

Now is a pivotal time to stand with Israel



6I have set watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem;
They shall never hold their peace day or night.
You who make mention of YHWH, do not keep silent,
7And give Him no rest till He establishes
And till He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth. Isaiah 62:6-7

Standing with Israel

Last Saturday when we were in the mountains for our sukkot retreat as we were starting our morning Sabbath service we discovered that Israel had been brutally attacked by the Hamas terrorist organization. We received ongoing reports throughout the day of the carnage of this attack which was focused on civilians. The totals as of this writing include over 1300 dead, over 3000 wounded, and ~150 hostages taken by the terrorists into Gaza. I have heard this described as the worst atrocity against Jews since the Holocaust.

The prophet Zechariah prophesied that before Jerusalem is surrounded and attacked by all the nations at the time preceding Yeshua's return that it would be a cup of trembling and a heavy stone that will negatively impact all the nations who try to move her (Zech 12:2-4). In Joel 3:14, the prophet describes that multitudes of people will be in the valley of decision as it relates to their decision related to stand (or not) with Jerusalem. Yeshua also tells of the coming day after His return when He will judge the nations related to how they treated the Israelis who were in need. Those who don't pass the test were cast into the lake of fire (see Mathew 25:31-46). In other words how we relate to Israel both now and in the days to come is not a light matter.

But you might say I don't get this Israel thing. I'm not specifically for her or against her--I love Israel like I love all people. I used to feel this way, but have had a slow process of change as I continued to read my Bible, study what God says about Israel, and grow in my prayer for her and then to repent of my unrighteous attitudes towards her. I'm still on the journey, but I know my heart is changing. I believe the starting point to standing with Israel and helping her in her time of need is to pray for her. In fact, do you know that we as Believers are commanded to pray (and care) for her? The prophet Isaiah calls for those who make mention of YHWH (that includes you and me) to be intercessors for Jerusalem until Yeshua's return (Isaiah 62:6). The landscape will get much worse before it gets ultimately better at Yeshua's return and God calls us to pray for her until that coming day

Consistent prayer changes us and moves God's heart. Did you know that Corrie ten Boom's grandfather in 1843 started a weekly prayer meeting for the Jewish people each Wednesday in their home in Amsterdam? His motivation for starting this prayer time was just that his pastor asked him if he would be willing to do this and qualified it by saying: "You know the Scriptures tell us to pray for the peace of Jerusalem, and the blessing of the Jews." It was an odd request at the time—few Dutch Christians had heard of praying for Israel—but her grandfather agreed. "I have always loved God's ancient people," he told the pastor; "they gave us our Bible and our Savior." And with that started an approximately 100 year prayer meeting in the ten Boom home that was the impetus for the ten Boom family standing with the Jewish people in need when

their kairos time was upon them. I pray that we will be a people who grows in our prayer and love for the Jewish people and that we too will be pleasing to the Lord when their time of need comes our way.

For those who want to join us in a practical way, our weekly Thursday night zoom call from 6-7pm is dedicated to praying specifically for Israel. I believe it to be a noble goal to commit to pray for Israel one hour a week. I know very personally that the accountability that comes from a group prayer time helps in keeping me committed on the times that I'm not feeling excited to do it.