

Transcript 178

Shea Houdmann

Welcome to the Got Questions podcast. As you can imagine, Gotquestions.org is receiving a ton of questions about Israel recently or since the attack from Gaza on October 7th Q&A system has been flooded with questions about Israel. And we're going to be covering some of those popular ones today. But focusing on the ones we think are most important. So welcome to the Got Questions Podcast on what does the Bible say about Israel essentially. Joining me today is Jeff, the administrator of bibleref.com, and Kevin, the managing editor for Got Questions Ministry. So, Kevin, why don't you start us off. What is Israel in the Bible? Maybe like, what is? Why is Israel so important in the Bible? And also related to that, why specifically did God choose Israel?

Kevin Stone

Yes. So this is very important question. We do get questions often about you know, why is the Bible so focused on Israel. Weren't there other countries in the in the world back then? And of course the answer, the world was full of people. But why is it always, you know, Israel is the focus of of Scripture? I guess to define Israel, we would say it is the ethnic Israel is defined as the 12 Tribes of Israel. So it goes back to Abraham. God chose Abraham, called him out to be separate from his land and his people. And then said I'm going to start a new nation with you and they're going to, they're going to inhabit this land that you are so journeying in. And so that promise was carried on to his son Isaac. And then it was again repeated that promise again, repeated to Isaac's son, Jacob. Jacob's name then was changed to Israel by God, and then he had twelve sons. Those became the fathers of the 12 Tribes of Israel. So Israel today are the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, who is also called Israel in scripture.

Kevin Stone

Of course, national Israel would have to would be those that are involved with the the nation of Israel today. And then I guess you could think of religious Israel as well, which would include those who are practicing Judaism and proselytes into Judaism and all of you know, these overlap some. These categories overlap some. But we think of Israel, we're usually talking about the descendants of the 12 tribes of of Israel.

Kevin Stone

As for why God chose this particular people, it was to bring the savior into the world, the Messiah. God wanted to establish a setting for the Savior. And so we read about this in Romans Chapter 9, verses four and five that where Paul says that the people of Israel are special because of this quote, theirs is the adoption to sonship. There is 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. And so all the covenants in the temple worship system and the the law that was given, it was all leading up to a place and a person. The place that that God had given them and and the the person was Jesus Christ, the Messiah who is now the savior of the world. And all the world is being blessed through the seed of Abraham in that way. That God's promised to Abraham that he would bless all the nations of the world through him.

Kevin Stone

Why was God choosing all of this? Basically because it was to provide that setting for the Savior. Moses talks to the people of Israel in Deuteronomy Chapter 7 and says the Lord did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples. For you were the fewest of all peoples. But it was because the Lord loved you and kept the oath He swore to your ancestors. So why did God choose Israel? Basically, it was because God simply chose that chose. He chose to go this way. He set his love on the children of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. And he has said I'm going to be faithful to my promises to them. I am going to bring the Savior into the world through this line. And so now we have we we speak of Israel as God's chosen people, which is a good term for that. Also we have the the promise of Jeremiah Chapter 31 where God says I will be the God of all the families of Israel. They'll be my people. And then he says in verse three, speaking to them, I have loved you with an everlasting love. Why did God choose them? Well, because he he chose to, to love them. He chose to provide this way, this means of bringing the Savior into world. And God has been faithful to those promises all through the ages.

Shea Houdmann

Kevin, thank you for that excellent summary. I mean, obviously we could do it a whole episode just on what the Bible says about Israel throughout Scripture it's to focus on the people of Israel. Even in the New Testament, the entire almost entire setting of Jesus life and Ministry and the book of Acts is where it spreads beyond Israel. But it all starts in Israel. The church starts in Israel. Jesus died in Jerusalem, the capital of Israel. So the Bible is very Israel centric. So that answers that question about why is Israel important that both to bring the Messiah in into the world, but also Israel's just to be an essentially like a Kingdom of priests who point people to how to worship the one true God.

Shea Houdmann

But then we have the Nation of Israel ceased to be a nation in essentially AD70, when the Roman, Romans attacked and destroyed Jerusalem. And then for nearly 2000 years there was no nation of Israel. It was, Jews were spread out throughout the entire world, but there was no actual nation of Israel. But then something happened, and Jeff wanted to pick up here. We could do a whole episode on this as well, but the modern nation of Israel, how exactly did that come to be and why is that important?

Jeff Laird

Yeah. As you said, there's there's a lot of information there. So I I know that no matter what level we try to discuss this at, there's going to be a historian somewhere who says that we are glossing over something or oversimplifying. So yes, we're going to gloss over and oversimplify because there's a lot to understand. You kind of have to understand the history within the history. This is one of the most traveled, mentioned, and contested locations on the planet. And it always has been. And there have always been what we would call Semitic people living there. You had the Canaanite civilization, Israel and Judah. And then it gets conquered over and over and over. You have Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece. Eventually you have Rome, and as you were saying, Rome conquers the area. There's some revolutions, there's some revolts. And then in the 1st century or two, Rome really cracks down hard. And that's where you have this major diaspora or expulsion. Where all of these Jewish people are are scattered, forcibly more or less out of what used to be their homeland. After that, the territory comes under Muslim occupation. Then you have the Crusades. Then you have the Ottoman Empire.

Jeff Laird

What starts to happen when you get right about there, about World War One is you start to see a cycle of attack and reprisal and revenge and struggle between people living in that area for control over the territory. And that's in a sense sort of continued that way for about in the last 100 years. And the only thing that's really changed in a really meaningful sense is that we've gone from sort of a either military versus military conflicts, or riots and police reprisals, to now it's basically a cycle of terrorism and government reprisal. So right around the 1920s, you had what they called the mandate. Basically that was just the the post World War One assignment of the United Nations that Britain was going to sort of supervise this territory. And once again gross oversimplification, lot of things to talk about and all of that. The British intended to make parts of Palestine into a Jewish homeland, not necessarily the entire thing, and meant to do the same thing, essentially for Palestinian Arabs. But between those two groups there was infighting.

Jeff Laird

Then after that you get into the lead up to World War 2 and the Holocaust and all the anti-Semitism that was coming along with that. After World War 2, the UN had a plan that they were going to divide that territory between Arabic and Jewish states with Jerusalem being something of a a neutral territory that was going to be administered by the United Nations. That did not work. Arabic people in particular objected to that because of balance of land and things like that. Again, civil wars, skirmishes. Once the legal part of that British control ended, Israel declared independence. And they said, OK, we are now a nation and we are in control of the territory that we say we're in control of. A lot of Arabic people, the persons that we would consider Palestinian, evacuated during that time. And once things started to calm down, they were barred from coming back in. And that in a in a very, very core sense is one of the sticking points about who lives where and who has what right to what land.

Jeff Laird

Immediately other Arabic states attack. There is a A A Arab Israeli war. There's an Armistice in 1949 and you have skirmishes and wars in the 50s and 60s. Late in the 1960s the Arabic nations become politically aggressive towards Israel. Egypt threatens to cut off shipping. Israel says if you do that, it's war. Israel, or Egypt does it anyway. That starts what was now known as the Six Days War. And that time Israel greatly expanded its territory. That also factors into some of the arguments and disputes about what land is and is not supposed to be there. In the early 70s, you had the Yom Kippur War. Where that was in October of 1973, you had an attack by Arabic nations and that was on October 6th. This recent war or spate of violence that's happening in Israel was meant to coincide historically with that event. With the 50th anniversary of that.

Jeff Laird

After this you start to see this drift towards a a little bit more negotiation. Israel and Arab nations sort of realized that it was going to be really risky to fight each other military on military. So they started to sort of lean into negotiations, but this is also where you got into in the 1980s, you get more protests and riots and strikes. This was the earliest days of Hamas. You get the Persian Gulf War where Iraq is trying to bait Israel into fighting. It doesn't happen. Israel declares peace with Jordan in the 90s. And then the Palestinian territories, they have an agreement in theory that they're going to start to give some

Palestinian autonomy, and that again fell through. And Hamas was one of the groups that was sort of instrumental in in knocking that out and not making that work.

Jeff Laird

And then over the 2000s, up till now, you keep seeing this string of suicide bombings and overt terrorism and deliberately targeting civilians and indiscriminate fire of rockets and things like that. That's met with Israeli responses that some people think are overdone and overblown. And that has culminated effectively in Israel blockading and setting off certain parts of the Gaza Strip and saying we are not going to allow anything other than the basic supplies to go in and out. This has obviously caused a humanitarian problem. People are concerned about what this means and what it doesn't mean. So that's how we've wound up in this circumstance where we have the Nation of Israel and then sort of in its northeast and southwest corners, we have these two areas that are contested, that Palestinian persons, Arabic persons believe they have a right to and that Israel does not. A lot of nuance blown over in that and a lot of core strokes. But that's essentially how we've gotten from where we were in Bible times to where we are today.

Shea Houdmann

So Jeff's excellent summary, like you said, trying to summarize 70 ish years of history in a few minutes. Difficult, but well done. Kevin, maybe the next question for you is the most common one we've been receiving. So since October 7th, this article on Got Questions on what is Israel's role in the end times has been viewed over 330,000 times and that's as of the last time I looked a couple days ago. And I looked last month, that article was viewed like 2000 times. So obviously what's going on in Israel right now, which we'll talk a little bit more later, but generally speaking, what is Israel's role in the end times? That's the number one question on people's minds right now.

Kevin Stone

I do hear that a lot, not only from the website but also from people at church saying how this are we is this like the end times? Is things getting set up and all of that. So yes, it's a very common question, very natural question to be asking at this time. So how do? How to summarize all of this? What the Bible says about Israel and the end times? I think we need to start with just saying that yes, Israel does have a role in the end times. In fact, it's a prominent role in the end times. The go to passage on this is Romans, Chapter 11. We'll start reading in verse 25. I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery brothers and sisters, so that you will not be conceited. Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles have come in. And in this way all Israel will be saved. As it is written, the deliverer will come from Zion. He will turn godlessness away from Jacob. This is my covenant with them. When I take away their sins. Verse 28 says, as far as the gospel is concerned, they are enemies. For your sake, speaking to Gentiles. But as far as election is concerned, they the Jews, are loved on account of the patriarchs for God's gifts and his call are irrevocable.

Kevin Stone

So Paul is dealing with two ethnic groups here, the Jews and the Gentiles. He's writing to a Gentile church, the one in Rome. And so he's he. He says that the current state of Israel is one of unbelief. There's a hardening of heart that against the gospel, against receiving their Messiah, but that will not last forever. This hardness of heart will be taken away and all Israel will be saved. Verse 26 is that

promise. And at that time, when the hardening is taken away, then to be part of ethnic Israel is going to be tantamount to being forgiven and saved. So this rejection on the part of Israel, the rejection of the Gospel, has an expiration date. And that's given to us in verse 25 when the full number of Gentiles has been saved. Only God knows when that is going to be. But when God's plan for the gentiles, when God's plan for the church age has been fulfilled, then God is going to turn his attention back to Israel.

Kevin Stone

And the truth of verse 29 I think is important, that God's gifts and calling are irrevocable. This is in the context of God keeping his covenants to Israel and bringing them to a place of repentance and salvation. Israel's current state of unbelief and rebellion against the gospel should never cause us to doubt God's love for Israel and God's faithfulness to his promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and to David for that matter who has promised to have a king on the throne.

Kevin Stone

So what are? What's coming up for in the end times the what's coming up for Israel? How is Israel going to be involved? Well, there is the battle of Gog and Magog that Ezekiel talks about. Ezekiel, chapters 38 and 39. So be a coalition of nations that come against Israel. God intervenes. That alliance of nations is wiped out. And this this is going to happen sometime, it may be before the tribulation starts, maybe at the first part of the tribulation. It might be before or after the rapture. We're not real sure, but it's going to happen sometime, probably before the tribulation starts. And then we have the tribulation itself, this time of trouble that is called in well, Jeremiah chapter 30, verse seven calls it the time of Jacob's trouble. This will have two purposes for Israel to purify them and to purge from them all those that are rebelling against God. So Ezekiel chapter 22, sovereign Lords says you have all become dross, speaking to Israel, I will gather you into Jerusalem and then I will blow on you with my fiery wrath. I will put you inside the city and melt you as silver is melted in a furnace. And you will know that I the Lord have poured out my wrath on you. So there's going to be a gathering to Israel for the purpose of judgment, for the purpose of purifying Israel of their dross. You know Israel, you're silver, but you got a lot of dross. God says I'm gonna have. There's gonna be a time of purification there. And I believe that's the tribulation period that we're that we're talking about. And then there's also a purging in Ezekiel Chapter 20 starting in verse 36, says I judged your ancestors in the wilderness of the land of Egypt. So I will judge you says the sovereign Lord. I will take note of you as you pass under my rod, I will bring you into the bond of the covenant. I will purge you of those who revolt and rebel against me. So this tribulation time, the time of Jacob's trouble, Jeremiah says, is going to be a time of purification for Israel and purging the sinful from Israel. And what begins this time of tribulation is going to be Israel's signing a peace treaty with a man who will eventually be identified as the Antichrist in scripture.

Kevin Stone

We read about that in Daniel Chapter 9. He's going to sign this seven-year peace treaty. He's going to break the covenant with Israel halfway through that time., so 3 1/2 years in. But that's going to be the starting point of the tribulation, the starting point of the time of Jacob's trouble. So during the tribulation, we have 144,000 Jews who are selected from the very beginning of that time of trouble for a special work of God. Revelation Chapter 7 makes it very clear that these 144,000 are taken from the 12 Tribes of Israel. This is an entirely Jewish group. In fact, that group is contrasted in the very next verse,

verse nine, with another group that is comprised of non Jews. People from every tribe, tongue and nation. So this 144,000 then is also referred to in Revelation Chapter 14 as the first fruits to God and the lamb. So the 144,000 Jewish individuals that are protected and sealed and preserved during the Tribulation period are the first wave of Jewish converts. And there's many more to come during the Tribulation period as God purifies and purges. And Israel is being brought back to a faithful, a love of God and recognizing Jesus as their Messiah.

Kevin Stone

The end of the tribulation then, there's a battle of Armageddon referred to in Revelation 16 and 19 were another alliance of nations, this time led by the Antichrist, will gather for an all out assault on Jerusalem. And Antichrist leads the charge. Jerusalem will fall. But the Jews flee to Basra and the region of Petra, Isaiah Chapter 63, Jesus Christ, will return with the armies of heaven. Matthew 25 and in Revelation 19, He's going to defeat the forces of evil. The forces of the Antichrist. His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives. Zechariah 14, he'll cast the anti Christ and the false prophet into the lake of fire. Revelation 19, Satan is bound and then starts the millennial reign, or the Messianic Age. Isaiah Chapter 11, this is the context of the wolf lying down with the lamb and just a peaceful world ruled by Christ. Versus 10 through 12 says this, in that day the root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples. The nations will rally to him and his resting place will be glorious. In that day the Lord will reach out his hand a second time to claim the surviving remnant of his people from Syria, Egypt, Kush, Elam, Babylonia and islands of the Mediterranean. He will raise a banner for the nations. He will gather the exiles of Israel and assemble the scattered people of Judah from the four quarters of the earth. So earlier, and in Ezekiel, we looked at how God has a gathering of his people for judgment, and Isaiah 11, God gathers them a second time for blessing. They come from all four corners of the earth. And then that time of blessing is going to be a time of Romans 11 that promises fulfilled where all Israel will be saved. And he's they're going to be the part of the millennial Kingdom. Ezekiel Chapter 37 has some details about that. Matthew chapter 19, just a little summary here where Jesus says I tell you truly at the renewal of all things, when the son of man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me, that's the disciples will also sit on 12 Thrones judging the 12 Tribes of Israel. Ezekiel chapter 40, there's going to be a millennial temple. Jews are serving there we assume. Ezekiel 48, there's the land and the millennial Kingdom is divided into 12 sections among the 12 tribes of Israel, Dan to the north and Gad to the extreme South. And there's a restoration of all things. So the Jews have quite a bit to do there in the end times. And there are a lot of prophecies concerning their future.

Shea Houdmann

Kevin, I know the three of us have talked about doing a series on the end time. Some of the most frequent last questions, so you did a good job trying to summarize different end times things where each of those, the tribulation, the millennial Kingdom, battle of Armageddon. We do episodes on all of those, and maybe we will. Maybe this can be kind of a jumping off point. But let me go ahead and jump into the key question that's on a lot of people's minds related to the summary is, that is what is going on in Israel right now is that a sign of the end times? So you have Palestinians from Gaza led by Hamas attacking Israel, Israel responding by bombing Gaza, threats from Syria, threats from Lebanon, threats from Hezbollah, threats from the Palestinian territories, threats from other nations saying to Israel is doing too much. Every time there's an explosion of violence in Israel, and as Jeff said earlier, this has

happened again and again, again. This one is worse. This one is the worse, probably in all of Israel's history, except for maybe the six day war, one of the very early ones.

Shea Houdmann

Could it be? Yes, I mean, you look at what's going on, some people think it's all the nations are eventually going to align and attack Israel in response to them supposedly being too brutal towards the Palestinians. At this point you can't say. But it's based on what the Bible does say at some point, Israel is going to be attacked by essentially everyone, and God will step in to deliver them. Could that be now? Yes. Is it now? I don't know. Just as in previous times, some people were fully convinced this is it. This is the one. And then things calm down and we have a few years of peace until the next explosion of violence. Ultimately, we don't know. Rather than speaking with certainty areas where we shouldn't be certain, just keep focusing on pointing people, here's what the God's word says about Israel related to the end times. Here's how we can recognize the signs. So rather than being overly confident where we shouldn't be, it's focused on what God's word says, be expect and be hopeful. Be looking longingly for the return of Christ in the end times, but not being so focused on signs that we see things that aren't there, or exaggerate the matches between what's going on and what Scripture describes. So is right now what's happening in Israel, a sign of the end times? I don't know. I. Could say I hope so, because we should all be longing for Christ's return, but ultimately the answer has to be, we'll see.

Shea Houdmann

But that leads me to this next question that we, I've I've seen several times recently and Jeff, why don't you tackled this one. Not even specifically related to whether it's an end times, as Christians, what should be our response to what is going on in Israel right now? And you know the saying war is hell. I don't think that's an accurate statement because according to Scripture, nothing is as bad as hell. But war is awful. War is terrible. What's happening in Israel and Gaza, it is awful. What should our response as Christians be to what's going on right now?

Jeff Laird

I think some of the things you've highlighted already are important. We got to remember, it's hard for us to know the details of what's really happening, especially when these situations are changing so fast and they're so fluid. We were physically in that region of the world 10 something days ago and it was difficult even being that physically close to fully understand exactly what was happening in in these different areas in these different places. So we have to start from the understanding that we cannot claim that we have infallible understanding. Couple of verses that are important for that perspective, Proverbs 18:13 talks about how if you speak about something without really knowing it, that's foolish. Need to be careful about what we speak about. Proverbs 18:17 talks about how it's easy to seem right until somebody else comes and presents more information. We also have Act 17:11, First John 4:1, John 7:24 those basically combined to tell us that we need to be careful about having cautious skepticism. Don't just believe things, don't just run with things. We need to be careful, cautious, discerning about how we do this, but we're never going to have really deep, detailed information.

Jeff Laird

So what do we do as believers? Well, I think as believers what we can do is we can focus on what we can know and what we should know. And that's basic concept. So as you said, war is terrible. Loss of

innocent life and violence and death and destruction are always something negative. Those are always something bad. So as believers, it's appropriate for us to mourn that people on both sides of the conflict are being harmed and being hurt. That we can be mourning that this is happening, that we can be advocating for restraint and peace and all those things because it doesn't take a lot of deep, detailed knowledge to understand that killing people is bad. And that unfortunately most of the people in these circumstances who are being killed are civilians. They're men, women and children who are sort of caught in the middle of all this. And that's a distinction that we need to keep in mind. There's the people who are really suffering and then to an extent, there are some of the forces that are involved. Hamas is not the Palestinian people. The Israeli Government is not all Jewish people. But it's essentially the Israeli Government and Hamas that are fighting with each other. And it's important to keep that perspective that a lot of what's happening is between those groups and people getting caught in the crossfire. Violence, oppression, evil, all those things are bad no matter who does it. So as Christians, we should be ready and willing to condemn those things. That is not what God intends us to do on Earth. Atrocity and evil, no matter who's perpetrating it, no matter who's doing it, and no matter what their supposed justifications are, is not acceptable. We should be willing to say no, this is not right.

Jeff Laird

Now, that doesn't mean equivocation. So that does not mean that as a believer, we're obligated to say that both sides of the current conflict have an exact perfect moral equivalency. Hamas is deliberately targeting civilians. And then there's all the controversial claims about everything else that we don't have time to get into. But there really isn't a question or a doubt that Hamas is choosing to involve not only Israeli citizens, but their own people. They've said that they understand that when they do these things, there will be reprisals, and to them, that's part of the cost of winning their freedom is inviting these things. When you make a surprise attack and you attack people at a concert and people commuting back and forth to work, that is simply evil. That's satanic level of evil on the most basic level. That's not difficult to condemn.

Jeff Laird

It is OK for us as believers to also be very concerned or critical of things that Israel is doing in response to that. That is OK. When we read the Bible, Israel does a lot of things as a nation that are not OK. They do some pretty heinous things in their history. God's love for Israel does not change in that sense that he still has them as his chosen people. We as believers can support Israel in the sense that we understand their value to God, that we believe they have a right to exist, that we want what's best for Israel, that we appreciate who and what they are in the world. But that does not mean that as believers we are obligated to say whatever the modern nation of Israel does in any form, at any time, in any shape must be absolutely OK. We're not supposed to give them just this blanket carte blanche agreement. Nor are we supposed to say, well, this is different so everything that they do is wrong.

Jeff Laird

So one of the things that I'm seeing in conversations about this is that most people's opinion about what's happening right now is it's mostly just anti. In other words, people are either anti Israel or they're anti Hamas. And most of what they're saying and doing is really just driven by those feelings. But it's very politicized. Unfortunately, the Palestinian and Israeli conflict has sort of gotten divided up into political tribalism around the world, and people are just sort of assumed that they have to support one

side or the other based on some of their political beliefs. So when that side does something bad, it's automatically condemned in the strongest terms. When the other side does something bad, there's reasons and there's people shrugging it off. There is awful things happening on both sides of the issue. So as Christian believers, it is more incumbent on us to recognize human suffering, pray for peace. To do what we can do, which frankly from where we are, is almost nothing other than prayer, not that prayer is nothing. But prayer is about the only thing that most of us in the world can do in this circumstance and take that as our primary responsibility. Do what we can insofar as we can to pursue peace.

Jeff Laird

And that's parallel to our lives in general. God didn't call on us as Christians to to judge or save or fix the entire world personally. It's not my responsibility as a Christian to evangelize every single person or to fix every single, every single thing in the world. What God does is he puts me in a place, in a time with people and says I need you to interact there in that circumstance and with those situations. And then I leave the results to God. When it comes to the end times, I I could be dead in 30 minutes. I could be dead in. 30 weeks. I could be dead in 30 years. I need to be ready and live the way God wants me to. So as believers, I think we should respond to this by being careful about arrogance, ignorance, over politicizing what's going on. This is human suffering. This is not a time to own the red, blue left, right, sort of situations that are going on here. We we should recognize that Israel ought to be supported by Christians, but not necessarily enabled. And that shouldn't make us be afraid to criticize when things are happening that are legitimately just irresponsible terrorism. We can pray, we can work as much as we can for peace. And through all that, understand that what's going to eventually happen is going to have layers and and nuances to it that we are just not connected to. It's frustrating to say that to some extent most of the world is going to have to just put its hands up and say, Lord, I don't know how you're going to settle this, but I hope you do very soon. But in a sense, that's almost all we can really do.

Shea Houdmann

Jeff well said. In a very difficult issue and like I could hear like your passion, your care and what you were saying and I I feel the same way. On the one hand you have Scripture saying about Israel the decedents of Abraham. Those who bless you, I will bless. Those who curse you, I will curse. Yes. Christians absolutely should recognize that God has a plan for Israel and still has a plan for Israel, and we should support Israel. We should be pro Israel. But that does not mean that everything they do is correct. And as you said throughout Scripture, Israel did many things that God did not approve of. Because it's not a blank check, Israel can do whatever they want in any situation. At the same time, supporting Israel's right to exist, supporting Israel's right to defend itself, supporting Israel's right to try to bring justice to the perpetrators of heinous acts of evil. But it's awful. But we should as Christians feel compassion for the Palestinian people, not Hamas, the Palestinian people who are suffering as a result of so most of them would not have supported actions like this. Human lives, people who need Jesus. That's that's the perspective that's difficult to remember when yes, support Israel, be pro Israel, at the same time recognizing both Israel and the Palestinians largely rejected Jesus as Messiah. So as Christians our utmost call is to share the gospel, to promote peace, to be the hands and feet of Jesus and difficult situations. Provide aid to provide care to both sides.

Jeff Laird

Those people are all image bearers of God. Every single person involved in the circumstances over there is valuable and meaningful to God, and there's no sense in which believers should be callous or insensitive to that level of suffering. I what's going to happen in the end, and I don't know, but love and care for those people and their souls and their spirits and their lives. And that should really be the thing that's characterizing our response.

Shea Houdmann

GotQuestions.org is unashamedly Pro Israel, in terms of what the Bible says about Israel, what the Bible says about Israel's role in the end times, what the Bible says about Israel's right to exist. That does not prevent us from also having compassion to what the people in Palestine in Gaza are experiencing right now. And recognizing that we live in a sinful world and that only the return of Jesus, the Messiah who came through Israel, that's the only true solution to this. So in that sense, come Lord Jesus. In another sense, let's look as Christians for ways to minister to people on both sides and to point people to Jesus as the solution to both war in this sense, but also to the core problem of sin which is driving this.

Shea Houdmann

Jeff, Kevin, thank you for joining me for a good conversation, difficult conversation, probably a jumping off point into future conversations about the end times. But this is been the Got Questions podcast on what does the Bible say about Israel and its role in the end times. Got questions? The Bible has answers and we'll help you find them.