

# The Appalling Silence of the Black Church During Israel's Time of War

"We will have to repent in this generation not merely for the hateful words and actions of the bad people, but for the appalling silence of the good people." –Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Israel is at war, and the Black church finds itself silent again. Why?

Over 1,400 innocent Israelis have been murdered. Women, children and the elderly have been violently taken hostage. Israeli babies have been beheaded and burned, all at the hands of Hamas, a terrorist organization.

If any organization or group of people should be decrying the atrocities of these brutal killings from Hamas, it should be the Black church. If any organization or group of people should be standing with unwavering support for Israel during these difficult days, it should be the Black church. We are compelled to do so.

Unfortunately, many Black pastors and leaders have a mixed level of apathy and resistance toward Israel as well as empathy of the Palestinian struggle, often making a comparison to the civil rights era. In addition, some consider the Black community to be the most antisemitic group in America today. From the historic "Hymie-towns" comments of Rev. Jesse Jackson to the self-proclaimed "atoned and promised One" of Louis Farrakhan, there is a disdained hatred and distrust for a people whom God Himself commanded the church to love and bless.

High profile as they may be, these individuals who express

anti-Israel or antisemitic attitudes are not speaking for the entire Black community. That may not be clear to the casual observer because many Black people are unaware of the intricacies of Israel's struggle for survival.

In his 1968 speech to the Rabbinical Assembly, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., said "peace for Israel means security, and we must stand with all our might to protect its right to exist, its territorial integrity. I see Israel as one of the great outposts of democracy in the world, and a marvelous example of what can be done, how desert land can be transformed into an oasis of brotherhood and democracy."

Less than two weeks after giving that speech, King was assassinated. Unfortunately, since his passing, some, including the aforementioned high-profile Black individuals, have embraced anti-Zionism and antisemitism. Rather than building upon the strong ties forged between Jews and Black people