LET'S TALK ABOUT IT



Part 3 • November 15, 2026 | Pastor Jason Smotherman

ISRAEL

WHAT SHOULD OUR ATTITUDE BE TOWARD ISRAEL?

ROMANS 11:17–29 (NKJV)

17 And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree, 18 do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you.

19 You will say then, "Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in." 20 Well said. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear. 21 For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either. 22 Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off. 23 And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. 24 For if you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, who are natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?

25 For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. 26 And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written:

"The Deliverer will come out of Zion,

And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob;

27 For this is My covenant with them,

When I take away their sins."

28 Concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers. 29 For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

Our attitude toward Israel should be shaped by God's Word, not by political affiliations, cultural opinions, or current events. We must understand the difference between God's covenant faithfulness and His approval of human behavior.

1. WE MUST UNDERSTAND WHAT A COVENANT IS

Genesis 12:1–3 | Genesis 17:7–8 | Romans 11:28–29

- A covenant is a binding agreement that establishes a relationship with promises and obligations.
- God's covenant with Abraham included promises concerning descendants, land, and blessing to the nations.
- God's faithfulness to His covenant does not depend upon humanity's ability to remain faithful.
- We cannot understand Israel's place in Scripture without understanding God's covenants.

You cannot properly understand God's relationship with Israel until you understand the covenant He made with Abraham.

2. WE MUST RECOGNIZE THAT GOD'S COVENANTS HAVE IMPLICATIONS FOR BOTH ISRAEL AND US

Galatians 3:7–9, 14, 29 | Romans 11:17–24 | Ephesians 2:11–22

- Through Jesus Christ, Gentile believers become recipients of the spiritual blessings promised to Abraham.
- Paul describes Gentile believers as branches grafted into an olive tree.
- We do not replace Israel; we participate in God's promises through Christ.
- The New Covenant brings salvation to both Jews and Gentiles through faith in Jesus Christ.

We are not in competition with Israel for the promises of God. We are beneficiaries of God's faithfulness.

3. GOD'S COVENANT DOES NOT MEAN HE ENDORSES EVERY ACTION WE TAKE

Amos 3:2 | Isaiah 1:11–17 | Romans 2:6–11

- Throughout Scripture, God repeatedly confronted Israel over injustice, idolatry, and disobedience.
- Being chosen by God never meant being exempt from accountability to God.
- God's covenant faithfulness should never be confused with unconditional approval.
- The same standard applies to the Church. God loves us, but He does not endorse everything we do.

God's commitment to His people is not an endorsement of every decision His people make. We can acknowledge God's covenant relationship with Israel without assuming that every action of the modern Israeli government reflects God's will.

4. DISOBEDIENCE CAN KEEP US FROM WALKING IN THE FAVOR OF GOD

Deuteronomy 28:1–2, 15 | Romans 11:20–22 | Hebrews 3:16–19

- Israel's history demonstrates that covenant promises do not eliminate the consequences of disobedience.
- An entire generation experienced deliverance from Egypt but failed to enter the Promised Land because of unbelief.
- God's mercy does not remove the necessity of obedience.
- As believers, we must never presume upon God's grace while deliberately rejecting His Word.

Being in covenant with God does not mean we automatically walk in the blessings of obedience. God's promises should produce humility, gratitude, faith, and obedience rather than entitlement.

WHAT SHOULD OUR ATTITUDE BE TOWARD ISRAEL?

Romans 11:18 — "Do not boast against the branches." (NKJV)

Our attitude should be characterized by four things:

- **Gratitude** — We recognize the Jewish roots of our faith and God's faithfulness to His promises.
- **Humility** — We remember that we have been grafted in by grace.
- **Discernment** — We distinguish between supporting God's covenant purposes and endorsing every human action.
- **Prayer** — We pray for the peace of Jerusalem, the salvation of the Jewish people, and justice and mercy for everyone affected by conflict.

We do not have to approve of everything Israel does to acknowledge God's covenant with Israel. And we do not have to deny God's covenant with Israel to hold Israel accountable to the righteousness of God.

God's faithfulness to His covenant never removes His expectation of righteousness from His people.

We do not have to approve of everything Israel does to acknowledge God's covenant with Israel.

And we do not have to deny God's covenant with Israel to hold Israel accountable to the righteousness of God.

God's covenant is not the same thing as God's endorsement.

But before we apply that truth to Israel, we need to apply it to ourselves.

God is in covenant with us through Jesus Christ, and He does not endorse our mess either.

- He does not endorse our pride because we are His.
- He does not endorse our bitterness because we are His.
- He does not endorse our injustice, compromise, hatred, greed, or disobedience because we are His.

In fact, covenant should never make us less accountable.

Covenant calls us to greater faithfulness.

Israel's failures did not make God unfaithful. And neither do ours.

That is the beauty of covenant. God remains faithful even when His people are a mess. But His faithfulness is never permission to remain a mess.

Grace does not mean God endorses everything we do. Grace means God refuses to give up on what He is making us into.

So when we look at Israel, we should do so with gratitude, humility, discernment, and prayer, not arrogance.

Because the God who is faithful to His covenant with Israel is the same God who has been unbelievably faithful to us.

He is faithful to His covenant.

He is faithful to His promises.

And He is faithful enough to confront His people when we are wrong.