

How to Move in The Father's Love for Israel

As many of you know, I often speak on the Father's heart for Israel and the church and that nothing short of it will do when reaching out to our Jewish friends and neighbors with the love of G-d. But what does the Father's love actually look like in our everyday lifestyles and actions when interacting with Jewish people?

In my travels and associations in my ministry, I was recently quite taken and stirred by a teaching of a good friend of mine and Jewish brother, David Harwood. He has written a book on the love of G-d, and his teachings on it really moved me into a greater understanding and depth of G-d's love. I asked David to write an article for my ministry to help us to focus more on the love of G-d through the Father's heart. –Grant Berry

As Grant mentioned, I've written a book, *God's True Love*, which exhorts the Jesus follower to prioritize abiding in Jesus' love, provides an interpretive grid for the believer's experience of the Trinity's love, and gives an explanation of God's love for humanity. Many have found it transformative and life-enhancing, and you can find it on my website (information below). This article is an application of aspects of this teaching to a topic that is not discussed in the book: God's unique love for the Jewish people.

To start, every believer is called to understand and experience God's love (John 15:9). Within that context, through Paul's ministry, we are invited to understand and experience God's unique love for Israel (Rom. 1:16). This is part of the church's pilgrimage that shall last "until the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time" (Acts 3:21).

Entering into God's emotions concerning Israel is not for the fainthearted. It is fraught with misunderstanding, often filled with frustration and potential peril. The love of the predominantly Gentile church for their Jewish brethren and all of Israel is intended to be sign seen in the heavens and the earth (Eph. 3:8-10; John 13:34-35).

As in World War II, it is possible that terrible prices may be exacted on those who embrace God's view of His firstborn children. Should all the nations gather against the nation of Israel, it will not be because they think that war is unjustified (Is. 14:24-27; Zech. 14:2-3). Imagine the amount of international propaganda that will be marshaled against the Word of God. How grounded in the Scriptures will disciples need to be to withstand such pressure? How immersed in love? How might you strengthen your heart so that your *agape* does not grow cold?

Begin With Love

Paul encouraged every believer to know God's love. He prayed toward that end, recognizing the special place the people of Israel have in God's heart. The foundation to loving others with a holy love is not loving oneself. It is receiving God's love for oneself and consequently being transformed until you are conformed to His perspective. The Messiah admonished His disciples, "Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love" (John 15:9). The Lord promised that if we remained in His love that we would bear fruit. Amongst other wonderful outcomes a significant result will be that we love others as we have been loved.



Paul put that into practice. He wrote of "the Son of God, who loved [him] and gave Himself up for [him]" (Gal. 2:20). The love of Jesus was a source of encouragement and strength to this man. So important was the knowledge of God's love in

Paul's estimation that he penned one of the most exalted prayers in Scripture for the receiving of that experience.

In Ephesians 3:14-21, we find Paul fervently prayed that his disciples would know the love of the Messiah, which passes knowledge. The results of knowing this love would be that the believing community would be filled with the fullness of God. It will take the fullness of God for the church to persevere in love for the Jewish people. This is not something that will be accomplished by dint of human effort. It shall be a result of a life-changing conviction of, and an ongoing encounter with, the love of God, which Grant often refers to in *The Reconnection*, and is the heart of his ministry focus to the church. Wonderfully, as we relate to God's love for us, He reveals His love for others. It is not by accident that so many are being affected by His love for Israel. This is something He loves to communicate.

His love for you is your home. Remember, the Messiah commanded you to dwell in His love for you. Abiding in the love of Jesus is the key to bearing fruit (John 15:1-10). One aspect of this fruit is how we relate to others. Living in the experience of God's love has consequences (Eph. 3:19-20). When you receive God's love through faith and experience this love by the Spirit, you are empowered to love others with the same love you have received.

Begin With Prayer

Pray for the Jewish people's salvation. Pray energized by the Holy Spirit. In Romans 8:26-27, Paul wrote of the groanings of the Spirit within us, which are too deep for words. Then he vulnerably exposed us to what may have been his own experience of these groanings:

"I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the

flesh" (Rom. 9:2-3).

In the following chapter, he confided the content of his intercession: "Brethren, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them is for *their* salvation" (Rom. 10:1).

Finally, in Romans 11, he revealed the goal of his prayers: "Now if their transgression is riches for the world and their failure is riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their fulfillment be! ... For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?" (vv. 12, 15).

Although Paul knew that Israel was not rejected by God, was convinced of God's love for the Jewish people and knew the certain outcome of Israel's reconciliation, he still prayed. He prayed through the power of the Spirit. He prayed on God's side and in Israel's best interests. God is motivating people throughout the world to enter this cosmic conflict and bring judgment to victory through His love by the power of the Holy Spirit. For there is no greater duty for us in our spiritual reconnection towards Israel than to pray and intercede for their awakening, which is driven out of love.

Begin With the Messianic Jewish Brethren

We are called to do good to others and to prioritize the good we do. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith (Gal. 6:10).

It is a good thing to pray for Israel and the Jewish people, but prioritize praying for the remnant of Israel. Consider prioritizing praying for the Jewish believers who are living in the Land of Israel, as well as the Nations.

Wisely Give Practical Help

Let's talk about money (Rom. 15:27). Many believers are moved

with compassion and generously express that compassion giving money to help poor Israelis and impoverished immigrants to Israel. Often these finances are given through organizations that are hostile to the Messianic Jewish community who live in the land of Israel. Rather than funneling monies through groups that are also dedicated to the destruction of the testimony of the Messiah in the Land, why not “do good” through believers of unquestioned integrity who are helping out the brethren?

Become a Bridge-BUILDER

Upon occasion I am asked to speak about the relationship of the believers from the nations with Messianic Jewish believers and communities. There are many barriers that need to be overcome and more than one way of viewing the problems and solutions to these problems. Really, from my perspective it is a wonderful thing when Gentile Christians take this up as part of their ministry.

Between Dan Juster’s and Michael Brown’s writings, there is enough information to get educated and qualified. Having a heart that is informed with good information goes a long way towards being an effective peacemaker and successful bridge builder.

This should come as no surprise, but I also recommend Grant Berry’s insightful book, *The Ezekiel Generation*. In particular, Grant addresses issues of transgenerational anti-Semitic spiritual pollution. Get his book and work through those prayers of repentance and renunciation. Becoming progressively free is a foundational prerequisite for entering into the ministry of reconciliation and all that God has for us in these coming days as He looks to connect His family between Jew and Gentile.

Begin Today

For those of you who know Jewish believers or Messianic Jewish

congregations, please encourage them to continue to pursue the Spirit's leading and power in the establishing of growing spiritual communities. Pray for the Messiah to raise up the ascension gifts (Eph. 4:11-13) in and amongst these communities. Pray for their effective ministry to the Jewish people and the nations. Encourage them in their expression of their identity as Jewish followers of Yeshua, as well as to their strengthening in the Holy Spirit.

Begin with love. Begin with prayer. Begin with the Messianic Jewish brethren. Become a bridge-builder. Begin today.

David Harwood is a Jewish believer who has pastored Restoration Fellowship in Glen Cove, New York, since the mid-1970s. A prophetic teacher and worship leader, David has presented this message in conferences, training centers and congregations in the United States, Israel, Canada and Mexico. For more information, visit .