



TOUGH QUESTIONS

Why Should Christians Care About Israel?

Just as with the answers to all the Tough Questions in this sermon series, the answer to this question should be found in the Scriptures. Today we will look at three primary reasons that Christians should care about Israel.

Because of Who God is

God is a Promise Keeper

The Lord had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." (Gen 12:1-3 NIV)

God chose Abram and made him a promise. Also of personal application, note the significance that Abram responded to God's call and chose God back.

So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Harran. (Gen 12:4 NIV)

It is a spiritual covenant:

And Abram believed the Lord, and the Lord counted him as righteous because of his faith. (Gen 15:6 NLT)

It is a geographical covenant:

So the Lord made a covenant with Abram that day and said, "I have given this land to your descendants, all the way from the border of Egypt to the great Euphrates River. (Gen 15:18 NLT)

It is a racial and ethnic covenant:

Then God said to Abraham, "As for you, you must keep my covenant, you and your descendants after you for the generations to come. (Gen 17:9 NIV)

It is an eternal covenant:

"I will confirm my covenant with you and your descendants after you, from generation to generation. This is the everlasting covenant: I will always be your God and the God of your descendants after you. (Gen 17:7 NLT)

It is natural as humans that we have trust issues because of our experience with broken promises, but God is not human and cannot break His own word. He will not let us down.

He remembers his covenant forever, the promise he made, for a thousand generations, the covenant he made with Abraham, the oath he swore to Isaac. He confirmed it to Jacob as a decree, to Israel as an everlasting covenant: "To you I will give the land of Canaan as the portion you will inherit." (Psalm 105:8-11 NIV)

God is Faithful and Unchanging

Lord, Your faithful love reaches to heaven, Your faithfulness to the clouds. (Ps 36:5 HCSB)

For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; His faithfulness continues through all generations. (Ps 100:5 NIV)

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. (Heb 13:8 HCSB)

Jesus is Jewish

The lineage of the chosen Messiah had to be Jewish – he was a descendant of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob – or it would not have been part of the original blessing God promised. Everything about Jesus, the authors of the New Testament and the early church was Jewish.

We love Jesus. The Father loves the Son. Hating Jewish people would include hating Jesus. It makes no sense to be anti-semitic. And Jews are no more "Christ-killers" than any of us are – because He died for all of us – willingly.

Jesus chose the cross:

“This is why the Father loves me, because I lay down my life so that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down on my own. I have the right to lay it down, and I have the right to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.” (Jn 10:17-18 CSB)

Because God loves Israel: past, present and future

God loves Israel – the people. He is their God and they are His people. He is identified as “the God of Israel” approximately 200 times in the Bible.

Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, Who alone works wonders. (Ps 72:18 NASB)

Jesus left there and went along the Sea of Galilee. Then he went up on a mountainside and sat down. Great crowds came to him, bringing the lame, the blind, the crippled, the mute and many others, and laid them at his feet; and he healed them. The people were amazed when they saw the mute speaking, the crippled made well, the lame walking and the blind seeing. And they praised the God of Israel. (Matt 15:29-31 NIV)

God considers the people of Israel so special He refers to them as “the apple of His eye.”

So said the Eternal, Commander of heavenly armies. After His glory has arrived in the city, He will send me to the nations that stripped you bare, Jerusalem, because any nation who harms you harms the apple of His eye. (Zech 2:8 VOICE)

But that doesn't mean that all Jewish people are always in good standing with God spiritually.

...but the people of Israel, who pursued the law as the way of righteousness, have not attained their goal. Why not? Because they pursued it not by faith but as if it were by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone. (Rom 9:31-32 NIV)

Nor does it mean that they have been rejected for all time.

I ask then: Did God reject his people? By no means! I am an Israelite myself, a descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin. God did not reject his people, whom he foreknew... So too, at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace. (Rom 11:1-2a,5 NIV)

And if you read Revelation 7 it is clear that many Jewish people are included in a remnant.

But some of these branches from Abraham's tree—some of the people of Israel—have been broken off. And you Gentiles, who were branches from a wild olive tree, have been grafted in. So now you also receive the blessing God has promised Abraham and his children, sharing in the rich nourishment from the root of God's special olive tree. But you must not brag about being grafted in to replace the branches that were broken off. You are just a branch, not the root...

And if the people of Israel turn from their unbelief, they will be grafted in again, for God has the power to graft them back into the tree. (Rom 11:17-18,23 NLT)

Because all people can have a relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Christ.

If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. As Scripture says, "Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame." For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." (Rom 10:9-13 NIV)

Because you want to be blessed

God's promise went not just to Abram and his descendants but to all people – that if they bless His people they too would be blessed.

The Lord had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." (Gen 12:1-3 NIV)

The nations are blessed when they bless Israel.

On that day Israel will form a triple alliance with Egypt and Assyria—a blessing within the land. The Lord of Hosts will bless them, saying, "Egypt My people, Assyria My handiwork, and Israel My inheritance are blessed." (Is 19:24-25 HCSB)

The Gentiles (non-Jews) are blessed with salvation through the Messiah Jesus.

Concerning the Gentiles, God says in the prophecy of Hosea, "Those who were not my people, I will now call my people. And I will love those whom I did not love before." And, "Then, at the place where they were told, 'You are not my people,' there they will be called 'children of the living God.'" (Rom 9:25-26 NLT)

Consider ways to practically bless the Jewish people in your life, to take steps of application, and most importantly, to make sure you are choosing God back and following Him.