

## Israel and the Church

Our topic today is one that we cannot possibly cover in depth in such a short time. We'll be touching very briefly on a subject that we could literally cover in depth for months if not years; Israel.

So for today's format, I'll mention an article, then we'll be reading some statistics and principles from Scripture and then Jerry and I will discuss how they affect the Church along with some other related news headlines.

There is an organization called The World Council of Churches, which was formed in 1948 and currently has approx 350 member churches with roughly 500,000 members.

According to an article in The Times of Israel on June 11<sup>th</sup>, the Geneva headquarters of the World Council of Churches recently sent a letter to the EU requesting the EU to impose sanctions on the state of Israel if Israel annexed the West Bank as Benjamin Netanyahu is intending to do.

*If Israel annexes land, the letter said, "the EU must surely suspend the EU-Israel Association Agreement," a reference to a 1995 contract that promotes trade between the bloc and the Jewish state. In addition, the EU should apply sanctions on Israel "at least commensurate with those adopted by the EU in response to Russia's annexation of Crimea."*

This could involve blacklisting Israeli businesses and individuals as well as freezing or seizing property and assets within the EU as a result of these sanctions. The economic fallout could be significant.

Obviously, this has triggered some backlash among Bible believing Christians even within the World Council of Churches organization itself.

It's interesting that commonly when an article is printed, the publication posts a disclaimer saying something like this; "The opinions and/or ideas expressed are the sole opinions and ideas of the author of this article. XXX Publication assumes no liability for the ideas or opinions expressed herein."

As the Christians, our Article of Doctrine is the Bible, and the author is God. So let's take just a minute to see what He might think and say.

All Christians within the church would say they feel the church is vitally important and precious to God. If you look at how many times the word "Church" is used in the Bible that's apparent. 117 times the Bible uses the word "Church". If God mentions something once it's important. 117 times seems to indicate He is pretty passionate about it!

**So let's talk about Israel;**

**The word "Israel" is used *over 2300 times* in both OT and NT!**

**Jerusalem is named *over 760 times*!**

**Jerusalem is called the Holy City *15 times*.**

**It's called the city of God *6 times*.**

**The term "Land of Israel" (*physical borders given to Abraham in Genesis 15:18-21*) is specifically used *31 times*.**

**(For background read Genesis 12, 13, 15, 17, 18, just to name a few....)**

***9 times* God references (remembers) His covenant with Abraham; *7 times* OT, *2 times* NT**

***8 times* the Bible references God's promise to Abraham; *1 time* OT, *7 times* NT**

**God says He gave this land to the Israelites (descendants of Abraham through Isaac, the Son of Promise) over 160 times!**

**Gen 13:14** *And the LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him: "Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are—northward, southward, eastward, and westward;*

*Gen 13:15* *for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants **forever**.*

*Gen 13:16* *And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, then your descendants also could be numbered.*

*Gen 13:17* *Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you."*

**God makes it clear that this gift is not temporary, it's FOREVER!**

**1Ch 28:8** *Now therefore, in the sight of all Israel, the assembly of the LORD, and in the hearing of our God, be careful to seek out all the commandments of the LORD your God, that you may possess this good land, and leave it as an inheritance for your children after you forever.*

**This is even more clear reading Leviticus 25:23 where the Israelites themselves couldn't sell their land forever; Everything returns to the owner in the Year of Jubilee;**

**Lev 25:23** *"The land shall not be sold permanently, for the land is Mine; for you are strangers and sojourners with Me.*

**Is God invested?**

**Absolutely!**

**God calls Himself "The God of Israel" over 220 times!**

**He also calls Himself "The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Israel) 27 times!**

**Exo 3:15** *Moreover God said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: 'The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My name forever, and this is My memorial to all generations.'*

**God IS invested, and He has a perfect memory!**

**Gen 12:1** *Now the LORD had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, From your family And from your father's house, To a land that I will show you.*

*Gen 12:2* *I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing.*

*Gen 12:3* *I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."*

**Let's be clear: There is NO expiration date on this verse!!! What God said in Genesis 12 is just as applicable today as it was several thousand years ago, and will *continue to be applicable* as long as God is God!**

Some within the Church say that time has past, the Church is the New Israel, they're over, we're here. That's not the case at all. In fact, Romans 9-11 are a doctrinal thesis on Israelology that all Christians should study and understand. Also the Church needs to remember, our Lord and Savior has a few different titles that show He is invested as well!

Lion of the Tribe of Judah

Son of David

Seed of Abraham

Jesus Christ of Nazareth, King of the Jews

Here's where the Church NEEDS to be Bereans (Acts 17:11- Look it up!). We need to know God's word and take it at face value.

When we fail to know His Word for ourselves and are content to let others tell us what to believe we are easy prey to deception and outright falsehood, heresy, and lies.

This is easier to do today that it's ever been. In the past we would go through the Scriptures noting, counting, cross referencing, etc., looking up things in concordances and other reference materials. Today there are numerous electronic Bible apps that are word searchable! What I've pulled out here is not reserved for the scholar; it's available to anybody who will take just a bit of time to search the scriptures to see which things be so!

So if you're viewing this and disagree, please comment and show me in Scripture where I'm getting it all wrong!

So Jerry, I know you have some related articles and news topics that have caught your attention this week.....