing the Devil's Playbook," visit .*

Even stranger, is the footage of Zeena LaVey Schreck, the daughter of Anton LaVey who started the Church of Satan. The resemblance of LaVey and Swift is uncanny.

Speaking of Swift's witch-like performance, one commentator sarcastically said, "That doesn't look like a summoning right. Just speculation, right?"

In another clip from the show, a viewer can be heard saying, "summon the demons."

It's clear, whether subtle or out in the open, artists like Swift are idolizing witchcraft, mythology and other demonic forces. Remember, what we see and listen to will affect our souls and the direction we will go.

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*Abby Trivett is content development editor for Charisma Media.*

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## **Man Shot in Head While Street Preaching Praises God For 'Miracle' in First Interview**

An Arizona pastor shot in the head while street preaching last year is speaking out and thanking God for his miraculous survival.

“It’s a miracle – absolutely a miracle,” Hans Schmidt told KNXV-TV of the ordeal. “I should not be alive. Realistically, I should be dead. And because of His grace and His love, I’m still here.”

As CBN News previously reported, Schmidt, a 26-year-old dad of two, a military combat veteran, and the outreach director at Victory Chapel First Phoenix in Arizona, was taken to the hospital Nov. 15, 2023, on suspicion of having been assaulted.

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But a CT scan revealed he had been shot in the head. Schmidt’s condition quickly deteriorated, as his family prayed for a miracle and implored others to do the same.

Schmidt’s wife, Zulya, told CBN News late last year about the events surrounding the shocking ordeal, noting the shooting unfolded while Hans was street preaching as he has frequently done.



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“He’s been doing that for over a year, and, usually, he street preaches for 30 minutes before every evening service for our church,” she said. “That day, he just ended street preaching early, and I thought that was odd.”

Schmidt said Hans loaded the sound system into the car after being shot and drove to the church. She suddenly noticed he was bleeding and assumed someone had potentially thrown a bottle at him while he was speaking or injured him in another similar way.

But she would soon learn something far more sinister unfolded.

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Schmidt told KNXV-TV this week details of his experience – a dangerous, near-death encounter that left him fighting for his life.

“I remember falling to my knee, and then, after that, I was like, ‘Oh, something’s not right,’” Schmidt told the outlet of the moments after the shooting. “I grabbed all my gear, put it back in the car. I drove my car back to church.”

He recalled trying to speak to Zulya, but no words were coming out. That’s when he was brought to the hospital, the bullet was discovered, and he was placed on life support and in an induced coma.

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# **Morning Rundown: Officials Shut Down Kid’s Ice Cream Stand, Fundraisers and Death**

# Threats Follow

Here's a quick rundown of the top stories on :

## **Officials Shut Down Kid's Ice Cream Stand, Fundraisers and Death Threats Follow**

Bored and looking for something to do this summer, Danny Doherty hatched a plan to raise money for his brother's hockey team by selling homemade ice cream.

But a few days after setting up a stand and serving up vanilla, shaved chocolate and fluffernutter to about 20 people, Danny's family received a letter from the Norwood Board of Health ordering it shut down. Town officials had received a complaint and said that the 12-year-old's scheme violated the Massachusetts Food Code, a state regulation.

"I was surprised and upset," he said of the letter that came Aug. 5. "I don't understand because there are so many lemonade stands and they don't get shut down."

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## **Dallas Jenkins Reveals Plans for 'The Chosen'**

Dallas Jenkins, the creator of "The Chosen," recently shared exciting news about the show's expansion and plans in an exclusive interview with Charisma Media. As the series continues to captivate audiences with its unique portrayal of the life of Jesus and His disciples, Jenkins expressed his enthusiasm for its growing success on national television.

The show's move to the CW network brought "The Chosen" to a wider audience, many of whom may not have previously encountered the series. "It's really exciting ... seeing the show on the CW last year," Jenkins said. "They did seasons one through three, and the ratings actually improved as the

seasons went on, which was shocking to me.” Despite the show’s availability on multiple streaming platforms, Jenkins was pleasantly surprised to see a dedicated viewership tuning in to watch the episodes on the CW network.

Jenkins emphasized the show’s mission to remain transparent with its audience, especially as “The Chosen” relies heavily on donations. “From the beginning, we said we’re going to pull back the curtain, and you’re going to be part of the process,” he explained. “We do survive because of your donations; we have an obligation to let them know where their money is going.” This commitment to transparency extends to the creative choices made in the series, particularly regarding the depiction of biblical events from a fictional standpoint.

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### **Church Closed as Pastor Threatened by Authorities**

About 50 officials from Jombang Regency, Indonesia, on Aug. 18 dragged a pastor from his worship site and sealed the shop where his church met, sources said.

The sealing of the worship site was part of a Jombang government effort to recover dozens of shops the government says it owns at a business compound in the Weru area of Mojongapit village, East Java Province.

Pastor Herri Soesanto described the government seizure of the two-story shop-house used by his Good God Church (Gereja Gembala Baik, or GAB) in the Simpang Tiga Shopping Compound, about 80 kilometers (50 miles) west of Surabaya, as “violent and anarchic.”

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# NFL Rookie's Mother Explains How 'God Shielded Him'

An NFL rookie who was shot during a robbery attempt while walking in downtown San Francisco is recovering.

Ricky Pearsall of the San Francisco 49ers was shot in the chest on Saturday, Aug. 31, and initially was listed in serious but stable condition. On Sunday he was upgraded to fair condition at San Francisco General Hospital and Trauma Center, according to ESPN.

A social media post from CBS said Pearsall was released Monday.

The 23-year-old's mother said God had a hand in his survival.

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"Update on my baby boy," Erin Pearsall wrote, according to a copy of her Facebook post posted on X.

"First and far most I want to thank GOD for protecting my baby boy. He is extremely lucky, GOD shielded him. He was shot in the chest and it exited out his back. Thanks be to GOD it missed his vital organs. He is in good spirits right now. Life is so precious my friends. Please love eachother. My son was spared today by the grace of GOD. Please pray for my baby," she wrote.

A 17-year-old from Tracy, California, was arrested Saturday in connection with the incident, San Francisco Police Chief William Scott said, according to ESPN.

Pearsall, a first-round draft pick, was walking through the Union Square area of the city after signing autographs at an event at about 3:30 p.m. when he was approached by a person with a gun.

Pearsall put up a fight, police said.

"A struggle between Mr. Pearsall and the suspect ensued, and gunfire from the suspect's gun struck both Mr. Pearsall and the subject," Scott said, noting that multiple shots were fired.

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The suspect was detained by police responding to the incident.

Scott said the incident did not appear related to Pearsall's status as an athlete.

The suspect, whose name was not released, acted alone "as far as we know," Scott said.

The suspect will not be charged as an adult, San Francisco District Attorney Brooke Jenkins said, according to CNN.

"Given that the suspect is a juvenile at this time, those charges will be filed in the juvenile court as we continue to review the evidence to figure out where we go from there," Jenkins said.

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# Fraud Fallout: Pastor To Return Tesla After \$3.5 Million Scheme

Pastor Rudolph Brooks Jr. was recently sentenced to 18 months in prison following his conviction of wire fraud and money laundering.

ChurchLeaders reported how the Maryland pastor was found abusing the “pandemic era Payroll Protection Program (PPP).” Through this scheme, Brooks ended up illegally gaining \$3.5 million worth of loans and other funding for his own personal use.

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In the statement by United States Attorney’s Office for the District of Maryland, it was discussed how “Brooks admitted that he used the loan proceeds for his personal benefit and on payments and purchases not permissible under PPP, such as for a residence; for a luxury vehicle; and, for restaurant, retail store and grocery purchases.”

The Kingdom Tabernacle of Restoration Ministries pastor is now required to give up the large purchases he made illegally with the money he exploited from the church. This includes the Tesla Brooks bought.

*“The Court also ordered Brooks to forfeit all property and assets derived from or obtained as a result of his criminal activity, including a 2018 Tesla Model 3, property located in Upper Marlboro, Maryland, and at least \$2,231, from 17 bank*

*accounts controlled by Brooks," the statement continued.*

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Brooks acquired fake PPP loans and used the funds from those loans for his own personal gain.

From the court documents, it appears that Brooks "grossly inflated the number of employees and average monthly payroll, and submitted fraudulent IRS Forms 940, Employer's Annual Federal Unemployment Tax Return, and other fraudulent IRS forms to support the loan applications."

Brooks acquired his luxury vehicle by wiring \$60,407 to Tesla Motors Inc. The car was bought under his son's name and then registered in his name.

Once Brooks is release from his 18 months in federal prison, he will have a 2-year period of a supervised release.

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*Abby Trivett is content development editor for Charisma Media.*

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Bored and looking for something to do this summer, Danny Doherty hatched a plan to raise money for his brother's hockey

team by selling homemade ice cream.

But a few days after setting up a stand and serving up vanilla, shaved chocolate and fluffernutter to about 20 people, Danny's family received a letter from the Norwood Board of Health ordering it shut down. Town officials had received a complaint and said that the 12-year-old's scheme violated the Massachusetts Food Code, a state regulation.

"I was surprised and upset," he said of the letter that came Aug. 5. "I don't understand because there are so many lemonade stands and they don't get shut down."

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Danny's mom, Nancy Doherty, who had encouraged her son to start the stand as long as he donated half of the proceeds to charity, also was taken aback.

"Somebody complained. That was the most disappointing part for us was that somebody thought it necessary to complain about a child's stand," she said. "It seemed a little, you know, crazy if you ask me."

Rather than give up, Danny decided to give away the ice cream and accept donations for the Boston Bear Cubs, a team featuring players with physical and developmental disabilities – including his brother, who is autistic.

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That's when the neighborhood fundraiser blew up and became the talk of Norwood, a suburban town about an hour from Boston.

The first day they gave away the ice cream, supplies ran out in 10 minutes and \$1,000 was raised. Then, word began to spread about the fundraiser and Danny's clash with the town.

Local media ran stories about the stand, prompting scores of local businesses to hold their own fundraisers for the hockey team.

Town officials, meanwhile, said they received hate mail and death threats over the dispute, which they suggested has been badly mischaracterized in the media.

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