

Should Christians Still Visit Israel?

Many people are now asking me: "Should Christians visit Israel in light of all that has just happened?"

Absolutely – now more than ever.

In fact, **The Joshua Fund** and I are moving full steam ahead on organizing the **2013 "Prayer & Vision Tour" of Israel, which will include the 2013 Epicenter Conference**. Sixty people are already signed up for the trip – and we had 10 people sign up last week during the peak of the fighting. That's what I love: believers who are willing to stand up and serve the Lord and bless Israel and her neighbors in the name of Jesus, even in hard times.

We would love to have you join us. Here are three reasons why:

1. We're looking for prayer warriors – The Lord commands us to pray for the peace of Jerusalem and we're looking for people ready, willing and able to obey Him. On the tour and during the Epicenter Conference, we're going to pray with and for Israelis and Palestinians, Jews and Muslims. We're going to pray with and for local believers and encourage them in the faith. We're going to help you understand the history of the epicenter, current events in the epicenter, and Bible prophecies about the future of the epicenter. The more you understand what's happening in Israel, the better you'll be able to pray effectively. Are you a prayer warrior? Would you like to be? This is the trip for you.

2. We want to help you show God's love to Israel in a real and practical way – Much of the world ignores or criticizes or isolates or condemns the State of Israel. That's why it's vitally important that followers of Jesus Christ take the opposite approach. Let's show the love of the Lord for both

Jews and Arabs by touring Israel and serving the people there. If you come on The Joshua Fund tour, you'll see how we do humanitarian relief in this country to care for the poor and needy. You'll visit our warehouse and meet our allies in the Land. You'll also have the opportunity to participate personally in a humanitarian relief project that we'll organize. It's one thing just to visit the Holy Land. It's quite another to actually make a difference here, to be able to roll up your sleeves and show God's love to someone in need in a real and practical way. Very few tours allow you to do this. But we think it's so important to help you step into the story and be a participant, not a spectator.

3. We want to help you become an ambaddador of God's love for Israel and her neighbors to other Christians when you return home – By participating in this Joshua Fund tour and conference, you'll get to see first hand why God loves Israel and her neighbors. You'll understand the Scriptures better. You'll meet Israelis and Palestinians in person and get to interact with them. You'll see God at work in a very powerful way. You'll have a chance to ask me the questions about Bible prophecies and the geopolitics of the region that you've always wanted answered. Then you'll be able to go home and share with family, friends, neighbors and people at your church what you've seen and heard. By God's grace, you'll become an ambassador in your sphere of influence. You'll be able to help people better understand God's heart for the people in this region, and why Christians should pray for Israelis and Palestinians, as well as financially invest in what the Lord is doing here. "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you," Jesus said, "and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth." (Acts 1:8)

Our team wouldn't invite you to come to Israel if we weren't committed to being there ourselves. As you know, my Joshua Fund colleagues just spent 12 days in Israel and the West

Bank. By God's grace, we helped with humanitarian relief work. We comforted those who were suffering. We held conferences for pastors and their wives, teaching through the book of Titus on godly leadership in challenging times. We encouraged local believers. We met with government officials. And we spent a lot of time in prayer.

Some people told us we were crazy to go. But honestly, we would have been crazy not to. After praying about before we left, we knew the Lord wanted us to be there, and we were honored to obey Him.