



Light of Messiah Ministries

...Bringing Jesus to the Jewish People

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What Does It Mean To Love Israel?

Israel. The land. The people. It is one of the smallest countries in the world and yet it is in the news every day. **Israel is mentioned more than 2500 times in the Bible. Jerusalem over 760.** The world has its eyes on Israel. Some love her. Some hate her. Israel. **The Jewish homeland.**

It is very popular today in evangelical Christian circles to communicate one's love for Israel and the Jewish community. Pastors and Christian groups alike have jumped on the "love Israel" bandwagon. Groups such as John Hagee's "Christians United for Israel" have popularized loving Israel within the Christian community. (We do not endorse this ministry because it emphasizes loving Israel at the expense of sharing Jesus with the Jewish community and John Hagee does not believe Jewish people need Jesus in order to go to heaven.) **Don't get me wrong, I love Israel and love my people. I have a heart for the land, which is my homeland too.** And, I hope every believer in Jesus loves Israel. I want the Christian community to unite, to stand for Israel's existence as a nation and as the Jewish homeland.

However, there is a danger in loving Israel if we are misguided, misdirected, or don't understand what truly loving Israel and the Jewish people means. Building bridges of understanding often comes with strings attached. **The Jewish community wants to be loved by Christians as long as those Christian friends do not push the issue of Jesus.** And that is exactly why most Christian groups focus more on loving the Jewish people and Israel at the expense of communicating the



Gospel to the Jewish people.

It is much easier to show love and friendship, because it feels good. It is applauded. Telling someone they need Jesus and are risking eternal separation from God if they do not consider His claims is difficult, uncomfortable, and scary to do. **Therefore, oftentimes individuals and groups placate their own feelings by substituting their kind of love for the kind of love we are commanded to show.**

So what does it mean to love Israel and the Jewish people? How are we supposed to show our support for them in a way that is most pleasing to God? What are we called to do? What does the Bible tell us? **There are three main ways to show our love for the Jewish community and for their land that is specifically communicated in God's Word.** Each one of these injunctions are not optional and cannot be separated from the others. If we neglect one, we are not fully loving the Jewish people. If we focus on one at

the expense of the others, we again, are out of balance in our perspective on how to love Israel.

We Are To Pray For Israel And The Jewish People

Specifically the Lord commands us to pray for the peace of Jerusalem. *"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: May those who love you be secure."* Psalm 122:6 **Jerusalem is the heart of Israel and the city closest to the heart of God.** It is the city which represents His glory. The psalmist David knew the importance of that city. Jesus wept over Jerusalem. **Israel and Jerusalem represent the location, the epicenter, of God's work among humankind.**

When we pray for the peace of Jerusalem we are turning our hearts in the direction of God's heart. Israel, Jerusalem, and the Jewish people, have a special place in God's heart and plan. Jesus left from Jerusalem and Jesus is going to return to Jerusalem. **We are commanded to keep our eyes and hearts focused in the direction of Israel through our prayers.** If it were not important for us to pray for the peace of Jerusalem, God would never have commanded it. And so, we pray, knowing that there will not truly be peace in Jerusalem or in Israel until Messiah Jesus returns to establish His kingdom.

We must also pray for the Jewish community to come to know their Messiah. Paul says in Romans 10:1, to the predominantly Gentile church in Rome, *"Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved."* **Jesus prayed for His people. Paul prayed for the Jewish people.** We must pray for Israel, Jerusalem, and the Jewish people.

We Are To Share Our Blessings With Israel And The Jewish People

Not only are we commanded to pray for the Jewish people but we are given instruction to share our material blessings with the Jewish community.

The Apostle Paul had been to Macedonia and Achaia where he received a love offering for “the saints in Jerusalem”. These saints primarily consisted of Jewish people who had accepted the Lord and were a part of the church in Jerusalem. Though the offering which he had taken was going to Jewish believers in Jesus, the principle of giving to the needs of the Jewish people is made clear when he says in Romans Chapter 15, “For Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem. They were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in the Jews’ spiritual blessings, they owe it to the Jews to share with them their material blessings.” (bold added) Romans 15:26-27

The church has received so much from the Jewish people. They sent out the first missionaries, they gave us the Bible, and is through a Jewish Messiah Jesus that God brought salvation to the world. They have blessed us beyond comprehension with spiritual blessings. We owe it to them, according to Scripture, to share our material blessings.

There are many ways to share blessings with the Jewish people. If you have a Jewish friend, whether they are in material need or not, look for opportunities to bless them. A birthday? Anniversary? Special holiday? When they ask you why you are reaching out, tell them because you have received many great gifts from their community. In fact, if it were not for the Jewish people, we would not have Jesus.

We Are To Share The Gospel With Israel And The Jewish People

The greatest way we can show love for Israel and the Jewish community



is by sharing with them the message of Jesus. He is the greatest gift they gave us. It is our responsibility to bring Jesus back to them.

Unfortunately this command has been, and continues to be, sorely neglected by the church. Church history is littered with instances of my people being persecuted in the name of Jesus rather than being wooed to the one who wept over Jerusalem and loved His people so much. Again, it is much easier to pray for the peace of Jerusalem than it is to proclaim the Prince of Peace to Jerusalem. It is much easier to share material blessings with Jewish people thinking that the material blessings suffice, than it is to share the gift of the Gospel and the blessing of knowing Messiah Jesus personally.

But the Apostle Paul’s heart was broken when he said, “I speak the truth in Christ—I am not lying, my conscience confirms it in the Holy Spirit—I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, those of my own race, the people of Israel.” Romans 9:1-3 Paul’s heart was for his Jewish people first. **Jesus wept over**

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Jerusalem and sent his disciples out beginning in Jerusalem because of the enormous responsibility to bring the Gospel to the Jewish community.

The Jewish people and Israel need our prayers, our blessings, and most importantly, our Jesus. The Bible commands us to give them all three. However, without sharing Jesus ultimately our prayers for their peace and our gifts of love will be meaningless. **Because, in the end, it is only the gift of Jesus that will bring lasting joy and peace into the life of anyone.**

Please pray for our ministry as we bring the message of the love of Jesus to the Jewish community and to Israel.

Hanukkah Baskets

This year we will be making and delivering gift baskets for the Hanukkah season. Like our Shalom Baskets during the Jewish New Year, Hanukkah baskets will let your Jewish friend know you care about them in a culturally relevant way, and bless them during Hanukkah.

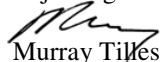
The gift baskets will be filled with goodies for the Hanukkah season. We encourage you to order from us and deliver them yourselves, but we will deliver them for you if you like. You may order online or by calling our office. **Orders must be received by November 25th.**

Thank You!

My people need your love. They need your prayers. They need your blessings. They need Jesus. We are focused on making sure that the love of Jesus is brought to our people in all the right ways.

Thank you for standing with us in our efforts to reach Jewish people with the message of Jesus. Your prayers and financial support help to make our ministry possible.

Rejoicing in Him,


Murray Tilles

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