

THE BEACON

Harrisburg Christian Church
201 E Sexton St. PO Box 36



MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

May, 2026

Greetings HCC,

One of the questions submitted for our "You asked for it" series was about Israel. The question was: "How does modern day Israel fit with the Biblical version?"

Do we, as Americans, support them politically?

As a Christian American, I've always felt that we were supposed to support them. Recently I've been hearing conflicting information and have seen political articles suggesting the current Israeli government may not align with that blind support."

This is a great question with lots of layers (i.e. current events, Old Testament covenants, Bible prophecies, governments, and clarifying terms).

I have written a Q&A discussion paper that is included at the end of this edition of the Beacon and I also plan to speak on this topic on May 17th. Keep scrolling if you are interested in a topic that includes politics and religion.

May it be well with your soul,
John Gillman

CONTINUE...

Dear Harrisburg Church and Community,

God Bless you all!

My husband and I would like to thank you all for the thoughts and prayers during my Dad's passing (Robert Hughes)! We would also like to thank you for the wonderful meal! We really appreciate it. We would also want to thank Pastor John Gillman for the fantastic service. Thank you!

-Denise and Donnie Strawn

Dear John,

Thank you once again for the wonderful service you performed for Robert. The whole family loved it.

You really listened to us & that means the world.

Thank you again.

Gratefully,

Carol Hughes and family

Find our Prayer Chain in our App to find ways to connect and pray for one another.



THE BEACON

JOHN'S TIDBITS

1. Another great Easter service! Thank you to the dozens of volunteers who served to make it happen. God is moving in our community!
2. Welcome to our latest new members: Rachael Strawn, Rick and Pam Russell!
3. Come worship with us on Mother's day where we will honor our graduates, moms, and Cayde Stroer (Child dedication!)
4. HCC is in need of a Christian Education Chair. If you would like to hear more about the position, please reach out to John Gillman.



JOIN US ON SUNDAY MORNINGS AT 9AM OR 10:30AM



UPCOMING EVENTS

You can be a part of it!

Find an event and get connected!

01

Mother's Day Celebrations

4/10 Join us for Child Dedication and Mother's Day celebrations.

02

Operation Christmas Child

See the last page for items we are collecting in May.

03

Senior Luncheon 5/12

11-12pm in the Fellowship Hall

04

Elders & Deacon Meeting

5/26 from 6:30-7:30

05

VBS Help

We will be seeking lots of youth and adult help for our summer VBS program. Stay tuned for more info.

A Plausible Christian Stance on Modern Israel:

Should we “Stand with Modern Israel”?

Q: Let’s define our terms; who are you referring to by the term Modern Israel?

A: I will use the term Modern Israel when I am referring to the diverse group of citizens currently living in the Middle Eastern country named Israel led by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Q: What other terms are you planning to use to distinguish the people you are referring to?

A:

Jewish Race - Primarily the biological descendants of Jacob (Israelites) spoken of in the Old Testament of the Bible with the inclusion of those who are not biological descendants, but who wished to be assimilated into this people group (Old Testament examples of this would be Rahab and Ruth.) This race of people has existed for 4000 years and is estimated in the millions currently in our world. 7.5 million in the U.S. and 7.4 million in Modern Israel.

Spiritual Israel (Christians) - People who have the faith of Abraham both of the Jewish race and of the Gentiles (non-Jewish races). Currently this group is referred to as Christians and/or Messianic Jews (People of the Jewish Race who recognize Jesus as Messiah). Modern Israel has a population of 9.6 million citizens around 180,000 identify as Christians (10,000 of them identifying as Messianic Jews)

Q: Did God promise land to the Jewish Race?

A: Yes. The promise was first spoken when God made a covenant with Abraham in Genesis 12:7 “To your offspring I will give this land.” Later the promise was repeated to Abraham’s grandson Jacob (also known as Israel) in Genesis 28:13 “I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying.”

Q: Was God specific about the borders of the land that was being given to the Jewish Race?

A: Yes. In Genesis 15: God specifies “from the river of Egypt (Nile) to the great river, the Euphrates.”

Q: Is the land promise still in effect for the Jewish Race?

A: Yes. God refers to His promise as an “everlasting covenant” in Genesis 17:7. And now, this promise applies to Spiritual Israel (Christians). Other races have been grafted into this promise because of their faith in Jesus Christ. This is explained in Romans 2-4.

Q: If God promised it, then why doesn’t the Jewish Race or Spiritual Israel (Christians) possess it? Why have they never in 4000 years possessed all the land that was promised?

A: There are several promises (prophecies) in the Bible that have yet to be fulfilled. Many like this one will most likely be fulfilled after the 2nd Coming of Christ and during the Millennial kingdom referred to in Revelation 20:1-10.

Q: What about those in the Jewish Race who are not Christian / followers of Jesus? Is this land promise still in effect for them?

A: No, but if they choose to become followers of Jesus it will be.

Q: In the Old Testament, Joshua and the Israelites were instructed to enter into the promised land and take possession of it by military force. Does God still desire either Modern Israel, the Jewish Race, or Spiritual Israel (Christian) to take possession of the promised land by military force?

A: No, the instructions by God to take the land by military force are no longer in effect for any of these three groups listed. However, that does not mean that Modern Israel should not defend itself and the land currently in its possession. Modern Israel's justification for defending its land would come from political and human rights reasons rather than saying "God gave us this land and told us to take possession of it."

Q: Why are the instructions to take the land by military force no longer in effect?

A: Because the Joshua-led Israelites entered the promised land and no further instructions to any other leader in the Bible like that were given by God. It can be safe to assume that God's instructions to Joshua were given during unique circumstances. Also, Jesus emphasized that his Kingdom was not of this world and the current task of Spiritual Israel (Christians) is to build the kingdom of God and make disciples of all nations, not to obtain land.

Q: What were the unique circumstances surrounding the taking of the promised land by the Joshua-led Israelites?

A: There were several unique circumstances: God was freeing the Israelites from slavery in Egypt and giving them a new home. The Israelites and God were in a covenant relationship (The Mosaic Covenant) where they were to follow the law and be a blessing to all the nations. And God was bringing judgment on the sinful nations that were residing in the promised land whose wickedness had increased and warranted judgment. (Gen 15:16). None of these circumstances are currently in play. There is a New Covenant now between God and Spiritual Israel (Christians). Even if the Mosaic Covenant was still in effect, in Modern Israel, over half its citizens claim to have no religion. Deuteronomy chapter 28 lays out the terms of the Mosaic Covenant which required the Israelites to obey the law in order for the blessings to be in effect.

Q: When God made a covenant with Abraham, God stated: "I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse." (Genesis 12:3). Are those blessings and curses still in effect and should that influence how we treat Modern Israel and those of the Jewish Race.

A. Yes, those blessings and curses are still in effect, but the covenant promises are directed toward Spiritual Israel. Some people in Modern Israel and the Jewish Race are also a part of Spiritual Israel so in that way, these blessings and curses would apply. As followers of Jesus, we are to bless everyone and curse no one, even our enemies "bless those who persecute you, bless and do not curse" (Romans 12:14) So we are to put this into practice regardless of what people group we are referring to.

Q: Let me rephrase that question, should we be afraid to critique or speak out against some of the actions of Modern Israel for fear of God's promise to "curse those who curse you".

A: If you mean speaking out against immoral actions and human rights violations, then no, you should not be afraid to speak out. A lot of the writings of the Old Testament prophets are doing just that. Also Jesus spoke out against the evil and hypocrisy in the Jewish people during his ministry. However, if you mean the "curse" like Balak was seeking in Numbers 22-23 or if you mean taking a stance of Anti-Semitism (prejudice or hostility towards the Jewish Race) then yes, I think you should be aware of God's love for the Jewish Race and fear the consequences of your own immoral act.

Q: So should we as Christians "Stand with Modern Israel?"

A: Yes, to the extent that we can support their actions. God's promises to Abraham do not somehow require our blind support of Modern Israel. What God wants us to do is to "act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with our God." (Micah 6:8) There are many reasons why supporting Modern Israel would be in alignment with how God wants us to live.

Q: What do you mean? What reasons?

A: God loves diversity and nations and races of people. He loves the Jewish Race that lives in Modern Israel and for centuries, there have been groups trying to wipe this race off the planet. Recently Hamas promoted the annihilation of Israel while chants of "from the river to the sea" were referring to destroying Modern Israel. Iran's policies call for the destruction of Modern Israel. Israel has been regularly bombed and attacked by Hezbollah, an organization with a goal of destroying Modern Israel. For us as Christians to "Stand with Modern Israel" against these injustices is appropriate. It would be appropriate for us to stand against any call for the genocide of a race of people and a country that is being attacked for their land. We can pray for the citizens of Modern Israel to be able to live peaceful lives without the continual fear of attack from surrounding countries. We can also vote for political candidates who are willing to uphold the political alliance that the U.S. has with Modern Israel. Many of the groups attacking Modern Israel have also declared intent to cause harm to the United States. With all these injustices happening, it's hard to imagine what it would look like to "NOT stand for Modern Israel"? I.e. being neutral toward or in favor of these injustices.

Q: Do we as Spiritual Israel (Christians) have any special obligation to the Jewish Race in comparison to other races? Should we seek to "bless" them?

A: Yes, we would be wise to recognize that God has a special purpose for the Jewish Race. He used this race to bring about the patriarchs, the Law of Moses and the Messiah. He used this race to start Christianity and to be the tree that we, who are of other races, are grafted into. (Romans 11). God loves the Jewish Race and still plans to use this race in future prophetic events.

Q: Is the Jewish Race a part of future prophecies in the Bible?

A: Yes, albeit, prophecies are more clear after they have come to pass. Prophecies that have yet to occur mention the holy city (Jerusalem) and a holy people (Spiritual Israel). Jesus refers to people fleeing from Judea when the “abomination that causes desolation” occurs. There are varying end times views about these passages. Most (including the pre-millennial futurist view that I think best fits Biblical prophecy) would include the Jewish Race and events taking place where Modern Israel currently exists. So, it appears that God will preserve the Jewish Race throughout all time and we would be wise to respect the Jewish race, help those of this race continue to survive amidst Anti-Semitism and pray for them to come to know Jesus and become part of Spiritual Israel (Christians).

Q: Is there anything else you would like to say?

A: Yes!

I do not hold to replacement theology which is the belief that the church has replaced Israel in God’s plan. I think a better representation of the scriptures would be to say that people of other races have been grafted into the promises to Israel. (Spiritual Israel/Christians)

Zionism is an international movement for the return of the Jewish people to Zion (location of Modern Israel). This movement found its fulfillment in 1948 when Israel was officially recognized as a state and granted sovereignty as a nation within Palestine by the United Nations. Missouri’s own, President Harry S. Truman was the first world leader to recognize Israel as a state. The return of the Jewish state for the first time since 70 AD has gotten the attention of many theologians who see the formation of a Jewish state as an indicator that the end times are quickly approaching.

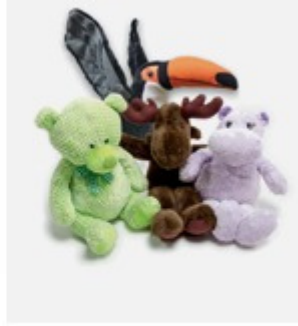
To summarize this paper I would say: Let’s “stand with Modern Israel” to the extent to which we can support their beliefs and actions and let’s seek to bless the Jewish Race who are loved by God. One of the greatest blessings that we can pass on to those of the Jewish Race is to introduce them to Jesus who brings salvation and will one day fulfill all His promises to Spiritual Israel (Christians).

Year-round shopping for Harrisburg Christian Church – Operation Christmas Child

FEBRUARY



"Wow" Items



Stuffed Animals

MARCH



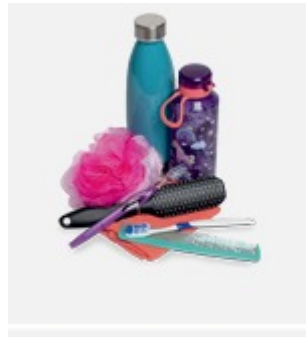
Fashion Accessories

APRIL



Hats, Gloves, and Scarves

MAY



Personal Care Items

JUNE

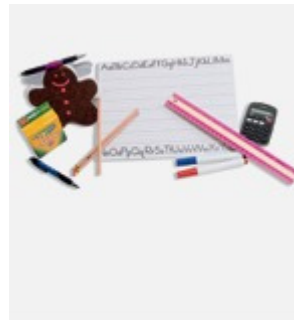


Toys

JULY

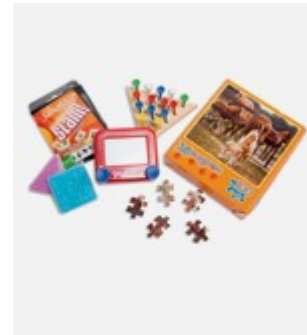
*Christmas in July!
Special Event*

AUGUST



School Supplies

SEPTEMBER



Games

