

**ALL AFRICA CONFERENCE OF CHURCHES
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**AFRICAN CHURCHES ON THE STATE OF ISRAEL AND
PALASTINE**

A KEYNOTE ADDRESS

BY

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Title: “Israel is People of God”

Your Excellencies, fellow church leaders, brothers and sisters in Christ, and partners in the gospel across our beloved continent of Africa.

I bring you greetings in the matchless name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. It is with deep humility and a profound sense of spiritual duty that I address this distinguished assembly of African Christian leadership under the banner of the **All-Africa Conference of Churches**.

Today, I speak to you not just as a Bishop or as a servant of the Nigerian church, but as a watchman called to remind us all of a biblical truth that must never be neglected: **Israel remains the people of God**, and the Church, especially the African Church has a prophetic responsibility to walk in *understanding, intercession, and solidarity*.

Dedication

This address is dedicated to the glory of God Almighty, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; the God who revealed Himself on Mount Sinai; the God who delivered His people from Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm; the God who preserved Israel through exile, scattering, and persecution; the God who in the fullness of time sent His only begotten Son, born of a Jewish mother, under Jewish law, in the Jewish land of promise, to redeem the world from sin and reconcile us to Himself.

It is further dedicated to every pilgrim who has walked the hallowed streets of Jerusalem, to every intercessor who has prayed for the peace of Jerusalem, to every believer who has stood with the people of Israel in moments of trial, and to the countless witnesses who, like the Apostle Paul, affirm boldly: “*Has God cast away His people? Certainly not!*” (Romans 11:1).

Introduction: Why Israel? Why Now?

Beloved, allow me to begin by posing a question that resonates across the corridors of theology, history, and politics: *Why Israel?* Why should we, as Christians, as Africans, and as global citizens, devote our hearts, our scholarship, and our prayers to the subject of Israel?

The answer is both simple and profound: **because God Himself has chosen Israel.** Not because of Israel's size, not because of Israel's righteousness, not because of Israel's strength, but because of God's sovereign love and unbreakable covenant. As Moses declared in **Deuteronomy 7:7–8:**

“The Lord did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples; but because the Lord loves you, and because He would keep the oath which He swore to your fathers.”

From Genesis to Revelation, the name “Israel” is engraved on the pages of Scripture. Israel is not merely a nation among nations it is the covenant people through whom God chose to reveal His redemptive plan for all humanity. Through Israel, we have the Law. Through Israel, we have the Prophets. Through Israel, we have the Scriptures. And supremely, through Israel, we have the Messiah, Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Mystery of Israel in God's Plan

Saint Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, described Israel as a mystery in God's redemptive plan. In Romans 11:25, he cautions us not to be ignorant of this mystery: that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. Yet in the same chapter, he affirms that *“the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable”* (Romans 11:29).

This means that while **Israel stumbled, Israel was not cast away.** While Israel rejected the Messiah in part, Israel was not abandoned by God. Instead, their stumbling opened the door of salvation to the Gentiles. And through this divine mystery, we, who were once aliens to the commonwealth of Israel, strangers to

the covenants of promise, and without hope in the world (Ephesians 2:12), have now been brought near by the blood of Christ.

Israel, therefore, stands as both a ***physical nation and a spiritual signpost***. They are a reminder of God's faithfulness, His covenant-keeping nature, and his unstoppable plan of salvation for the whole world.

Israel and the Church: A Covenant Relationship

It is important, beloved, that we do not fall into the error of replacement theology the false idea that the Church has replaced Israel as God's people. No, the Church has not replaced Israel; rather, the Church has been grafted into Israel's olive tree. We, as Gentiles, are wild branches grafted into the cultivated tree (Romans 11:17).

This means our roots are Hebrew. Our faith is anchored in the promises God made to Abraham. Our salvation flows from the Jewish Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth. As Jesus Himself declared to the Samaritan woman: *"Salvation is of the Jews"* (John 4:22).

We owe an eternal debt of gratitude to Israel. Every Christian who prays, every Christian who sings the Psalms, every Christian who calls upon the name of Jesus, is already standing upon the spiritual heritage of Israel. **To dishonour Israel is to dishonour the very foundation upon which our faith is built.**

A Prophetic Moment

Beloved, I believe we are living in a prophetic moment. The rebirth of the State of Israel in 1948 was not a political accident but a fulfilment of ancient prophecy. The survival of Israel through wars, terrorism, and global opposition is not a coincidence but a testimony to God's covenant faithfulness.

Today, as we see nations raging, alliances shifting, and prophetic scriptures unfolding before our very eyes, it is imperative that the Church reaffirms its

understanding and support of Israel. For the Psalmist declares in Psalm 122:6: *“Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: May they prosper who love you.”*

This keynote address, therefore, is not merely an academic exercise. It is a spiritual clarion call. It is a summon to knowledge, to intercession, and to covenantal faithfulness.

Gods Relationship with Israel

1. Covenant: The Eternal Bond

A covenant is not a casual agreement; it is a solemn binding relationship initiated by God. The Bible describes multiple covenants, but four stand out as central to Israel's identity:

a. The Abrahamic Covenant

This covenant (Genesis 12, 15, 17) established Israel's very existence. God promised Abraham land, descendants, and blessing. It was unconditional and eternal. God Himself swore by His own name that He would keep it.

This is why, despite exile, dispersion, and persecution, Israel survives. Nations rise and fall, empires come and go, but Israel endures because of the Abrahamic covenant.

b. The Mosaic Covenant

At Sinai, God gave Israel the Law (Exodus 19–24). This covenant defined Israel's role as a holy nation and a kingdom of priests. Though conditional in terms of blessings or curses based on obedience, it did not cancel the Abrahamic covenant. Instead, it provided a framework for Israel's national life.

c. The Davidic Covenant

Through David, God promised **an eternal throne** (2 Samuel 7:16). Though the monarchy was interrupted by exile, the promise pointed ultimately to the Messiah, Jesus Christ, who reigns forever.

d. The New Covenant

Foretold by Jeremiah (31:31–34), this covenant promised forgiveness of sins and the indwelling Spirit. Importantly, it was made with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In Christ, Gentiles share in this blessing, but the covenant remains rooted in Israel.

2. Election: God's Sovereign Choice

The doctrine of election teaches that Israel's chosenness is not based on merit, power, or numbers but solely on God's sovereign will. Deuteronomy 7:7–8 declares:

"The Lord did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number... but because the Lord loves you, and because He would keep the oath which He swore to your fathers."

This truth humbles Israel and exalts God. Their election is a gift, not an achievement. It also reminds the Church that our own salvation is by grace, not works (Ephesians 2:8–9).

3. The Irrevocability of God's Call

Paul, in Romans 11:29, makes a statement of eternal weight:

"For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable."

This means God cannot change His mind about Israel. Though they stumbled, they were not cast away. Though they resisted the Messiah, they were not abandoned. God's covenant with Israel remains in force because it is grounded in His unchanging character.

If God could abandon Israel, He could abandon us. But because He is faithful to Israel, we can trust that He will also be faithful to the Church.

4. Israel and the Mystery of Divine Election

Paul calls Israel's role in salvation history a mystery (Romans 11:25). It is beyond full human comprehension. Why Israel? Why not Egypt, Babylon, or Rome? The answer lies not in Israel's greatness but in God's divine purpose.

Through Israel, God reveals His holiness, His justice, His mercy, and His sovereignty. Israel is the stage upon which the drama of redemption unfolds. Their election is not an end in itself but a means of blessing the nations.

Theological Implications for the Nations

The theology of covenant and election carries global consequences:

- **Blessing and Curse Principle:** Genesis 12:3 promises blessing to those who bless Israel and curse to those who curse her. History bears witness to this truth. Nations that honoured Israel prospered; those that persecuted Israel fell.
- **Theological Humility:** Both Israel and the Church must recognize that their election is by grace, not merit. This fosters humility and worship, not pride.
- **Universal Salvation Plan:** Israel's election is not for Israel alone. It is through Israel that salvation flows to the nations in Christ.

Jesus the Jew: Our Shared Heritage

As African Christians, we love Jesus deeply. But let us remember: **Jesus was born a Jew**. He was raised under Jewish law, taught in synagogues, celebrated Passover, and upheld the teachings of the **Torah (The 5 Books of Moses)**.

The Gospel of John reminds us:

“Salvation is from the Jews” (John 4:22).

We must teach our congregations across Lagos, Nairobi, Accra, Addis Ababa, Kinshasa, and beyond that **our salvation story began in Jerusalem**, not in Rome, not in Europe, but in the heart of God’s covenant with Israel.

Why Africa Must Care

You may ask, “What does Israel have to do with Africa?”

I say: **everything**.

We, as African Christians, understand struggle. We understand suffering, displacement, and the fight for identity. The Jewish people, too, have walked that path from slavery in Egypt to exile in Babylon, from the horrors of the Holocaust to the rebirth of their nation in 1948. Their story is one of divine preservation and it mirrors, in many ways, our own.

But beyond shared suffering is **a shared calling**.

Africa is the world’s fastest-growing center of Christianity. With that growth comes **great responsibility** to be biblically informed, prophetically aware, and spiritually aligned. We must teach our people to bless Israel, to pray for the peace of Jerusalem (Psalm 122:6), and to resist all forms of antisemitism or theological distortion.

A Prophetic Role for the African Church

Africa has always played a role in salvation history from Egypt as a place of refuge for Joseph and later Jesus, to the Ethiopian eunuch who took the Gospel back to Africa. But now, more than ever, **Africa is rising as a prophetic voice in global Christianity**.

Our support for Israel is not political. It is **biblical, prophetic, and spiritual**.

Let us not be silent when Israel is falsely accused or unjustly targeted. Let us not be afraid to teach our children and youth the truth of God's Word concerning His people. And let us not hesitate to take our place in global intercession for the land and people of Israel.

As Zechariah prophesied:

"In those days ten people from all nations will grasp the robe of one Jew and say, 'Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you'" (Zechariah 8:23).

Let that prophecy begin to be fulfilled in our time—and may Africa be among those ten nations who cling to the covenant of the Lord.

Conclusion: Let Africa Bless Israel

My brothers and sisters in Christ, we are not merely African churches—we are **the Church in Africa**, and we have a divine calling to stand in truth and unity.

Let us boldly proclaim:

- That **Israel is God's covenant people.**
- That **our destiny is intertwined with theirs.**
- And that **as we bless Israel, we too shall be blessed** (Genesis 12:3).

May the All-Africa Conference of Churches become known as a **continental voice of biblical clarity, prophetic witness, and covenant loyalty.**

May we teach our people to love what God loves, to honour what God honours, and to pray for the peace of Jerusalem, from Cape Town to Cairo.

God Bless You!

God Bless Africa!

God Bless Israel!

And may his kingdom come on earth as it is in Heaven