

A Christian Understanding of Israel?

For a moment let us presume that Western Culture can continue to be generally defined as being Christian from a religious context. Or at least let us consider the prospect that Western Culture generally professes itself to be Christian premised upon the following demographics.

Demographic	Total Population	Christian Population	% To Total
Europe	800,000,000	536,832,000	67%
Northern America	<u>350,000,000</u>	<u>212,167,000</u>	60%
	1,150,000,000	746,999,000	65%

Presuming for a moment the general accuracy of the demographic data, one can only wonder why there exists such little support for national Israel in this modern era.

Could it be that Christians in Western Culture have acquiesced their political positions to the minority secularists?

Could it be that Christians in Western Culture simply do not feel the need or understand why they should support Israel?

Could it be that while national Israel and to a greater extent world Jewry, continue in their non-acceptance of Jesus the Messiah (Yeshua HaMashiach), that Christians in Western Culture will not see the Israelites as brethren?

Big questions indeed one may think, but as will soon be seen not very difficult questions to answer.

The Secular West

Without proceeding down a broad sweeping discourse we should cut to the chase and accept the fact that post-enlightenment Europe and the United States of America can be described as having secular governments. Despite Christian vestiges which permeate their respective cultures both Europe and the United States of America have essentially acquiesced governmental control to liberal secular humanists.

When one objectively views the separated church and state dynamic existing in both cultures, it is clear that the views of the liberal secularists have dominated the respective political landscapes. How else could these Christian populations suffer and endure such anti-Christian ideology and governance?

With the current reality of the governmental secularization being a given, what should we say? Have Christians been bullied into a subjugated position by a voracious minority? Or have Christians been duplicitous in this secularization process?

Given the population majority Christians enjoy in Western culture the answer would seem to imply Christian duplicity. Quite simply Christians have at best failed to engage in the political process to maintain their values and way of life and at worst they have willingly engaged in the political process with today's moral decay being a reflection of a purportedly enlightened but immoral Christian population. Sad to say but it simply might be that the liberal minority has enough liberal non-Christian support from professed Christians to realize their secular agenda.

In either scenario the net result remains the same and the Christian population within Western culture must be declared guilty. Guilty of silent acquiescence or guilty of active conspiracy! So if indeed there does exist a heart for Israel within the Christian West it assuredly does not seem to manifest itself openly nor will it do so from a geo-political perspective. Why? Because a secular government recognizes no Scriptural mandate or reason to support Israel!

Support for Israel from any secular government is then simply a reflection of a temporary geo-political preference or need as opposed to support because of an ideological or covenantal bond.

Support of Israel

Beyond the permanent steadfast support which national Israel will never receive from any secular government, what support then should be expected from the Christian population and various church sectors within Western culture? Support for Israel within Western church communities is of course dependent upon one critical aspect; does the Christian church see a reason to support Israel more or less than perhaps any other national entity?

Within Christian culture there seems to be a significant difference of opinion and understanding as to what "Israel" really is or means. In plain language what then is Israel from a Scriptural perspective?

We know historically that Israel (Yisra-el) is the name G_D (Elohim) gave to Jacob. The name itself can roughly translate to "G_D Rules/Perseveres/Contends". Essentially we see from history that Israel broadly represents:

- 1) a man's name;
- 2) an ethnic grouping of peoples (12 Tribes of the Israelites);
- 3) a geo-political kingdom (Israel);
- 4) a cultural kingdom (Kingdom of G_D) and
- 5) the collective body of G_D's elect or chosen people ... the saints

So if we think in modern terms then; who is and who is not Israel?

To begin we will start by declaring that Spiritual Israel ... the saints ... is essentially the chosen people or elect of G_D. People of any ethnic group who profess in faith that Yeshua HaMashiach (Jesus the Messiah) is indeed the savior of mankind and Lord, Echad (one) with ADONAI ELOHIM! Israel is then all the people adopted into the greater Kingdom ... the people operating under the eternal covenant and whose G_D is the G_D of Israel and not some universal abstracted power. This from a Scriptural perspective is the easy part.

Despite those that would like to declare that only Spiritual Israelites exist today; it should be noted that this notion is incorrect. Undoubtedly an ethnic Israelite would represent a descendant from one of the twelve tribes. Therefore those ethnics, recognized predominantly as Jews, would have to be considered Israelites given their inclusion into the listing above. Still further since we do in fact have a nation of Israel situated within some of the domain of the Biblical Promised Land we therefore also have a geo-political kingdom as well. So what then can we say about this Israel? Is it the spiritual Israel which comprises the body of Yeshua HaMashiach? Is it the Kingdom of G_D which Yeshua tells us is at hand? At first glance we would say no simply because Israel is a secular nation with a secular government. Still further the only recognized religious entities aligned with Israel do not accept Yeshua as the Mashiach of Israel. Essentially then the geo-political entity known as Israel today is almost the same as all the other "nations". Nations that do not submit to the sovereignty of the G_D of Israel. But this entity is not quite (and never will be) the same as all the other nations because of the following reasons:

- 1) The lands they occupy and more are theirs. A gift from G_D and a component of the everlasting covenant. Israel is unlike all other nations because the ethnic contingent is the only people with such a G_D given right and perpetual promise to the land.

- 2) Amongst the geo-political Israelites there is according to Scripture a remnant which G_D keeps unto Himself. A remnant which represents the Israelites in their fullest and most complete form. Israeli/Jew by ethnicity ... circumcised in flesh and circumcised in Spirit.

So essentially Israel represents both a promise and a conduit! Currently, even in their non-believing condition, the people of Israel serve as stewards of the land promised to their ancestors; promised to the seed of Abraham. The seed of Abraham in both a physical and spiritual sense! Currently, even in their non-believing condition, the people of Israel serve as a conduit between the G_D of Israel and the rest of the Earth!

So who are these non-believing Israelites taking care of the land for? These people are tending to the land for two distinct groups of people;

- 1) Those Israelites amongst them that represent the declared righteous remnant in Scripture. The Israelites who are believers of Yeshua HaMashiach!
- 2) The grafted in Israelites who not by birth but by faith become grafted into the family of Israelites through Yeshua HaMashiach.

Together of course both the believing physical and believing non-physical Jews comprise the singular chosen people Israel. Gentiles from a Scriptural perspective as "Gers"/"Strangers" are given provision by ELOHIM to maintain a presence in the land ... just as the native born!

So the logical outcome of such a dynamic is that true believers, not really Christians per se, but members of "Israel", have kinship with some of the people within the land of geo-political Israel. There is also a kinship with the Promised Land as well which geo-political Israel resides within. I repeat ... believing Gentiles have kinship with both the people and land despite the current state of unbelieving Jews or the secular geo-political state of Israel.

So then how should true believers respond to Israel in light of this kinship?

- 1) We should have mercy on them. Mercy for they have been blessed and cursed among people for their selection by and disobedience to G_D. They've been beaten down, scattered, tormented, persecuted and murdered to the point of near extinction. If any people ever deserved mercy it is the ethnic Israelites. If any people ever owed them mercy it is the Spiritual Israelites. In spite of G_D's

plan, which calls for their miraculous and divine deliverance by the hand of Yeshua HaMashiach at the end of this present age, our hearts should break for them for the world has delivered so much misery to them. We must pray for their eyes to be opened and their acceptance of their very own ethnic Mashiach.

- 2) We should stand by them in their time of distress. We do not know which of the ethnic Israelites are our brethren so let us stand with all of them, even those still blinded in disbelief, for in so doing some good fruit may be borne by those who are our brethren. If we do not know which of the Israelites are G_D's own then we must presume that any could be. As such we should see that they are all protected. We should lobby on their behalf. We should not tolerate anti-Semitism. We should financially support them in their times of distress. Etc., etc., ...
- 3) We should stand by them for the sake of the land. Our own promised inheritance as adopted Israelites. They are stewards of the land so why would we want to see harm come to our own national property?
- 4) We should delight in their fullness as both ethnic and Spiritual Israelites. As Paul points out there is much advantage to being a Jew. Why then would people think that this is not true for all time? Of course it is true and this means that we can all benefit from the advantages of the ethnic Jews. If not then Paul is wrong on this point. If he is wrong on this point then what other points is he wrong on? Is then Holy Scripture not invalidated if there is no benefit in being a Jew?
- 5) We must revere them for they are the chosen people. The only chosen people of a distinct ethnic lineage. This makes them special indeed! They are the apple of G_D's eye. Therefore revere them out of nothing else then fear of the Lord! But also revere them for vast blessings from ADONAI have come to the nations because of world Jewry. No other people, small or large, have been the reason for so many blessings and goodness throughout history.
- 6) We must lift them up and drive them to jealousy because their role in G_D's plan is to be the light to the world, a gift to all the nations. A people of Kings and Priests to be set apart.
- 7) We must love them as the first born child that they are and as an older sibling who has gone astray and needs to get themselves together. What joy will there be when the lost brethren return home? Salvation itself! Scripture teaches that the stumbling of the Jew resulted in the reconciliation of the Nations (Goyim) ... but that the reconciliation of the Jew will result in resurrection; life from the dead.

Yes it would seem clear that it is the Jew who will invoke the return of Yeshua when finally from Jerusalem they cry out: "Blessed is HE WHO comes in the NAME of THE LORD!"

- 8) We must love them for our Lord Yeshua HaMashiach is an ethnic Jew. The greatest of all Jews. So essentially any Christian must accept the fact that their destiny and escape from eternal death is due to the saving works of one perfect Jew.

So should we run out and storm our own governments and convince them through any means possible that our policies towards Israel should change? Unfortunately we had our chances and have lost this opportunity. And even if we did not lose this opportunity, let us all understand that while Israel fails to put their trust in G_D there will be no peace for Jerusalem. Only G_D will deliver Israel from the hands of all the nations. So even the best intended support, in a geo-political sense, would be working contrary to G_D's plan if those actions constitute an attempt to "save Israel"! At best we can bless them ... and we should!

No my Israelite brethren ... we must pray for Israel and support them in the best way that we can. We must strive to make a positive difference while understanding that G_D Himself alone will deliver Israel according to His plan and not man's plan! Quite simply a Christian who does not have a tender heart for Israel will be found lacking or even potentially not viewed as being part of Israel!

Needless to say the implications made herein are quite important and if one were to peel back the onion we could see that traditional Christian theology, concerning our personal and communal relationship with ADONAI ELOHIM (The G_D of Israel), is objectively based upon a heresy of replacement dispensation.

Believers in Yeshua must realize that we do not serve some abstracted cosmic power ... but rather the specific G_D of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. We serve a G_D WHO in HIS wisdom and desire chose to interact with the people of Earth through the nation of Israel ... through the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Israel therefore is not some abstracted cosmic entity either ... it is a defined group of Jews and grafted in Gentiles operating under the auspices of the eternal covenant.

Does this sound like us?

Shalom Aleichem ... P. R. Otokletos