

**Do not become Edom : Why Christians must not turn against
Israel in the hour of Jacob's wound** *by Emir Phillips*
A Summary Review by F. Scott Nickerson

**“There are moments when the Church reveals not only what it believes, but
what kind of heart it has become. This is one of those moments.”**

This recent article and statement by Emir Phillips appeared at All Israel News at a very timely moment in the current events surrounding Israel and our changing attitudes toward Israel across North America. I will try to summarize Emir's thoughts and statements in this article and give you a lot of it in hope that you can use some of these meaningful perspectives in your own understanding and to share with others who may be wondering about our support for Israel.

Since October 7, many Christians have found themselves disoriented. They see images of war. They hear accusations against Israel. They grieve civilian suffering. They recoil from political slogans. They feel the moral exhaustion of a conflict too old for easy answers and too bloody for cheap ones.

But beneath the arguments about Gaza, Hamas, hostages, Iran, ceasefires, settlements, civilian casualties, international law, and Israeli politics, a deeper biblical question presses on the Church:

When Israel is wounded, what kind of brother do we become?

Emir digs into how Edom responded to the attacks on brother Judah during the Babylonian siege of Jerusalem and destruction of the temple around 586 BCE.

The prophet Obadiah deals with this subject.

Obadiah is only twenty-one verses long, but its message is like a sharp knife. Its target is Edom, the people descended from Esau, brother of Jacob. That detail matters. Edom is not condemned merely as a foreign enemy. Edom is condemned as a brother who watched Jerusalem fall and found satisfaction in the sight.

What Emir deals with is what Edom did to Judah, who really was under judgment. Jerusalem had sinned. The prophets had warned of idolatry, violence, injustice, covenant-breaking, and spiritual adultery. Babylon did not catch God by surprise. But God's judgment on Judah did not authorize Edom's cruelty.

So what did Edom do to Judah?

Edom stood aloof. Edom gloated. Edom entered the gate. Edom looted. Edom cut off fugitives. Edom handed over survivors. Edom saw a brother wounded under God's rod and decided to become the rod's assistant. That is why Obadiah matters now.

Emir says, Christians do not have to defend every action of every Israeli government but there is a difference between criticizing policy and training one's heart to despise a people.

Emir says,

“Many Christians will not betray Israel with swords. They will do it with tone. They will do it with posture. They will do it by becoming fluent in every accusation against Israel and strangely uncurious about every murderous terror action against the Jews. They will do it by treating Jewish fear as manipulation, Jewish grief as propaganda, Jewish sovereignty as a scandal, and Jewish survival as a negotiable inconvenience.”

Obadiah has a word for that, it is called betrayal.

The wound God overturns

Scripture teaches that God often defeats evil through the very wound evil makes. Emir goes on to make a great point about how God works through wounds he allows. God allowed Joseph to be betrayed by his brothers, sold into Egypt, falsely accused, imprisoned, and forgotten — yet through that wound God preserved life. Pharaoh enslaved Israel — yet through that bondage God reveals Himself as Redeemer and brings His people through the sea.

At Calvary, the pattern reaches its holy and terrible summit. The powers bruise the Son. They strip Him, mock Him, nail Him to wood, and seal Him in death. Then through that wound, Yeshua “disarmed the rulers and authorities” and triumphed over them (Colossians 2:15).

That does not make the wound good. It makes God victorious and sovereign through all the wounds that His people have endured.

Christians must speak carefully here. The Holocaust was not good. Auschwitz was not useful. Six million murdered Jews were not the raw material for a political outcome. No resurrection of a state compensates for the murder of a child.

Emir declares: And yet **the Holocaust exposed, with unbearable finality, the lethal cost of Jewish statelessness.**

Zionism existed before Hitler. Jewish attachment to the land existed long before Europe, long before Islam, long before the United Nations. The Holocaust did not create the Jewish claim to Israel. But it revealed what happens when the Jewish people must depend entirely on the mercy of nations that have repeatedly failed them.

The serpent meant annihilation. History answered: the Jews live.

The enemy sought a world emptied of Jews.

History answered with Hebrew in the streets of Jerusalem, Jewish children born in the land of their fathers, and a state that exists so Jews need not beg the nations for permission to survive.

That is not an argument for Israel's innocence.

It is a testimony to God's power to overturn the wound.

Emir points out that we must remember history and connection Jewish people have with the Land. This is a vital point in our case for the Jewish State.

A great deal of Christian confusion occurs when believers speak as though modern Israel were a detachable political project, scarcely related to Abraham, David, Isaiah, Jerusalem, the Temple, Jesus, Paul, or the prophets.

A very important point Emir makes here on the connection of Yeshua to Israel.

The New Testament does not detach Jesus from Israel. Matthew begins with Abraham and David for a reason. Jesus was circumcised according to the Law. He was born of the line of David. He taught in Galilee and Judea. He went up to Jerusalem. He wept over that city. He died there. He rose there.

Jesus Himself says, "salvation is from the Jews" (John 4:22).

Paul says the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, the promises, the patriarchs, and the Messiah according to the flesh belong to Israel (Romans 9:4-5).

Romans 11 should sober every believer. Paul asks whether God has rejected His people and answers, "By no means." He says Gentiles have been grafted into Israel's olive tree. He warns them not to boast over the natural branches. He

says Israel remains beloved for the sake of the patriarchs and that “the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable” (Romans 11).

Romans 11 is not a military manual or a border map. It does not settle every modern policy dispute. But it absolutely forbids a certain church posture.

It forbids arrogance.

It forbids replacement theology.

It forbids the Church from imagining itself as a new people permitted to sneer at the old.

The Church does not own the root. The root supports the Church.

The land itself is not incidental in Scripture. God does not merely promise Abraham a private spiritual experience. He promises land, seed, nationhood, and blessing. He repeats the promise to Isaac and Jacob. He disciplines Israel in the land, exiles Israel from the land, promises regathering to the land, and ties Israel's continuing identity not to Israel's perfection but to His own faithfulness (Genesis 15; Genesis 17; Jeremiah 31:35-37; Ezekiel 36).

Exile is not cancellation.

Discipline is not divorce. (Scott.: at least for Judah)

Judgment is not replacement.

God does not forget because Israel fails.

Modern Zionism was not created by the Holocaust. Theodor Herzl published *The Jewish State* in 1896, and the First Zionist Congress met in Basel in 1897. Decades later, the United Nations adopted Resolution 181, recommending partition into Jewish and Arab states, and Israel was admitted to the United Nations in 1949 under Resolution 273.

Those legal facts do not replace Scripture. But they do expose the falsehood that Israel appeared from nowhere as a guilty Western improvisation.

Israel is older than the modern state system. Older than the United Nations. Older than the empires that scattered her. Older than the nations now presuming to instruct her in moral existence.

Mercy is not amnesia.

A pro-Israel Christian witness must not become careless about Palestinian suffering. Palestinian civilians are not abstractions. Their children are not Hamas. Their grief is not imaginary. Palestinian Christians deserve particular concern from the global Church.

But Christian mercy must be governed by biblical truth, not by the moral vocabulary of the age.

Scripture does not present the land of Israel as interchangeable territory to be reassigned by international exhaustion, revolutionary slogans, demographic pressure, or the latest consensus of diplomats. The land is bound to covenant. God gave it to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and their descendants. The prophets rebuked Israel fiercely, but they did not erase the promise.

Having compassion for Palestinians does not require Christians to deny Jewish covenantal title. Sympathy for suffering does not require us to pretend the Jewish people are foreign trespassers in Judea, Samaria, Jerusalem, or the land promised to their fathers.

The land is not an idol. But it is certainly not nothing.
It is the land of patriarchs and prophets. The land where David reigned. The land where the Temple stood. The land where Jesus walked, wept, died, and rose.
The land from which the Gospel went to the nations.

Human Rights Watch concluded that Hamas's military wing and other Palestinian armed groups committed numerous war crimes and crimes against humanity against civilians during the assault on southern Israel. Families were slaughtered. Hostages were taken. Communities were brutalized. Jewish fear stopped being theoretical.

And yet much of the world immediately began preparing its excuses.
At the same time, antisemitism remains historically elevated. The ADL's 2025 Audit of Antisemitic Incidents says 2025 was the third-highest year on record since ADL began tracking incidents in 1979. The American Jewish Committee's 2025 survey found that 93% of American Jews say antisemitism is a problem in the United States. And Gallup reported in 2026 that American sympathies had shifted sharply away from Israel and toward Palestinians.

Public opinion does not settle theology. But it shapes the air Christians breathe.
And some of that air now carries an old smell.

**Every age invents the vocabulary by which it
excuses its treatment of the Jews.**

Medieval Europe spoke the language of blood libel. Modern racial antisemitism spoke the language of biology. Soviet anti-Zionism spoke the language of anti-imperialism. Our age often speaks the language of liberation, decolonization, and human rights. Add to that apartheid and genocide accusations.

Some of that language can name real injustices. But when it becomes a grammar in which the one Jewish state must disappear, Jewish fear is mocked, Jewish history is edited out, and Jewish sovereignty is treated as uniquely intolerable, something old has learned a new accent.

Obadiah heard it in Edom's laughter. Paul heard it in Gentile boasting. The Church should hear it now and listen to itself.

What Edom should have done

So what should Edom have done when Jerusalem fell?

- It should have grieved.
- It should have sheltered fugitives.
- It should have opened the road.
- It should have given bread and water, not directions to the executioner.

It should have said, "My brother is under God's rod; I will not deepen the wound." That is the analogy Christians need.

When Israel suffers, Christians should not become rhetorical roadblocks. We should not become digital informants for Babylon. We should not become theologians of Jewish humiliation. We should not stand at the crossroads of history explaining why the fleeing deserve no shelter.

- We should pray.
- We should tell the truth.
- We should resist antisemitism.
- We should defend Jewish life without denying civilian suffering.
- We should criticize injustice without savoring Israel's disgrace.

We should remember that the Jewish people are not incidental to our faith but native to it.

Abraham walked there.

David ruled there.

Isaiah prophesied there.

Jesus taught there, died there, rose there, and will reign as King.

The apostles preached from there.

The nations were blessed through Israel's Messiah, Israel's Scriptures, Israel's covenants, Israel's promises, and Israel's God.

- Love Israel, then, not because Israelis are flawless. They are not.
- **Love Israel because God is faithful.**
- Love Israel because Jewish survival is one of history's great contradictions of the powers.
- Love Israel because the people marked for disappearance have not disappeared.
- Love Israel because the wound did not get the last word.

God judged Judah.

But He also judged Edom for savoring Judah's fall.

The warning has not expired.

- Do not become Edom with a cross around your neck.
- Do not become Edom with a seminary degree.
- Do not become Edom with a microphone, a platform, and a contemptuous grin.
- Do not boast against the branches.
- Do not love the Jewish Messiah while training your heart to despise the Jewish people.

The Holocaust was Satanic negation: no Jews, no Israel, no covenant witness, no restoration, no future.

The rebirth of Israel was historical contradiction: the Jews live.

That is not a blank check for a state. It is not a denial of civilian suffering. It is a claim about the deeper grammar of providence: God often writes resurrection in the very place where the enemy thought he had written extinction.

So in this hour, the Church should ask itself a terrible question.

When Jewish blood cries out, when Israel buries her dead, when Palestinian civilians suffer, when the nations rage, when slogans replace truth, when the old hatred learns new vocabulary — are we becoming witnesses?

Or are we becoming Edom?

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Emir J. Phillips is a finance professor and writer with a longstanding interest in biblical theology and Israel in Scripture, with a focus on the prophetic storyline of the Old and New Testaments. His work aims to help evangelicals read contemporary events through careful exegesis — especially passages such as Deuteronomy 30, Ezekiel 36–37, Zechariah 12, and Romans 9–11.