

5 Ways to Stand With Israel in Crisis

Amir often woke up with his sheets drenched from a recurring nightmare: His country was under attack, and no one would help. The visions of assault looked different, depending on the night—from nuclear weapons to bombings to Holocaust-like death camps—but the outcome was always the same. He saw no hope for his beloved Israel.

This was my tour guide, a naturally jovial man who, like most Holy Land guides, had the intelligence of a college professor and the charisma of a salesman. A secular Jew, Amir had led Israeli tours for more than 30 years, included for American evangelicals who, like clockwork, would try to witness to him about Jesus. He'd heard the same pitches so many times he could recite—and refute—every Christianese argument. (It didn't hurt that his master's degree was in biblical studies.)

So instead of trying to win him over with words, I listened to what was on his heart as often as I could during our week together. This man lived, breathed and bled Israel. I'll never forget how, after telling me about his nightmares, he explained that living under a constant threat of imminent attack (and even death) is in the very DNA of every Israeli. "That's just part of living here," he said. "That's part of being a Jew."

A few years have passed since I met Amir, and since then the threats have only increased. Anti-Semitic rhetoric no longer comes merely from Muslim extremists; it's now seeping through Europe, raising its ugly head through government officials decrying Israel's every military move, academics boycotting Israeli conferences and a pro-Palestinian press that rarely tells the full story.

As this anti-Semitism grows and Israel's neighboring countries set their military sights on the Holy Land, it's increasingly imperative that we stand with the Jewish people. Here are five ways:

1) Pray for the peace of Jerusalem. Prayer can move mountains, bring down governments and do what seems impossible in the natural realm. So it's only through prayer that peace can be sustained in Israel's capital. Yet when believers quote Psalm 122:6 and mention praying for the most important city on earth, too often it translates to an occasional one-sentence prayer. That won't cut it considering the forces of darkness warring against humanity's centerpiece.

How should you pray, then? Start by asking God to reveal His heart for Jerusalem to you. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you a burden for Jewish people. Then step back and watch your prayers change for this critical area and people.

2) Recognize the importance of Israel. One of Satan's great end-times deceptions—that's working even among Christians—is that Israel is just another country. This diminished view has yielded everything from replacement theology to complete apathy for Israel's current dilemma amid its jihadist neighbors. Amid the enemy's lies, believers must wake up and realize the vital role Israel has played and will continue to play in human history until Jesus returns.

3) Honor our Hebraic roots. As Gentile believers, we have been grafted into the tree of God, the "root" of which is Israel (Rom. 11). Paul warned Gentiles to not boast but to "remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you" (v. 18). Even Jesus pointed out that "salvation is of the Jews" (John 4:22). It's astounding how downplayed this truth is in Western Christianity, usually under the pretext that believers now live under God's grace and mercy. But let's not forget to honor the avenue through which that grace and mercy—and every blessing from God—first came.

4) Understand the complexity of Israel. Many Christians avoid “the Israel conversation” because it mingles politics with faith. Our call to stand with Israel is not political but inevitably involves politics. And because politics involves people groups, we must resist the temptation to make this a black-and-white, Palestinian vs. Jew feud. God’s love extends to every person in Israel. No matter how many politicians try, this conflict can’t be resolved except through Jesus. Because of that, we can ...

5) Join with Messianic believers in furthering the gospel. Our call to stand with Israel is not conditional upon Jews being saved. Yet why not support those ministries of Messianics whose vision is to see their Jewish brothers and sisters come to meet *Yeshua Ha’Mashiach*?

Charisma readers are among the most pro-Israel segment of the American church. Let’s not stand by idly while the Jewish people once again need our help.

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