

Stand With Israel

Love is not just something you say but something you do.

When the president of Iran declared last October that Israel “should be wiped off the map,” the silence was deafening. Here was a head of state recommending genocide-yet his statement received no response! No United Nations condemnation. No reaction from the European Union. No response from the mainstream media. In fact, they buried the story.

That was the thanks and support Israel received following her generous unilateral withdrawal from Gaza. Islamo-fascists are determined to destroy Israel and ultimately the United States, unless we stop them.

I would not be surprised if there were a military exchange this year between Iran and Israel. That’s why I’m determined to rouse evangelical Christians and encourage them to stand up and actively demonstrate their support of Israel. We cannot be silent. We simply cannot let Israel down.

It was to show support of this nation that we sponsored “A Night to Honor Israel” right before Thanksgiving in central Florida. We were inspired by pastor John Hagee’s annual events in San Antonio, one of which I had attended a year earlier. When I invited Hagee to be the keynote speaker at our event, we gained the support of five of six local rabbis because he is so widely respected in the Jewish community.

On the night of our event, we asked those attending to sign a proclamation expressing Jewish and Christian outrage at the anti-Israel sentiment and urging the international community to deal with Iran in the strongest possible terms. A copy of

the proclamation is on our Web site:

I sponsored the central Florida "Night to Honor Israel" because I believe that Christians are commanded to bless the Jewish nation and to pray for the peace of Jerusalem. I saw it as an opportunity to show genuine Christian love to the Jewish people after centuries of discrimination and persecution.

And I echo John Hagee, who says love is not just something you say but something you do. So we raised money to buy an ambulance for Israel. With donations that came in from readers of Charisma, plus offerings from local churches and my staff, we had already paid for the ambulance before the event. Thank you to every reader who gave!

At the event we raised enough money through an offering to buy a more expensive ambulance described as an "intensive care unit on wheels." We gave 100 percent of the money to the Israeli equivalent of the American Red Cross (in Hebrew Magen David Adom), taking out nothing for fundraising.

One of my Jewish friends called this a mitzvah (good deed) because the mobile medical unit will save lives and because we expected nothing in return.

I was encouraged by the outpouring of support for Israel among local churches-especially several African-American ones. The outpouring of love shown by Christians that night was obvious to our Jewish guests, many of whom had tears in their eyes and who gave glowing reports afterward about how much they appreciated what was done.

Our event was only one small effort in the campaign against

anti-Semitism; much remains to be done. I urge Christian leaders across the country to speak up in their support of Israel, especially as that nation faces the threat of nuclear attack.

Write letters to the editor; sign and circulate petitions; meet with Jewish leaders in your community to see how you can cooperate. When the situation in the Middle East warrants it, encourage other members of your church to write the president and Congress to let them know that America must stand with Israel.

There is a political reason to stand with Israel: It is the only democratic ally we have in the Middle East. But even more important is the scriptural reason: We support Israel because we believe the country is a fulfillment of the prophecy from Isaiah that a "nation shall be born in a day" (66:8).

I urge you to join me in praying for the peace of Jerusalem and standing with Israel. Take action now, before Iran can attack-not afterward, when it may be too late.

Stephen Strang is the founder and publisher of Charisma.