

Israel Divide in the Millennial Generation (15 Minutes)

Thank you, International Christian Embassy of Jerusalem, Susan Michael, Arlene Samuels, Dr. Tony Crisp, and all other ICEJ leaders involved with inviting me to address you today. I am honored and grateful to deliver this address about the "Israel Divide in the Millennial Generation."

I. Is there an Israel divide amongst millennials?

Yes. This is true both anecdotally and empirically.¹

A. Anecdotally

I can just feel it in the midst of conversations amongst fellow people born between 1980 and 2000.

B. Empirically

¹ <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/05/23/5-facts-about-how-americans-view-the-israeli-palestinian-conflict/>

“Millennials are the only generational cohort in which fewer than half (43%) sympathize more with Israel. And about a quarter of Millennials (27%) sympathize more with the Palestinians, the highest share of any generation.”

II. Why is there an Israel divide amongst millennials?

Millennials are taught a pejorative view of Israel due to their views theologically, politically, and technologically.

A. Theological

i. Reformed Theology

Soteriology is the study of salvation. There are three main veins of soteriology: Arminianism, Sandy Creek Theologians, and Calvinists. Arminians have an emphasis that man has free will to choose God. Sandy Creek theologians hold to a belief that a healthy tension exists between the free will of man to receive Jesus and the omniscience of God. Calvinists emphasize how God has already

elected or predestined who will go to heaven or who will not, while putting very little emphasis on man's responsibility or opportunity to choose Jesus Christ.

Calvinism has become extremely popular amongst younger Christians.² A hot movement is taking place called "The Young, Restless, Reformed Movement."³

If you read Calvinist leaders, you will see again and again that part of their line of thought is supersessionism, also known as "Replacement Theology." Reformed theology leads to a belief in Replacement Theology.

ii. Replacement Theology

Replacement Theology is the most underrated danger in the theological world. It is the belief that the Church

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<https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2006/september/42.32.html>

³ E. Ray Clendenen and Brad J. Waggoner, Gen. Ed., Calvinism: A Southern Baptist Dialogue (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2008).

has replaced Israel. In other words, there is no value in Israel any longer.

Listen to this quote from of one of the leaders of Reformed theology, Martin Luther, a noted replacement theologian and anti-Semite:

Listen, Jew, are you aware that Jerusalem and your sovereignty, together with your temple and priesthood, have been destroyed for over 1,460 years? . . . For such ruthless wrath of God is sufficient evidence that they assuredly have erred and gone astray. . . . Therefore this work of wrath is proof that the Jews, surely rejected by God, are no longer his people, and neither is he any longer their God.⁴

Are you tracking this with me?
Reformed theology is extremely

⁴ Martin Luther, "On the Jews and their Lies," in *LW* 47:138–39.

popular with millennials. Reformed theologians teach that Israel has been replaced by the Church. Therefore, it teaches Israel is useless.

Replacement theology leads to a distorted ecclesiology.

iii. Eschatology

Have you ever been to the top of Mt. Megiddo? As they say in the Hebrew, "Har Megiddo," translated as Mt. Megiddo?

If you have a distorted soteriology, it leads to replacement theology, which leads to an askew eschatology. Mt. Megiddo is utterly pointless to replacement theologians. It means nothing to them.

Have you noticed there is less talk about the end times than there was a generation ago? That's because the end times matter less when you don't believe in a literal Israel.

B. Political

Most millennials are moderate or liberal, politically. Moderates and liberals are less likely to support Israel.⁵

Even look at the difference between President Obama's lack of support of Israel compared with President Trump's strong support of her.

Barack Obama once uninvited Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu from a visit to the White House. Meanwhile, President Trump moved the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem today.

Politically speaking, millennials are less likely to support Israel because most are moderates or liberals.

C. Technological

Millennials are addicted to their phones. So are many other generations. As millennials allow the ubiquity of the smart phone to

⁵ Ron Lipsman, *Liberal Hearts and Conservative Brains: The Correlation Between Age and Political Philosophy* (Lincoln, NE: iUniverse Books, 2007).

brainwash them on average six hours per day, the people who run their favorite apps and websites determine much of what they believe via the algorithms they implement on various social media platforms.⁶

There is a divide amongst millennials' support of Israel due to their views theologically, politically, and technologically.

III. What must be done to remedy the Israel divide amongst millennials?

A. Live Theology

i. Prayer

As you live out your theology, this means that when you say you “pray for the peace of Jerusalem,” you actually do it. Furthermore, you lead others to do it.

ii. Support

⁶ Jean M. Twenge, *iGen: Why Today's Super-Connected Kids Are Growing Up Less Rebellious, More Tolerant, Less Happy—and Completely Unprepared for Adulthood* (New York: Atria Books, 2017).

It means when you say you believe Israel is the apple of God's eye, and you give money and time toward causes that push forward our beliefs.

iii. Teach

Teach of your love of Christ to other people, and that you love His Holy Land.

B. Lobby Politically

Vote for candidates who are pro-Israel and support them. Don't just assume that if someone is a Republican that they love Israel. Do your research. Read their websites. Email their office. Always vet before you vote.

Turn to your neighbor and repeat that, "Always vet before you vote." Say it again, "Always vet before you vote."

C. Leverage Technology

Use wisdom as you discuss Israel on your social media outlets. Don't be overbearing. Be kind and loving, yet firm and be bold at the same time.

Discuss what is happening in Israel on your social media accounts. Use your influence for God. This would include positively leveraging technology—especially social media.

Conclusion

I close by telling you a brief story of something that happened in Israel. This closing story will help all of us with one key word: OVERCOME.

We must overcome obstacles getting in the way of bringing glory to God and supporting His Holy Land.

Numbers 14:24 says, But my servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit and has followed me fully, I will bring into the land into which he went, and his descendants shall possess it.

You can tell the size and character of a man by what it takes to stop him.

Caleb was a man who could not be stopped. He overcame every obstacle. He was 85 years old, but still strong.

God promised Caleb a piece of the land, according to this Bible verse.

Caleb chose Hebron. He said, "I want that mountain."

Caleb chose a mountain worthy of a spiritual challenge. He chose a mountain that God had promised specifically.

Just as the millennial supporters of Israel have much to overcome, so did Caleb.

1. Overcome Friends

Some friends **discourage** us in words, and in habits. Some **disappoint** us. Some **doubt** us.

Caleb was ridiculed. They wanted to stone him.

If you choose to support Israel with all your heart, expect opposition from some friends.

2. Overcome Delays

The delay in time for Caleb was really long.

Do not be defeated by time. 40 years elapsed after God promised. 38 years were in the desert.

3. Overcome Age

At 85, Caleb should've been asking for pajamas instead of a sword. Caleb would not relax until the promise was fulfilled. God kept him healthy and strong.

Joshua 14:11–12 says, ¹¹ *I am still as strong today as I was in the day that Moses sent me; my strength now is as my strength was then, for war and for going and coming.* ¹² *So now give me this hill country of which the LORD spoke on that day, for you heard on that day how the Anakim were there, with great fortified cities.*

It may be that the LORD will be with me, and I shall drive them out just as the LORD said."

Age is no barrier for doing God's will. No matter if you're a millennial or any other generational group, God wants to use you to expand His Kingdom. Expanding His Kingdom includes standing up for Israel.

4. Overcome the Enemy

Gaze at God's promises while glancing at your problems. The more we focus on God's promises, the smaller our problems become.

You have a great God. He is bigger than your obstacles. **1 John 4:4 says, *Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.***

God bless you.