

Flags of Israel: Today, we stand in support of Israel and the Jewish people. As believers, we have been grafted into God's chosen family and share in the covenant promises of God.

- We are here to remember the events in Israel on October 7, 2023. We are partnering with the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews of Canada, a supporter of impoverished Israelis and Jewish people around the world for over 20 years.
- **The spirit of anti-Semitism is alive and more active than ever. The hostility against Israel and its people is increasing.** B'nai Brith reports "6,219 incidents of anti-Semitism reported in 2024... over 17 incidents occurring every day, up from 8 daily in 2022... and online harassment increasing by 161% online since 2022" in Canada alone. So let us pray for Israel and her people.
- **Flags of Fellowship is a response to anti-Semitism.** It supports Jewish people, showing they're not alone. By choosing life, we honour and sanctify it. United for life and freedom, we seek God's blessing for peace.
- **Flags of Fellowship honours the 1,200 victims since October 7, 2023.** One flag per victim.

Today's Sermon: Israel & the Church

As mentioned, there is rising antisemitism in the world today. This is not new. Sadly, this has not just been from those outside the Church.

A. Israel's Battle Began in Eden

Paul warns us in Ephesians 6 that we are not fighting against flesh and blood but against spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. What is it about?

One needs only to look at Israel's history to see this battle unfolding.

- **4 Chapters, 5 Covenant Promises, 1 HERO – God's Grand Story!**
- **Israel was birthed from Jacob. Renamed, "ISRAEL" and the 12 tribes were 12 sons.**
- **The battle to destroy the bloodline began in Gen 3:15 – Where God promised to CRUSH SATAN.**
- **Satan has been trying to destroy the bloodline ever since. That is what this battle is over!**

Isaiah 54:5–10 (ESV) ⁵ For your Maker is your husband, the Lord of hosts is his name; and the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer, the God of the whole earth he is called. ⁶ For the Lord has called you like a wife deserted and grieved in spirit, like a wife of youth when she is cast off, says your God. ⁷ For a brief moment I deserted you, but with great compassion I will gather you. ⁸ In overflowing anger for a moment I hid my face from you, but with everlasting love I will have compassion on you," says the Lord, your Redeemer. ¹⁰ For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed," says the Lord, who has compassion on you.

- People charge – Modern Israel is godless and thus, God gave up on her! EVERLASTING LOVE.
- **QUESTION:** God is a promise maker and PROMISE KEEPER – His PROMISES to EVE & to ABRAHAM are UNCONDITIONAL – ETERNAL – UNILATERAL (depend on ONE person YHWH)
- Why would God give up on His promise now? After all this time? When we are so close to the end?

Satan has always sought to destroy what God loves. You can see his hatred displayed throughout Israel's history, but with that, you see God's faithfulness.

From harsh slavery in Egypt, to the Promised Land, to Kingdoms split, exile, and constantly being attacked. GOD HAS ALWAYS PROTECTED A REMNANT OF ISRAEL.

70 AD marked the first Sho'a (catastrophe) where 1 million Jews were massacred.

1938 Kristallnacht marked the beginning of the holocaust – Jewish businesses would be destroyed, Jews would lose their rights, and 6 millions jews were massacred.

At the **Nuremberg war criminal trials**, they pointed to Martin Luther's writings for justification.

- This same type of rhetoric is rampant in the Middle East, Europe, America and Canada! It is everywhere.
- **"From the river to the sea"** – Universities and countries are calling for the extermination of JEWS.
The words change – the sentiment is ancient – ALL inspired by the Devil.

1948 saw one of the biggest miracles in human history – a nation who had been destroyed was RESTORED after two millennia! Despite the Devils hatred and best attempts to utterly destroy Israel.

GOD RESTORED THEM TO THE LAND – partially! And they have been at WAR since. Fighting for the right to live. To exist.

In Germany, Churches were silent, many even joined in the antisemitism. The silence was deafening. Even those who did not agree, their silence cast a vote.

*First they came for the Communists, And I did not speak out— Because I was not a Communist.
Then they came for the Socialists, And I did not speak out— Because I was not a Socialist.
Then they came for the trade unionists, And I did not speak out— Because I was not a trade unionist.
Then they came for the Jews, And I did not speak out— Because I was not a Jew.
Then they came for me— And there was no one left to speak for me.*

QUESTION – Didn't the Church replace Israel? Aren't we "spiritual" Israel?

B. Israel, the Church, and the People of God

The charge: Israel failed to keep God's law. They rejected the Messiah. They crucified him. So, God gave the church the New Covenant and replaced Israel with the Church. The Church is now the People of God.

FIRST: Note the disciples' response after Jesus explained to them the OT and promises of God, Acts 1:6 (ESV). So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"

Romans 10:12–13 (ESV) For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. ¹³ For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

Galatians 3:26-29 . There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise

- NO distinctions? 1. Does NOT say REPLACED; 2. There ARE distinctions; 3. The point is ALL people are EQUAL & ALL people are SAVED the same way.

Romans 11:1-5 I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! For I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew. Do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he appeals to God against Israel? "Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have demolished your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life." But what is God's reply to him? "I have kept for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal." So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace.

- Paul clearly answers that charge. Has God rejected his people? NO!!!

- Has God given Israel a pass? A “get out of jail free card”? NO!! Salvation comes through FAITH.
- BUT, God has ALWAYS kept a REMNANT through whom HE ACCOMPLISHES HIS PROMISE.

Romans 3:1–4, 9 (ESV) ¹ Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the value of circumcision? ² Much in every way. To begin with, the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God. ³ What if some were unfaithful? Does their faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God? ⁴ By no means! ... ⁹ What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin,

- **Paul draws clear lines of distinction AND parallels between ETHNIC Israel & the Church.**

Romans 9:1–5 (ESV) ...I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. ³ For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh. ⁴ They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises. ⁵ To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ...

Romans 11:11–15 (ESV) So I ask, did they stumble in order that they might fall? By no means! Rather, through their trespass, salvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to make Israel jealous. Now if their trespass means riches for the world, and if their failure means riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their full inclusion mean! Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry in order somehow to make my fellow Jews jealous, and thus save some of them. For if their rejection means the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance mean but life from the dead?

- Just as the 2nd Adam (Christ) brought LIFE to the world. Paul posited that a RESTORED ETHNIC ISRAEL would bring BLESSINGS UNTOLD to the world. (Exactly what God promised ABRAHAM!!!)

Romans 11:17-23 But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, although a wild olive shoot, were grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing root of the olive tree, do not be arrogant toward the branches. If you are, remember it is not you who support the root, but the root that supports you. Then you will say, “Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in.” That is true. They were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand fast through faith. So do not become proud, but fear. For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you. Note then the kindness and the severity of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God's kindness to you, provided you continue in his kindness. Otherwise you too will be cut off. And even they, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God has the power to graft them in again.

- UNBELIEF = Broken off (for Israel & Gentiles) → BELIEF in JESUS = GRAFTED INTO HIS BODY!
- God is NOT done with Israel! NO WAY! He is going to FULFILL ALL HIS PROMISES TO THEM!
- For example: If you had kids through birth & adoption – THIS would be an analogy! BOTH legitimate! BOTH legitimate and privy to the PROMISES! BOTH can choose to REJECT JESUS.

Who are the TRUE People of God? Israel? Or the Church? BOTH! YES! We should REJOICE!

Romans 11:25-29 Lest you be wise in your own sight, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers: a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And in this way all Israel will be saved, as it is written, “The Deliverer will come from Zion, he will banish ungodliness from Jacob”; “and this will be my covenant with them when I take away their sins.”

As regards the gospel, they are enemies for your sake. But as regards election, they are beloved for the sake of their forefathers. For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

- The gifts & calling of God are IRREVOCABLE.
- **Jesus is coming back and ALL OF ISRAEL WILL BE SAVED!**

Israel hardened → Gentile harvest → Israel saved → Gentile Harvest = FILL HEAVEN!!!!

C. Standing with Israel: A Christian Response

Does standing with Israel mean agreement with everything they do? NO. “partial hardening” They are an unrighteous nation.

Does loving your family mean you agree with everything they do? Loving the church?

- The world says LOVE = AFFIRMATION. This is NOT biblical love. E.g. Jesus loved by dying for us
- CHRISTIANS – we need to reclaim what it means to LOVE. E.g. denominations, etc.
- We are so afraid that LOVE = AFFIRMATION that we withhold LOVE! NO!

Does standing with Israel mean we are against Palestinians? NO! reject the worlds FALSE DICHOTOMIES

- Jesus says “Love your enemies, Pray for them, do good to them”
- Jesus LOVED HIS ENEMIES – that includes US – and died for them!
- Christians can stand with Israel and want the best for them AND want to see ALL Palestinians AND TERRORISTS meet Jesus and receive the SAME grace & forgiveness that reconciled US.

1. PRAY → For God’s purposes to be done!

- We pray for peace in Israel – YES! Pray for the Salvation of Israel!
- and we pray for peace in Gaza, for the Palestinians. We pray for their salvation, too!
- We pray against antisemitism! YES! It’s RACISM. We should be against ALL forms of racism. Including demonizing all Muslims. THE CULTURE DOES THIS. We are NOT of the culture but are of the KINGDOM OF GOD.

2. STAND FOR GOD’S TRUTH & RIGHTEOUSNESS →

- We speak the truth about God’s righteousness & moral standards.
- We stand against EVIL in all forms. Including antisemitism!

3. DISCIPLE PEOPLE TO JESUS → share the Gospel!

- This is a command we have received from God! Disciple people to Him. “each one, reach one.”
- We speak the truth about the Gospel of the Kingdom – the FULL thing! Not truncated!
- Including His plan for Israel and the blessings we have received from God through Israel.
- “a partial hardening is on Israel until the FULLNESS of the Gentiles comes in” BE A PART OF THE SOLUTION!

4. GOD’S HEART FOR ISRAEL! *Luke 19:41–44 (ESV)* And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it, saying, “Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. For the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up a barricade around you and surround you and hem you in on every side and tear you down to the ground, you and your children within you.

- JESUS weeps over ISRAEL – He is coming and will save ISRAEL – AND we get to be included in this!