

“Why I Love Israel and the Jewish People”

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Ever since I was a young boy, Israel and the Jewish people have fascinated me and held a special place in my heart. As a Pastor’s son, my family moved frequently, but for several years we lived across the street from a Jewish family. I was always intrigued to hear of my friend going to synagogue, celebrating his *bar mitzvah*, or being invited into their home to watch Tevye in *Fiddler on the Roof*. As an adolescent, I was taken to a traditional *Shabbat* service at an orthodox synagogue as part of my youth group’s preparation for confirmation, and later on I had the privilege of witnessing “Christ in the Passover” during a traditional *Seder* meal. In all of these things, what seemed to resonate deep within my soul was the beautifully rich and long history of the Jewish people. As a young man who often felt without “roots,” there was a depth and enduring quality to the Jewish people that I yearned for in my own life. Mark Twain once famously wrote concerning the Jewish people:

The Egyptian, the Babylonian, and the Persian rose, filled the planet with sound and splendor, then faded to dream-stuff and passed away; the Greek and the Roman followed; and made a vast noise, and they are gone; other people have sprung up and held their torch high for a time, but it burned out, and they sit in twilight now, or have vanished. The Jew saw them all, beat them all, and is now what he always was, exhibiting no decadence, no infirmities of age, no weakening of his parts, no slowing of his energies, no dulling of his alert and aggressive mind. All things are mortal but the Jew; all other forces pass, but he remains. What is the secret of his immortality?”¹

Truly, there is no greater example of a people who have endured so much adversity and change!

¹ Twain, Mark. As quoted from “Concerning The Jews,” Harper’s Magazine, 1899, <http://www.simpletoremember.com/jewish/blog/mark-twain-and-the-jews/>, accessed June 29, 2017.

Another reason I love Israel and the Jewish people is because “*theirs* is the adoption to sonship; *theirs* the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises. *Theirs* are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of the Messiah, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen.”² As a grateful believer in Yeshua HaMashiach, I recognize that the very salvation I enjoy comes through a *Jewish* Messiah!³ This passage also reminds me of the deep debt of gratitude I have for the Jewish people who faithfully preserved the Scriptures so that millions today (myself included) have the privilege of hearing and reading God’s Word for ourselves!

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the reason I love Israel and the Jewish people is because *God* loves them with an *everlasting* love.⁴ Even in all their backsliding, the LORD has never removed His love from His chosen people. As Paul reminded the church in Rome, “as far as election is concerned, they are loved on account of the patriarchs.”⁵ The LORD promised to Abraham that through him all nations (families) of the earth would be blessed⁶; the LORD promised an everlasting kingdom and covenant to David based on His faithful and unfailing love.⁷ It is because of God’s faithful love that Israel and the Jewish people are not consumed, and it is my desire and prayer to see their eyes opened to the truth of Yeshua as their long-promised and soon-coming-again Messiah and King.

Shalom!

² Romans 9:4-5

³ John 4:22; Romans 9:5

⁴ Jeremiah 31:3

⁵ Romans 11:28

⁶ Genesis 12:1-3

⁷ Isaiah 55:3