

New Study Reveals Surprising Results of Evangelical Opinions About Israel

It is often presumed that evangelical Christians prioritize support for Israel as part of their religious and political beliefs. However, new research reveals evangelicals are not of one mind on what they believe about Israel and the Jewish people.

“The Jewish Connection: Evangelicals and Israel” is a study of 1,000 American evangelical Protestants, from Infinity Concepts and Grey Matter Research. It reveals that 51% of evangelicals believe Jews are God’s chosen people. However, the other half believe differently:

- 19% are not sure what to believe
- 17% believe Christians replaced Jews as God’s chosen people
- 10% feel that Jews never were God’s chosen people
- 2% had another view

“Older evangelicals and those who are Charismatic or Pentecostal are the most likely to believe the Jews are God’s chosen people,” says Mark Dreistadt, Infinity Concepts President. “Also, evangelicals who read the Bible at least weekly are significantly more likely to believe this than are infrequent Bible readers.”

The study also asked evangelicals what priority supporting Israel and the Jewish people is in their personal giving. On a five-point scale, 29% assign it the highest priority (5); another 19% rate it a 4. This is a total 48% who rate this as

a high priority (4 or 5). Only 21% consider this a low priority (1 or 2), suggesting more than twice as many evangelicals consider supporting Israel and the Jewish people a higher priority (4 or 5) than any lower priority (1 or 2).

Two out of 10 evangelicals can be considered “Israel loyalists”—they believe Jews have been and continue to be God’s chosen people and put the highest priority on supporting Israel and the Jewish people.

However, there is little agreement on how they most want to support Israel. A key finding is that just 11% of evangelicals prioritize supporting pro-Israel politicians or political positions in the U.S. The vast majority would rather prioritize helping the needy in Israel, teaching the Jewish roots of Christianity, helping Jews return to their homeland and other types of non-political causes.

Ron Sellers, president of Grey Matter Research, notes this research provides a clearer picture of evangelicals and Israel.

“The stereotype tends to be that evangelicals are staunch supporters of Israel who view things mostly through a political lens,” Sellers says. “So much previous research focusing on geopolitical issues contributed to this stereotype. We wanted to examine this from a theological and charitable standpoint, and found the political angle is rarely where evangelicals focus their priorities. Evangelicals are also far from unified in their theology related to Israel and the Jewish people.” {eoa}

Read articles like this one and other Spirit-led content in our new platform, CHARISMA PLUS.