

The Lord Has Chosen Zion

☒ Hundreds of years ago, God the Father gave to Abraham—and his descendants—the land of Israel. He established an eternal and everlasting covenant with Abraham, promising that his seed, through Isaac and Jacob, would possess the land forever. Out of all the nations of the earth, He chose Zion to be His special people.

Yet Christians often wonder what their responsibility ought to be regarding Israel and the Jewish people. Some are indifferent toward or ignorant of the believer's role in the nation's history; others are opposed to lending their support because they don't understand what such a commitment means.

Support of the nation of Israel does not mean a person endorses every political action of the government. Support of Israel means the support of biblical Zionism, and those who know the Bible know that it is not an option for the committed Christian.

Consider the following facts regarding Israel:

- All other nations were created by an act of men; Israel was created by an act of God (see Gen. 12:1-3).
- God Himself entered into an elaborate blood covenant (which was eternal and unconditional) with Abraham. In this covenant God gave the Jews a biblical mandate to possess the land forever (see Gen. 15:8-21).
- The boundaries of Israel were registered in the Word of God (see Gen. 15:18-21; Ezek. 47:13-48:1-29).
- God has personally sworn to protect and defend the nation of Israel (see Ps. 121:4; Ezek. 38:18-23).
- God designed the flag of Israel and promised to gather the Jews back to the land under those colors (see Is. 11:12).

- God promised that Israel would be recreated in a day (see Is. 66:8). His promise was fulfilled on May 15, 1948, when the United Nations announced the formal recognition of the State of Israel.
- God has chosen the nation of Israel and the Jewish people as His own inheritance (see Ps. 33:12).

In light of these facts-all biblically substantiated-is it not logical to assume that because God created and defends Israel, those who fight against Israel fight against God? Replacement theologians teach that there is not one word in the New Testament that remotely suggests Christians should support Israel. Wrong! Jesus Christ is our example, and He personally taught us by His conduct that Gentiles who support Israel have His special blessing.

In one account in Luke 7, the Bible tells us that Jesus entered Capernaum, where a certain Roman centurion (a Gentile) had a servant who was about to die. When the centurion heard Jesus was coming, he sent Jewish elders to Him, pleading for Jesus to come and heal the critically ill servant.

Notice the logic the Jewish elders used with Jesus. They said, "And when they came to Jesus, they begged Him earnestly, saying that the one for whom He should do this was deserving, 'for he loves our nation, and has built us a synagogue.' Then Jesus went with them" (Luke 7:4-6, NKJV).

So does it make a difference whether Christians bless the nation of Israel? Perhaps we should ask instead: Why did God select the house of Cornelius to be the first Gentile house to hear the gospel and to receive the outpouring of the Holy Spirit? The clear answer is recorded in Acts 10: Jesus went to the house of this Gentile and healed the servant who was near death because the Gentile had blessed the nation of Israel.

Cornelius was a Roman centurion (a Gentile) who lived in the coastal city of Caesarea. He is described in the Scriptures as

“a devout man and one who feared God ... and who gave alms generously to the people” (v. 2). The alms came from money he controlled through the Roman army.

The Scriptures repeat that the reason God selected the residence of Cornelius for this great spiritual blessing was that he had blessed the Jewish people. Verse 31 records, “‘Cornelius, your prayer has been heard, and your alms are remembered in the sight of God.’”

How important is it that Christians bless the nation of Israel and the Jewish people? God told Abraham that all anti-Semites (those who are hostile toward the Jews) are under His curse (see Gen. 12:1-3), and Jesus declared that they will come under the judgment of God during the judgment of the nations.

Few Christians recognize that there are five judgments in Scripture. The first has occurred, and four are yet to be.

The first judgment was on sin at the cross (see Rom. 8:1). The second judgment will take place at the judgment seat of Christ, where all believers will give an account of the lives they lived before God on Earth (see 1 Cor. 3:10-15; 2 Cor. 5:10).

The third judgment is the judgment of the Jewish people (see Ezek. 20:34-38; Jer. 30:4-7; Daniel 12:1). The fourth judgment is the judgment of the nations. All the nations of the earth will be judged before God Almighty and His holy angels for the manner in which they treated the Jewish people (see Matt. 25:31-46).

The fifth judgment is the Great White Throne judgment for the wicked dead, who will be released from hell to appear before God for formal sentencing before they are cast into the lake of fire forever (see Rev. 20:11-15).

The fourth judgment is the one that most concerns us here. The time of this judgment is immediately after the Messiah returns

to Earth to establish His literal kingdom in the city of Jerusalem. It is critical to your well-being that you understand what the Bible teaches about the believer's treatment of God's chosen people so you will not come under this judgment.

Who do you think are the hungry, naked, thirsty, sick, imprisoned strangers Jesus refers to in Matthew 25? They are not the church; they are the Jewish people.

Jesus makes this clear when He says, "And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren [the Jews], you did it to Me.' Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels. ... And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life'" (Matt. 25:40-41,46, emphasis added).

It is important to be right on the Israel question when you consider that being wrong brings you under the curse of God and headed for eternal, everlasting fire with the devil and his angels. Israel is not a "take it or leave it" subject. It is a life and death matter-eternal life!

If you believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God and that those who reject its truths have entered into idolatry and rebellion; if you believe Jehovah God is a God of integrity and that it would be impossible for Him to break covenant; if you believe that Jesus Christ is our example and that we are to follow Him, then there is no biblical alternative but to support the nation of Israel and the Jewish people. They'll be blessed—and so will you!

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