

The Danger of Christian Zionism

This subject is bound to provoke, but it's a subject close to our hearts that has been concerning us for some time. Please keep in mind the Emmaus Group was founded on promoting the relationship between the church and Israel and as such we remain strong advocates of Israel's legitimacy. Emmaus will always encourage the church, the people of God, to be reconciled to their Hebraic roots – for she must if she is to survive. If there was ever a time in church history for repentance and turning back to the holy teachings of God it is now.

So let us be clear: the church has not nor ever will 'replace Israel'. Those familiar with Apostle Paul's teachings in Rome know how he taught followers of Christ they are akin to wild olive branches grafted into a cultivated tree – symbolic of Israel. But when Paul spoke these words we must understand he was speaking of both spiritual and physical Israel. True Israel is made up of the people of God: *there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ.* (Galatians 3:28)

And who are the people of God - the saints, the elect or the holy ones? They are those who keep **both** His commands **and** the testimony of Jesus Christ. This point is so important! *"Remember the Law of Moses, My servant, which I commanded him in Horeb for **all** Israel with the statutes and judgments."* (Micah 4:4). All Israel includes all who keep the commands of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ as per Paul's olive tree metaphor.

In his letter to the early church in Rome he clarified that a 'true Jew' is one that is a Jew inwardly, not by circumcision of the flesh, and that *circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter, whose praise is not from men but God.* (Romans 2:29) This is the new covenant in which God has written His laws on the heart, not the letter.

The Hebrew word for Zion, *Tzion* (צִיּוֹן), can be translated as "indication" or "marking." Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson explains that the Jewish people are called *Tzion* by virtue of their study of Jewish texts and fulfillment of G-d's commandments.ⁱ True Christian Zionists should mark themselves out by adherence to God's commandments, not by glorifying Israel. They should be distinguishing themselves from the world by their love of and obedience to God.

Modern Zionism can also invoke man's inbuilt propensity for extremism. Israel is not something to worshipped or idolised. Nor are the people who live there, most of whom do not know their Messiah, are actively rebelling against God and who will soon be judged along with the rest of the world as scripture foretells. We are commanded to pray for the peace of Jerusalem, to do good to all people, to bless Israel appropriately, but not elevate it to a place where it consumes and colours our walk with God, for that is idolatry.

Across the UK, 'nights to honour Israel' are frequently held but where is the 'night to honour the God of Israel?'

Christian Zionists can take the view Israel is beyond reproach; yet fail to keep the Torah themselves. How confusing is this for the Jew whom they wish to 'provoke to jealousy' and reconcile to the Messiah? The Jew sees and hears Christians speaking of 'the Jewish Messiah,' yet failing entirely to keep His commands; commands the Jew knows better than the Christian. How many Christian Zionists keep even the Sabbath? It's like seeking to take the speck from the Jewish eye when there is a plank in the Christian eye, a speck that God Himself says He will remove from the Jewish eye at the appointed time.

There's an old saying: "if you can't beat them join them." Satan knows this so if he can't stop people loving Israel then he'll join them with deception, taking them to extremes rather than truth, bringing disrepute, mockery and hostility upon what in essence is a biblical act of obedience. He will lead people astray from within - like a fifth columnist. Extreme passion for Israel can mean victory for Satan, because the unaware has taken their eyes off the God of Israel and instead placed their focus on something else.

"The people have exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator. (Romans 1:25) The lie in Zionism is worshiping Israel, instead of God.

God has plans for Israel; any Christian with an ounce of knowledge of Israel knows this. God is not finished with her by any means and we know from the word, that Jesus the Messiah will come back to rule and reign from Mount Zion. This is why there is so much conflict over the holy city because God has chosen it for a time and purpose, and Satan knows this too, hence trying to derail God's plans. He won't succeed, but he will try to take as many down with him as possible through deception!

Our calling is to focus on and love the God of Israel with all our hearts, mind and soul, and insodoing obey His commandments, and by seeking first the kingdom of heaven and God's righteousness, to avoid being deceived and drawn into idolatry. Yes, pray for the peace of Jerusalem, seek to bless and not curse her, but maintain a balanced approach. Do not make Israel an idol. For if you do, your faith will be severely tested in the years ahead, when the world turns upon her and she is severely wounded before her final redemption.

ⁱ http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/1543702/jewish/What-Is-Zion.htm