

How Christians Can Respond to the War in Israel

The brutal massacres and horrifying videos of what Hamas has done to Jews in Israel are indescribably inhumane and beyond evil. I feel sick to my stomach even attempting to describe them to you here.

By this point, I probably don't need to.

According to the New Testament, Christians are grafted into Israel and are part of the commonwealth of Israel. You are in the family and a part of the promises. Israel are your brothers as well as the brothers of Jesus. This is His family. With all the chaos, what is really going on and what can believers in Jesus do?

Realize This Is a Spiritual War

I'm not suggesting this; Hamas is openly saying it. They clearly state in their charter in article 7: "The Day of Judgement will not come about until Muslims fight the Jews..." it goes on to describe the goal of the indiscriminate killing of Jews, like the world has witnessed. Hamas leaders have been openly saying it and praying it to their god for years:

"Our doctrine in fighting the Jews is the day of your slaughter, extermination and annihilation is near until not one Jew is left alive!... enable us to get to the neck of the Jews and all their supporters!"

Did you catch that last part? "Jews and all their supporters." Who do you think they are referring to? Even Hamas believes that Christians and Israel are part of the same family.

The only way to truly understand this war against this blind hatred and evil is through spiritual eyes. God has made an

everlasting covenant with the Jewish people, to be their God and give them a piece of land forever. After thousands of years, He is keeping that promise and bringing His people back to this same land. No other ancient people group in human history has done this, only the Jewish people. This is not simply theology, but verifiable historical facts.

There is a very real evil who hates God and His promises. Historically speaking, there is a directly correlation between the establishment of the state of Israel (as foretold by the prophets) and the rise of an increasingly violent form of Islam who is hellbent on killing Jews and destroying Israel. Even among the Islamic terrorist groups worldwide, most don't like each other because they aren't "Islamic" enough. Yet only one thing unifies them: the desire to kill Jews and destroy Israel.

Hear Obadiah's Message

While this may be the shortest book in the Scriptures, Obadiah's message is clear and for right now.

Obadiah lived during the time of Jeremiah and wrote his prophecy after the fall of Jerusalem and the exile of the people. Yet unlike Jeremiah, Obadiah's message isn't to Israel, but to Edom.

The Edomites were descendants of Esau. In biblical times, Edom was located directly east of Israel, in present day Jordan. His name came from Genesis 25:30 which tells us that it was after Esau sold his birthright to Jacob for "a swallow of that red stuff" his name was called Edom. So Esau becomes Edom and later, Jacob becomes Israel. Israel and Edom are brothers.

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Obadiah's primary message to Israel's brother Edom was

judgment for violence against his brother Israel. Yet this is the first charge against Edom in verses 11-12:

“On the day that you stood aloof, on the day that strangers carried off his wealth and foreigners entered his gate and cast lots for Jerusalem—you too were as one of them. Do not gloat over your brother’s day, the day of his misfortune...”

The issue the Lord had with Edom was what they did while their brother Israel was suffering: nothing.

In Hebrew word for “aloof” is “neged” and means to be in someone’s presence. The original language gives the impression that Edom showed up to watch but did not get involved. He remained silent in the face their brother’s suffering while Jerusalem was invaded and exiles were taken. They even gloated over watching Israel “get what they deserved.”

God said that because of this, He counted them as one of the Babylonian invaders.

Christians Must Respond

Believers in Jesus are brothers in Israel’s family. Christians cannot remain silent in the face of Israel’s suffering from the invaders’ horrors. If you are in this family by faith this is what you can do:

Pray – fulfill the biblical mandate to pray for the peace of Jerusalem, for peace within her walls and palaces (Ps. 122). They need and are asking for it. Pray.

Care – check on your Jewish friends. With over 1200 dead, 150+ taken captive and now young soldiers dying in combat to defend their families, everyone knows someone who has lost a loved one. Ask if they are ok, weep with those who mourn and love them like your family. They are.

Give – Romans 15:27 says “if the Gentiles have shared in their spiritual things, they are indebted to minister to them also

in material things."If you have enjoyed your Bible, then you have shared in Israel's "spiritual things". Now you owe a debt and how you repay it is ministering to Israel in material things. If there was ever a time to find a way to give, it is now.

Friends, hear the message of Obadiah as you watch the news. While it may feel overwhelming and Israel seems so far away, we simply cannot just stand aloof or show up to watch. We cannot say how awful things are then move on or even entertain questions if Israel somehow caused this.

To speak frankly, there is entire book in your Bible who's message is about how God feels when we do nothing when Israel is suffering, invaded and captives are taken. This is your family and Israel needs you. God will notice your decision.

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