

6 Practical Reasons Why Christians Support Israel

There are many very practical reasons for any American—not just Christians—to support Israel. America benefits from its relationship with Israel in many ways, and it only makes sense we would partner with and show support for the nation and its people.

1. Democratic Values – It is vital for America to maintain a strong alliance with the only liberal democracy in the Middle East. Israel advances our national interests and shares our values of freedom of speech, freedom of worship and human rights. Israel is the most stable, pro-American country in a volatile region and deserves a strong and committed friendship with the United States.

2. National Security – If there were no Israel, the United States would have to deploy aircraft carriers to the Middle East, along with tens of thousands of U.S. soldiers. This would cost our country tens of billions of dollars annually, possibly dragging the United States into unnecessary local, regional and global conflicts. Instead, we can rely on our partnership with Israel to represent our interests in the region.

American and Israeli militaries conduct joint training exercises that benefit both countries. Israel's intelligence leads the world in its expertise and provides valuable intel, allowing U.S. officials to prevent attacks on its citizens and bases overseas. Israel created an underside reactive armor for our Bradley tanks, which has saved thousands of U.S. soldiers from improvised explosive devices (IED). In battlefield medicine, Israel's expertise in combat and the development of post-traumatic stress treatment directly helps our American troops.

U.S. police commissioners, police chiefs and sheriffs have cooperative programs with their Israeli counterparts. Thanks to Israeli know-how and training in best practices, our airline and airport security have been dramatically enhanced.

3. Economic – Support of Israel is a good investment. The United States' first Free-Trade Agreement was signed with Israel in 1985, and it produces a trade of goods and services totaling more than \$40 billion annually. Thirty American states benefit from cooperative agreements with Israel in technology, agriculture, energy, business and homeland security. Out of the 250 multinational companies with operations in Israel, two-thirds are U.S. companies such as Apple, Intel, Microsoft, IBM and Cisco.

4. Medical Innovations – Israel's medical innovations are another vast resource for Americans. Israel is home to almost 1,000 medical device companies and is a leading country in terms of both patents per capita and in absolute number of patents. The intersection of hi-tech and health care by these companies is generating cutting-edge mobile health devices, AI-powered diagnostic platforms, novel therapeutics, pharmaceutical innovation and new digital tools that improve access, quality and precision of care.

Israel is also leading in the growing field of cybersecurity for health infrastructure and supply chains. In short, hundreds of Israeli companies in the United States are bringing new technology to hospitals and public health systems, improving our healthcare and supporting jobs across the country.

5. Humanitarian Aid and Volunteerism – Although just the size of New Jersey, Israel has achieved acclaim all over the world because of its humanitarian aid efforts. Israel's Foreign Ministry division, MASHAV, runs Israel's official humanitarian assistance program. Since its founding in 1957, MASHAV's training courses have trained over 270,000 participants from

132 nations. As a result, millions of lives in developing nations are being impacted as participants return to their countries and improve agriculture, medicine, water and other necessities.

Government programs are only part of the story in Israel. Israeli citizens are also known for volunteerism and assisting in disaster relief worldwide. IsraAID, a nonprofit non-governmental organization, focuses on disasters and long-term support. It has been on the ground in nearly every major humanitarian crisis since its establishment in 2001. Their civilian and Israel Defense Force personnel, including medics, doctors, search and rescue teams and post-trauma experts, often arrive in the earliest days of a disaster.

IsraAID has helped in over 140 countries. In the United States, they have assisted in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, Hurricane Harvey in Houston, wildfires in Washington State and the Florida Surfside condominium collapse, where they were heralded for their advanced techniques for locating victims' remains.

6. Tikkun Olam – The drive to help others and make the world a better place is nothing new in Israel. It is simply part of the Jewish DNA. Generations of Jewish people have prayed daily for *Tikkun Olam*, or the repair of the world. The biblical foundation of this concept is found in Isaiah 1:17, where the people of Israel are instructed to “Seek justice, rebuke the oppressor; defend the fatherless, plead for the widow.” This value permeates Israeli society, which carries out *Tikkun Olam* in times of need.

Israel is certainly making our world a better place in ways that far outweigh its size in population or land mass. The world—and particularly Americans—should be grateful and support Israel's efforts to be a light of goodness to the nations. {eoa}

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