

I. Standing

- A. Standing with Israel can mean different things to different people. I thought it would be helpful to examine the idea biblically so you have some sort of a plumbline and starting place. For me, a biblical term that best describes the heart to “stand” with Israel is to honor them rightly.
1. Honor - To assess the proper weight or importance to a person or subject and render a response in proportion to the assessed importance.
- B. In His letter to the Roman church, Paul lays out eight truths that are meant to produce honor in the hearts of the non-Jewish believers towards Israel. I believe that these truths are very significant and incredibly helpful in defining what it means to stand with or honor Israel. The significance of this really hits home when we consider the “to them belongs” statements before each truth. As Gentiles, we have become “partakers” of these truths but they “belong” to Israel. (Rom. 9:4-5)
1. To them belongs the Adoption - This speaks of God's sovereign irrevocable election and forming of Israel as His own special people. As Gentiles we have been grafted into this family, so in a sense they are the older siblings who have been a part of the family for generations.
 2. To them belongs the Glory - God chose to reveal multiple aspects of who He is and what He is like to this people and this people alone for hundreds of years. God chose to reveal his name, presence, character, righteousness, power, words, and activity to Israel and through Israel. All God did and said through His activity and leadership to Israel spoke of Jesus. Israel became the witness to the earth of who Jesus is and the work of redemption that He would do. In other words, they were the vehicle through which God revealed His glorious plan to the earth.
 3. To them belongs the Covenants - God made multiple covenants with Israel and for Israel including the New Covenant. The covenant that He made with Abraham (Through your family I will bless (restore) the earth) and David (A child from your lineage will forever sit on your throne) are both unconditional irrevocable covenants. The Mosaic Covenant (Instructions/Law) was given for the people to have blessing and life. Finally, the New Covenant through which we all have been brought into

the blood of Jesus was meant for Israel and was extended to all who would believe.

4. To them was given the Law - God's commands and instructions were meant to bring life and blessing to those who would walk in them. They were given to Israel because of God's desire to bring life and blessing upon them.
5. To them belongs the Worship - They were given the pattern of worship that allowed them to fellowship with God. This pattern of worship has been extended to the Gentiles but it belongs to Israel. I believe that this is also a reference to the sacrificial system which reveals the power and work of Jesus in His death and resurrection.
6. To them belongs the Promises - In my opinion, this truth motivates me the most to intercede and cry out for Israel to turn to Jesus and be saved. The promises of salvation and restoration belong to them. A thousand years into the restoration of all things, I will be experiencing the fullness of joy and experience of life on the earth as the nations are being led and disciplined by Jesus. In that moment, I am going to remind myself that I am walking in the promises that belonged to the Israelites.
7. To them belongs the Patriarchs - Have you ever considered that all the heroes of our faith are Jewish? It is this people group who bore the brunt of persecution and rejection for their beliefs for hundreds of years. The patriarchs were the keepers of scripture and without them we would have nothing. The Fathers of our faith were the ones who received the promises and held the line of faith positioning their children to receive them. What honor do we owe the Patriarchs of our faith?
8. Jesus our Saviour, our King, and our GOD is an Israelite - This is one of the most explicit statements of Jesus' deity in the New Testament. However, in its context, the point of this verse is the upholding and right honor given to Israel. Our eternally blessed God, through the incarnation, will forever be a Jewish man. How does He feel about His personal lineage and culture? How much more do you want your own family to be saved who don't know the Lord?

II. Apostolic Burden

- A. I refer to the first three verses of Romans chapter 9 as the apostolic burden for Israel. Paul makes it clear that he is so burdened with God's heart for His people, that He truly would give his eternal existence with Jesus up voluntarily, if he could exchange it for his people to come into faith in Jesus. Paul so understands the weight and implications of this statement that he adds the disclaimer that he is not lying or exaggerating.
1. The Divine Burden - We must understand that this is not a unique burden that only Paul carried but rather is the burden of God that has been given to Paul through the Spirit. This is God's burden, the burden of the Man of sorrows acquainted with grief, who entered Jerusalem to lay down His life as He wept over their current state. (Ex. 32:32; Jer. 9:1; Hos. 11:8; Lk 19:41)
 2. No Greater Love - Jesus tells us there is no greater level of love than to give your life for the life of another. I believe this is what Paul has in mind when he reveals God's plan to bring the Gentiles into the "fullness", and through their love, provoke Israel and open their eyes to the truth of who the Messiah is. (Deut. 32:20-21; Jhn 15:13; Rom. 11:25-36)
- B. It is clear from the message of Romans, chapters 9-11 that the plan of God is to give this apostolic burden to the worldwide Gentile church. As a result, there will be a standing with and a provoking of Israel that causes the entire nation to turn to Jesus and understand that He is their Messiah. I believe there is a great need right now for the Gentile church to humble themselves and ask for the impartation of the fullness of understanding and love for the Jewish people as they understand God's will in this mystery.