



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Fighting for Israel – Part 1

Guest(s): Joel Rosenberg

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Dr. James Dobson: Welcome everyone to Family Talk. It's a ministry of the James Dobson Family Institute supported by listeners just like you. I'm Dr. James Dobson and I'm thrilled that you've joined us.

Gary Bauer: Welcome to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, the broadcast ministry at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Gary Bauer, senior vice president of public policy here at the JDFI. I also host the podcast Defending Faith, Family, and Freedom. On today's edition of Family Talk, we're going to visit with a man whose unique gifts and talents make him a valuable asset in God's economy and actually an incredible asset for the times that we're living through right now. Joel Rosenberg is a best-selling author, a political consultant, a journalist, and philanthropist whose ministry has touched the lives of millions of people all over the world. Now, you might say that Joel grew up in an agnostic home. Joel's parents gave their hearts to Jesus when he was a young boy, but later in his teens, Joel was born again as well, and today, he lives out his faith as a Messianic Jew.

After graduating from Syracuse University with a degree in fine arts, Joel worked as a researcher for talk show legend, Rush Limbaugh, who we still miss a great deal, before working as a political consultant for Steve Forbes and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu among others. But in early 2000, Joel made the decision to step away from politics and focus on writing fiction. His first novel was called *The Last Jihad*. It was actually written nine months before the terrible attack on 9/11, and the final manuscript was updated to include the accounts of the brutal acts of terrorism that took place on that fateful day. *The Last Jihad* was released in the early 2002. It went on to spend 11 weeks on *The New York Times* best-seller list and other best-seller lists. Since then, Joel's gone on to write 12 more best-selling novels as well as five books of non-fiction and the sales of all these total over 5 million copies. You know, Joel, you rival Dr. Dobson in that regard. He turned out folks...

Joel Rosenberg: I think he had 70, but those are a few years ahead of me.

Gary Bauer: Well, that's true. He had a little bit more time. In addition, Joel established the Joshua Fund and nonprofit organization dedicated to blessing Israel and blessing her neighbors. According to the direction we get in Genesis 12: 1-3. To date, the Joshua Fund, this is unbelievable, has distributed more than a \$100 million dollars in aid to Christian humanitarian efforts in Israel and Iraq, Lebanon, and in

Syria. Joel Rosenberg is also the president and CEO of Near East Media, as well as the founder and editor in chief of the *All Israel News* and *All Arab News* websites. Quite frankly, it's one of the few places people can go, in my view, to actually get the real news instead of the propaganda that's being turned out with almost like an avalanche in the months we're living through. And if that wasn't enough, Joel also anchors *The Rosenberg Report* for TBN, the most watched Christian television network in the United States. Joel is married to his college sweetheart, Lynn. They're the parents of four sons. After having made their home in the Washington, D.C. area for nearly 25 years, the Rosenbergs are now full-time residents of Israel. So we are extremely grateful to have him in Colorado Springs with us today. Joel, Dr. Dobson was an incredible fan of your writings and a great friend of yours. He and Shirley respected you a great deal, and I know you had a wonderful relationship with them.

Joel Rosenberg:

I loved them, absolutely loved them. Lynn and I had the joy of meeting them a little over 30 years ago, and I mean, we hadn't done any of those things and by God's mercy, we still can't believe it. I mean that God has used us in any way, shape or form. But yeah, we were so impacted by Jim and Shirley Dobson, but Dr. Dobson in particular, from all the books. I grew up with this and my parents as they came to faith, my dad from an orthodox Jewish background, he had a horrible background. His parents were horrible. He was horrible too until he came to faith in Jesus. My mom was raised by a violent alcoholic who then left the family after trying to kill... That's her father. The father tried to kill her mother and then he left. So my parents didn't have a great model of how to be followers of Jesus, how to be a faithful, loving, kind, warm, married couple, and their marriage was on course for a train wreck until Christ saved them both radically in the Jesus movement, 1973, and then how to raise kids. They had no model for this. So Dr. Dobson was a huge influence, and so when Lynn and I had an opportunity first to get married, then to start having kids, and when we got to meet them, it was just so deeply moving. I didn't expect a friendship to develop, and it really did develop over the years, mainly once Dr. Dobson started reading my books, which I had no idea why he would, that he was doing it, but he invited me on, I think the first book was actually my first non-fiction book, *Epicenter*, which was really about what is happening in the Middle East then that was 2006, and where were things going. But it's because of all that I discovered a side of him. I wouldn't have even have thought to ask his deep, deep love for Israel. Yes, his love and compassion for the neighbors.

But his deep love for Israel based on his belief that Israel was biblical, that the Jewish people were truly chosen by God. Now, most Jews have not chosen God through His son, Jesus, back, so that's the challenge. But Dr. Dobson cared about Jewish evangelism. He cared about fighting antisemitism, and these were not things that normally he would talk about back when he was in Focus on the Family or when he started Family Talk. Those were not sort of things that I think people think of when they think of Dr. Dobson, and nor was it for me, but when I began to discover how much he wanted to talk about those things and how his love for Christ and the Christ Word motivated his love for Israel and the Jewish

people, wow. Then we were off to the races on a whole fun set of topics, and he had me on numerous times over the years.

Gary Bauer: You know, him not talking that much about it, at least in your experience, was probably at least in part because the branch of Christianity he came from was all in on the idea that without the Jews, there are no Christians. 95% of the Bibles written by Jews. All the patriarchs are Jews. And I'm fond of saying in speeches, I don't want to insult my Baptist friends, but John the Baptist wasn't a Baptist, he was a Jew. So there's a lot of theological background here. You and I have both heard over the years him tell a story about something that happened in the living room of his own house when he was a little boy. Why don't you share that with us?

Joel Rosenberg: Yeah. Well, he told me on air once that he remembered May 14th, 1948 distinctly. This was the day that David Ben-Gurion, the first prime minister of the reborn state of Israel, announced the Declaration of Independence and announced to the world the Jewish state had been reborn as a sovereign nation state after 2,000 years of exile and antisemitism and the Holocaust and everything else that had been part of our history. And he said he remembered his mom saying, "Jimmy, Jimmy, Jimmy. Come over to the radio quickly." And he rushed over thinking it was something bad. But what she described was she let him listen to the radio program where some announcer was explaining the rebirth of the state of Israel, that Harry Truman, the President of the United States, a strong Midwestern Democrat and a devout Bible believer.

Gary Bauer: And a rebirth in one day that shall be returned to land in one day.

Joel Rosenberg: Exactly. And that Truman had been the first world leader to acknowledge and affirm and recognize Israel's new independence. And she said to him, "Jimmy, the only book in the world over the last 2,000 years that ever told us that Israel would be reborn as a country," as you say in a day. Can a nation be born in a day? Yes, May 14th, 1948. And she told him, "The Bible is the only book that ever told us this, and now you and I are hearing it come to pass right before our very ears. And he told me that this had a huge impact on him because he believed in the Bible, but I think he was either a young teenager or maybe a preteen, but this impacted him. How often in history can you be alive at a moment where Bible prophecies coming true and not sort of some sketchy, weird, unhealthy theologian trying to tell you that some weird part of the Bible that you've never heard of before is actually...no, this was actually a global event and he was experiencing it. And so his love for Israel was very important because American evangelicalism for the next seven, eight decades has mostly but not entirely embraced Israel and said, "We're going to stand with Israel. We believe in Genesis chapter 12 verses one through three, the Abrahamic Covenant that God has chosen the Jewish people and He's given them a land and He wants to bless Israel and the Jewish people and that those who bless Israel will be blessed by God and those who curse Israel, there's a consequence and He will curse you. And that doesn't mean we have to agree with every single thing that an Israeli leadership government or people do, but that's a big

thing. And that's the 12th chapter of the first book of the Bible. And if you don't take that seriously, that God has a specific love for a specific group of people and a plan for the Jewish people and the nation of Israel, and that there are consequences positive if you stand with Him and them, us, I would say, and there are consequences if you stand against. And so Israel's under attack now from every direction, and when some staff for Dr. Dobson happened to hear me speak and give a briefing on what is happening in Israel now and what is God doing that you're not going to hear on *60 Minutes* tonight, you're not going to hear this. You're not going to hear it on *CNN*. You're not, you might not even hear it on *Fox*. What is God doing behind the headlines? This is what I was sharing at Council for National Policy in the spring, and they took that message back and said, Dr. Dobson, your friend Joel has been sharing some stuff that we haven't heard from other people, and he got excited and he invited me to come and be part of his annual gathering of prayer supporters, friends, donors, and so forth. I was so touched that even though I knew that from all my travels, I would be only touching down in Israel and staying there five days and then have to get back on a plane and come back, I thought this might be my last opportunity

To really see him and surely and thank them. And unfortunately I was a little late, but so honored to just be with you and be with this team and be with friends who care about these issues.

Gary Bauer: Well, Joel, we are having this conversation at one of the James Dobson Family Institute's important annual meetings, and it's a meeting where we're talking about the future and Dr. Dobson's legacy and how much we're counting on that great reservoir of support he has around the country. So for you to be here for this particular event is a God thing I think as we're sorting all of this out.

Joel Rosenberg: It's an honor. It really is. And I'm excited about where Dr. James Dobson Family Institute is going. I think his influence is so important. And we were having this conversation over lunch with some other friends and I said, we think of Charles Spurgeon who was the pastor of the largest evangelical church on the planet.

His sermons, his impact, his theology is still impacting many believers, young pastors today. That shows that when God has put anointing on a man or a woman and is using them, the legacy of the writings, the teachings in this case, the radio broadcast and the films, I think has so much more fruit to be born. I'm excited and I'm praying for you guys. I'm standing with you guys because with America having the wheels nearly coming off when it comes to the family, the culture, Dr. Dobson's voice is more important than ever actually. And I think how you guys hear the spirit show you how to steward that body of work to influence the next generation of parents that are being told all kinds of lies in the culture and the media, sometimes even in some churches. And so it's important.

Gary Bauer: And the lies in the churches are the worst lies of all because that's where your guard is down. So there's a lot of nervousness and hesitation in America today, even among conservatives about America's foreign entanglements. Why are we

getting in somebody else's war again? And this comes up all the time, and there's even a debate about it in the administration, but there is a special relationship between Israel and the United States more than the United States and some of the other places we've ended up getting involved in wars. And it goes, you can go all the way back to the founding, you can even go before the founding. But the founders themselves, as you know, Joel found the most important ideas about who we are, not from Greek and Roman philosophy, but from the Old Testament and the New Testament. And they were all restorationists. They believe the Jewish people that God wanted, the Jewish people restored to their homeland. Talk a little bit about that because for those Americans that think we can just walk away from Israel, I would say if we do that, we walk away from ourselves.

Joel Rosenberg:

Yeah. Well, and we're losing. Let's just be honest, we're losing millions of young evangelicals who are watching the war that's been raging for over two years now in Gaza and in the region, and just hearing lies being told by the media, by the UN, by TikTok or whatever it is, that Israel is the aggressor, that Israel's committing genocide, that Israel's purposely trying to starve people and it's having an effect.

And so this is a concern of mine, and I know it was a concern of Dr. Dobson's and Shirley's. And so in a world where the culture is abandoning the Bible on every front, it's not surprising. It's sad and it's painful, but it's not surprising that the nation, the world is turning against Israel and the Jewish people. When people say, where does that come from, why do people care that much? Why is there such hatred for Israel and the Jewish people? I would say the best way to understand it comes simply from John 10:10 in the New Testament. You think, well, that's a strange verse of Jews. Well, in this case, in John 10:10, Jesus is defining very quickly and simply, but incredibly clearly who Satan is. Satan is the thief, and the thief comes to rob, kill and destroy. And then Jesus says, "But I came that you might have life and have it abundantly."

Now, in one verse, you get the clear dichotomy between Satan and Jesus. They're not equal, don't get me wrong, but they're photographic negatives of each other. They have diametrically opposed objectives. If God has created marriage between a man and a woman, Satan says, fine, I'm going to come along and make it between a man and a man. Between a woman and a woman. But if God says, you're supposed to protect a child his womb because God knits that baby together and a mother, no, it's not even a person. It's not. So Satan is taking every truth in the Bible and he's twisting it and he's making up. Well, we can apply that to what the Bible says about Israel and the Jewish people, right? So God says, I love the Jewish people and I've chosen them to bless them. So Satan is not a creative being. He can't come up with new ideas, but he can twist and he does. He twists biblical ideas. So he says, okay, fine. God, if you're going to choose Jews to bless them, I'm going to choose the Jews to curse them. God says, I'm going to give the Jewish people a land, the land of Israel. Satan says, fine, I'm going to take it away. God says, I'm going to make Jerusalem the city of peace. And Satan says, fine, I'm going to make it the city of bloodshed.

Gary Bauer: And Christ actually predicts that Jerusalem will be the epicenter, a load star around the neck of the whole world. He knew exactly...

Joel Rosenberg: Absolutely. As did the prophets. And one more, God says, I'm going to make the temple mount holy to my name. Satan says, fine, I'm going to desecrate it. And now the two most iconic buildings on the Temple Mount are a Muslim mosque and the Dome of the Rock, both of which declare that Jesus is not God and He didn't die on the cross and He didn't rise again. This is religion a hundred percent against Christianity. Now, the good news is more Muslims are coming to faith in Jesus Christ as the true God and Savior than ever in human history. More Jews are coming to faith in Jesus than ever before. But I'm just saying that people are, I just don't even understand where this comes from. It comes from John 10: 10, and this is a satanic effort to kill, marginalize, berate, belittle, and dehumanize the Jewish people and the state of Israel. The good news is that those of us who believe in the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, the whole council of God or the Apostle Paul says, and what we have on love and compassion for Israel and the Jewish people, and we believe in the gospel, this is the moment that becomes clearer to love Jewish people and love Israel with unconditional love. We should love the Palestinians too.

And our ministry does. But Jews feel so alone in this world right now and so confused. Why does the world hate us? Everything in your phone was invented in Israel. Everything in your computer almost was invented in Israel. Israel's trying to be a blessing to the world, but it is coming under ferocious and seemingly incomprehensible hatred, and we need to understand it, and we need to stand against it, even while showing compassion to Israel's neighbors and enemies.

Gary Bauer: Hatred of Jews is the most ancient hatred in the world. If you go back and look at where it began and that it's still in the Seder itself, the Jews say in every generation, they come to annihilate us. You and I were talking earlier today about how many people said they were shocked to see antisemitism suddenly erupt in America. Well, it couldn't have happened suddenly. It's been simmering for a long time on university campuses, and unfortunately, we haven't been very careful about our immigration policies. We're bringing in massive numbers of people from countries who are the most by independent studies, the most antisemitic countries in the world. And if you bring large amounts of immigration from those countries, you're importing antisemites into your country. Historically, I don't think we've gone through a period like this where it's been so brazen. Jews used to be banned from some country clubs and people would say terrible things about Jews.

Joel Rosenberg: Practically speaking, I think the first half of the 20th century were rough, but it was so much better than where Jews were coming from as immigrants ourselves. My family on my father's side were Orthodox Jews escaping out of Russia. Escaping out of what? If you were an Orthodox Jew in antisemitic czarist Russia...

Gary Bauer: Brooklyn looks pretty good.

Joel Rosenberg: Brooklyn looks pretty good, and you have a choice. You could fiddle on the roof in Russia or you could get out. And so my family got out, and as hard as it was, they found freedom here. They found opportunity here. And eventually my father came to faith in Jesus here, which radicalized his life in a very good way. So that was rough, but things were kept getting better. But this is a blow back or an eruption, let's say. This is a volcano of hatred of Jews that most Jews didn't see coming. I would say most Christians didn't see coming, and I think you're right, but I think there's another element. Why are young supposed evangelicals falling for this? Why are they turning so hard against Israel? And I've laid out seven reasons. I won't go through them all, but I'll give you two. One is that parents and grandparents are not doing a good job sharing and passing on to their children and grandchildren, what they believe on various biblical issues. Israel being one of them, and the importance of the Jewish people being a special people, not special, that they can do whatever they want and there's no consequences, but special that God has a special love, and we need to show a special attention to Jews and seek to be a blessing at many levels. So if we fail as parents and grandparents, how can we expect our kids and grandkids to get it? But many of us have unfortunately outsourced that responsibility to our churches.

The challenge is even if you're going to a great church that's teaching everything on every issue, biblically sound and wonderful, including Israel, is the youth group doing that? Is the Sunday school classes, are they doing that or are they, they're mostly not.

And you might be going to a very good church. It may not be great on this issue, but biblical theology for many churches in America today is simplified into creation, fall, redemption, and return. All true. God created the world. We as men fell, we're sinners. Christ came to redeem us, and He's going to come back. All true. But what does that biblical theology cut out? The entire story of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the 12 tribes of Israel. And so the whole history that Paul says to the Corinthians, look to Israel, learn from Israel. A lot of churches aren't doing that.

Gary Bauer: Joel, this is just an incredible conversation. I got 10 more things I'd like to ask you about. Our listeners really need to hear what you have to say. Any way we could squeeze you in for another show? I know you're busy.

Joel Rosenberg: Happy to. Yeah, your wish is my command.

Gary Bauer: Fantastic.

Roger Marsh: Joel Rosenberg's point at the end there really caught my attention, and I hope it caught yours too. We are losing young people on this issue because we're not teaching our kids. And even good churches don't always cover everything they

need to hear. You've been listening to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk and a compelling conversation featuring author Joel Rosenberg and our own Gary Bauer, senior vice president of public policy here at the James Dobson Family Institute. He's also the host of the Defending Faith, Family, and Freedom podcast. They've been discussing standing with Israel during these turbulent times. And if you missed any portion of today's broadcast or if you want to share it with someone who needs to hear Joel Rosenberg's perspective on this issue, go to drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. Speaking of difficult times, many of us will face seasons when God's ways seem incomprehensible. When tragedy strikes or prayers go unanswered, our faith can feel shaken to its core.

That's why we have created a special 10-day email series based on Dr. James Dobson's best-selling book, *When God Doesn't Make Sense*. These daily emails explore why God allows hardship in the first place, and how dark valleys can actually draw us closer to Jesus Christ. Now, each email takes just a few minutes to read, but the insights can strengthen your faith for a lifetime. So sign up for this free email series when you go to drjamesdobson.org. Just look for "When God Doesn't Make Sense" and enter your email address.

Well, the mission of defending biblical truth has never been more urgent than it is right now. Every day, families face unprecedented challenges to their faith, their values, and their very understanding of what God's Word teaches. And your partnership with the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute makes it possible for us to stand firm in promoting biblical values that support marriage and family and the truths found in Scripture. Through broadcasts like the ones you just heard, we are equipping believers to understand God's heart for Israel, to raise godly children, and to navigate a culture that increasingly rejects biblical values. And when you make a donation to the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, you're investing in a ministry that refuses to compromise on truth. Now, you can make a secure donation at drjamesdobson.org. You can also give a gift over the phone when you call a member of our constituent care team. That number is 877-732-6825.

Well, I'm Roger Marsh, and from all of us here at Family Talk and the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, thanks so much for listening today. Be sure to tune in again next time for part two of Gary Bauer's fascinating conversation with Joel Rosenberg discussing why it's important to be fighting for Israel. That's coming up right here on the next edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, the voice you can still trust, for the family you love.

This has been a presentation of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute.