

Let's Support Israel

The bottom line is this: There is no such thing as "good terrorism."

In 1979 when I climbed Mount Sinai, then controlled by Israel, I was accompanied by an armed guard. When I went into Southern Lebanon in 1983, an Israeli soldier with an Uzi machine gun went along, just in case.

That was before the current rash of suicide bombers began blowing themselves up in order to kill Israelis. The violence has escalated to a new level. But in some ways, it's just more of the same.

The terrorist attacks of Sept. 11 allowed us to experience what the Jewish people have been living with for more than 50 years. Yet in spite of the fact that Americans are in favor of fighting terrorism in America, many seem almost sympathetic to Palestinian terrorists in Israel who often are portrayed in the media as "freedom fighters."

Because of terrorism, tourism in Israel has nearly dried up. So it's little wonder the Israeli government is putting inserts promoting the Holy Land in Charisma. Selected issues contain a preprinted insert that was ordered long ago and originally scheduled for the May issue.

When the violence escalated, we questioned whether it would be wise to include the advertisement. But we felt we needed to show our support of Israel by encouraging people to visit the country as soon as it is safe to do so.

The Israelis need our support more now than ever! My friend

Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein, founder and president of the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews, based in Chicago and Jerusalem, suggests we show our support by:

- * Writing letters to editors when there are distortions and prejudices in the media

- * Writing congressmen and other leaders to urge them to stand by Israel

- **Helping Israel by traveling in the country and purchasing Israeli products

- * Aiding the poor in Israel through ministries that bring Jews to Israel from the former Soviet Union, fund soup kitchens in Jerusalem and support other worthwhile projects in the troubled country.

Robert Stearns, a friend and respected Christian leader, is rallying Christians to pray for Israel. He has encouraged me to remind my readers to know what the Bible says about Israel and about God's purpose for His people.

Romans 11 ensures that Israel is not cut off and that a glorious awakening awaits many Jewish people. Both Genesis 12:3 and Zechariah 12:2-9 contain dire warnings for those who directly or passively come against Israel, and Genesis 12:3 has a related blessing for nations that stand with her.

Stearns also urges Christians to talk with their pastors, churches, neighbors and friends about supporting Israel, though the tide of world opinion is clearly turning against

this tiny nation.

The bottom line is this: There is no such thing as “good terrorism.” No cause can ever rationalize taking a 14-year-old boy, strapping dynamite on him and telling him that if he blows himself up, he will live in eternal bliss. This is nothing more than the Molech worship practiced by the Amorites, which God abhorred.

The most important thing believers can do is pray. Our prayers can effectively release God’s purpose in a seemingly hopeless situation. We should pray not only for the peace of Jerusalem, but also against the spirit of anti-Semitism rising up in the earth.

We are living in times in which biblical prophecy is being fulfilled. Zechariah 12:2, in which the Lord declares, “I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that sends all the surrounding peoples reeling” (NIV), is as current as today’s headlines.

This magazine has long reported on Israel and the Jewish people. We know the destiny of the church and of Israel are intertwined. And we regret that too few evangelical and charismatic Christians have spoken out in support of Israel.

Let us be those who see beyond the headlines and who, with our voices, with our influence, and most of all with our prayers, stand as the Lord has called us to stand. May we say, as Isaiah did, “For Jerusalem’s sake I will not remain quiet, till her righteousness shines forth like the dawn, her salvation like a blazing torch” (Is. 62:1).

Stephen Strang is founder and publisher of Charisma. He invites readers to attend our Preparing for the Harvest conference in Orlando, Florida, Oct. 31-Nov. 2.