

Orthodox Jew: Celebrating Jerusalem Every Day

This week, Israel and Jewish and Christian friends all over the world will celebrate Jerusalem Day, marked on the biblical calendar as the 28th of Iyar. That corresponds to the day on the secular calendar in June of 1967 when Jerusalem was miraculously reunified during the Six Day War.

Indeed, the restoration of Jewish sovereignty to all of Jerusalem for the first time in 2,000 years is yet another fulfillment of the many promises God made to the Jewish people, and many prophecies that continue to play out before our eyes right here in the Land.

For Jews and Christians, there is no place more central or significant to our faith than Jerusalem. Jerusalem is the place that kings built, prophets prophesied, where the temple stood, where Jesus preached and was crucified and much more. Jerusalem is mentioned several hundred times in the Bible. It's the only place by name that God specifically tells us to pray for, and to be guardians on its walls.

Sadly, not everyone understands that and the significance of Jerusalem to us today. Not only doesn't everyone understand that, but some people deny the significance of Jerusalem to Jews and Christians, deny that there was ever a temple on the Temple Mount and talk about Jerusalem being "defiled" by Jews and Christians, and "Judaized."

This narrative is not only not biblical, but it undermines the very foundation of Judaism and Christianity. It is the mother of all replacement theology, and is part of a deliberate attempt by many Arabs and Moslems to erase actual biblical history and our deep roots in Jerusalem as Jews and Christians to the holy city. When we celebrate, they incite violence.

When we march through the Old City and ascend to the Temple Mount, they threaten with rockets and terror.

This is all the more reason why we need to celebrate this year. Last year, Hamas and other terrorists used the occasion of Jerusalem Day to start an 11-day war, launching over 4,000 rockets at Israeli communities. As bad as that is and was, I prefer to look at the cup as half-full. Yes, we have our challenges, but there are far more blessings. In fact, our cup runneth over.

Being a Jew in Jerusalem I feel that every day. From the balcony of my apartment, I can see the Golden Dome on the Temple Mount. I pray for the day that the temple will be returned there, also as part of God's promise. I am overcome with joy and emotion that 17 years ago, my youngest son was born in Jerusalem. He's named for two relatives who were murdered in the Holocaust and no doubt prayed for the restoration of Jerusalem.

I suspect that they could never have imagined how that has become a reality today as a thriving diverse city that is the capitol of the State of Israel. As overjoyed as they would be seeing a young man carrying their name, born in Jerusalem, who is finishing high school and preparing to go serve the country as a member of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), they would be speechless to know that now I also have three grandsons born in Jerusalem, representing another generation of Jewish life thriving in Jerusalem.

But don't just believe me. This month I had conversations with two dear Christian friends who live in Jerusalem and have been part of life here for decades. We discussed modern and biblical history, the blessings that they experience being here and the significance of Jerusalem's reunification and why we celebrate today. Chris Mitchell has been the head of the CBN Jerusalem bureau for more than two decades. He's reported on thousands of aspects of life here and is well-known to

Christians around the world. He's a journalist with the highest of integrity who speaks about being at the intersection of history and prophecy. You can hear the conversation with Chris here. John Enarson works on a theological basis to help Christians understand the significance of Jerusalem to them. He has had the privilege of living and raising a family in Jerusalem and speaks with unwavering moral clarity rooted in biblical tradition. You can hear the conversation with John here. Together, Chris and John offer extraordinary personal testimonies and insight about living in Jerusalem and the significance of how and why the celebration of Jerusalem Day is so important. {eo}

Jonathan Feldstein was born and educated in the U.S. and immigrated to Israel in 2004. He is married and the father of six. Throughout his life and career, he has been blessed by the calling to fellowship with Christian supporters of Israel and shares experiences of living as an Orthodox Jew in Israel. He writes a regular column for Charisma, Standing With Israel, and is the host of the Inspiration from Zion podcast on the Charisma Podcast Network. He can be reached at firstpersonisrael@.

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