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When the modern State of Israel was founded in 1948, the reborn nation adopted the menorah as its national emblem. One of Judaism’s oldest symbols, the menorah dates back to the book of Exodus, when God told Moses, “You shall also make a lampstand of pure gold. You shall make seven lamps for it, and they shall arrange its lamps so that they give light in front of it” (25:31, 37). The menorah on the cover, built by British-Jewish sculptor Benno Elkan, is made of bronze and stands over 16 feet tall. It resides in front of Israel’s Knesset building in Jerusalem, a gift from members of the British Parliament on April 15, 1956. (Moti Meiri/iStockphoto)
love is a tremendous motivator. I was reflecting on that thought recently as I considered the founding of The Friends of Israel. In 1938 Jewish people lived in tremendous peril in Europe. Anti-Semitic riots were breaking out, persecution was rampant, Jewish people were marked by a Star of David on their clothing, and the Nazis were formulating plans to exterminate the entire race.

Four thousand miles from the seat of Nazi power in Berlin, Germany, love and compassion abounded as a group of godly men met in the Witherspoon Building in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. With the Lord’s guidance, they founded The Friends of Israel to be an instrument of Christian blessing and assistance to the Jewish people.

In its early years, The Friends of Israel ministered to thousands who faced the ravages of Hitler’s cruelty, providing material aid and comfort to Jewish people who suddenly found themselves cast out and homeless. We helped many flee Europe and settle in safe countries and helped others in their lands of refuge.

The ministry was established on God’s promise to bless those who bless Israel (Gen. 12:3). His promise implies He expects and desires that Gentiles bless His Chosen People. He put no time limitation on His promise. It is His desire forever that Gentiles bless Abraham’s children who descended from Isaac and Jacob.

But establishing The Friends of Israel was so much more than an obligation to God. It was an act of genuine love for God’s Chosen People, to whom we are eternally indebted. The Jewish people gave us the Scriptures. Godly Jewish men, using their individual styles, “breathed out” God’s Holy Word as they were moved by the Holy Spirit (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21).

Yet our debt goes still deeper—all the way to our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. He was born to Jewish parents and attended synagogue. With sinless perfection, He practiced the Law God gave in the Torah. He is the Redeemer, “The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (Jn. 1:29). And it is through His death, burial, and resurrection that He provides life eternal with God to anyone who places faith in Him (Rom. 6:23).

Were it not for the Jewish people, there would be no Christianity.

The years since 1938 have provided The Friends of Israel with many opportunities to share God’s message of love. God taught in the Law, “It is the blood that makes atonement for the soul” (Lev. 17:11). The great prophet Isaiah declared, “Our Redeemer, the LORD of hosts is His name, the Holy One of Israel” (Isa. 47:4). God, in His great love, gave His only begotten Son to shed His blood for our sins, “that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (Jn. 3:16).

Those of us who believe Jesus is the Son of God, the Lord’s promised Messiah, are forever indebted to the Jewish people. Our love for Israel and for them flows from our appreciation for all they have done for us. This year marks the 75th anniversary of The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, Inc. We are extraordinarily grateful for God’s abundant grace and blessing as we celebrate His faithfulness to our ministry. What a joy to reflect on the wonderful works of love and grace He has accomplished through the efforts of The Friends of Israel.

Our steadfast faith in God and in His faithfulness to keep His Word is reflected in the name given our organization 75 years ago. In 1938 there was no State of Israel. Hitler was growing in power and threatening the Jewish people’s very existence. Yet our founders chose to call this work The Friends of Israel Relief Committee. They believed the God who pledged to bring Israel’s dry bones back to life would keep His promise (Ezek. 37). So certain were they that they named the organization The Friends of “Israel” 10 years before there was an Israel.

Today we know the rest of the story. Israel was resurrected in 1948 and this year will celebrate its 65th anniversary as a modern nation.

I am confident God will continue to bless and prosper The Friends of Israel in the years to come because He has proven time and again that He alone is the one true God—the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—and He keeps His covenants and does all He promises. What a faithful God we serve!
Going Up to Jerusalem with The Friends of Israel is never the same twice. I’ve been on our tour more than two dozen times, but our recent fall trip was unique. Here is a glimpse of Israel that many tourists never see.

John Brown, founder and president of Zion Oil and Gas, Inc., of Dallas, Texas, hosted all of us for lunch in the Galilee at one of Israel’s few country clubs. He shared how he came to Christ and told us he believes Deuteronomy 33:24 (“let him dip his foot in oil”) refers not to olive oil but to petroleum. If he is right, it may be oil that will bring the northern armies against Israel in the future (Ezek. 38—39).

Then we journeyed to Ariel in Samaria (West Bank). In 1978, 40 families who understood the need for a Jewish presence in this strategic area moved to the rocky and barren hill that would grow into the thriving city of Ariel. Ariel is also a model for integration. Ariel University Center educates hundreds of Arabs from all over Israel.

The highlight for me there was seeing a small business that produces cables used by high-tech firms. All the employees are Russian seniors (average age, 79). They work willingly, happily, and productively, competing against the Chinese market.

Another day took us to Kibbutz Misgav Am (“Fortress of the People”) in northern Israel on the border of Lebanon. Aryeh, a 71-year-old Ohio native, explained the strategic and dangerous location. As we looked down on the many houses a few hundred yards below, Aryeh said, “You are looking straight into Hezbollah. They want us dead, but never again will we go as sheep to the slaughter.” None of the houses had glass windows, just holes in the walls, to make it easier to fire on Israel. We saw firsthand the danger Israel lives with every day.

At an Ethiopian absorption center, we donated school supplies we had brought for the children. Ethiopian immigrants live here for about a year, as they are helped to assimilate into Israeli society. Along with learning Hebrew, they learn to use electricity, to wash and iron clothes, and to use bathroom facilities. Their arrival is the latest chapter in the wonderful story of Israel’s people.

We also toured the Knesset (parliament) where 120 members—made up of liberals, socialists, conservatives, religious, nonreligious, and Arabs—argue, debate, and pass the laws that govern the only democracy in the Middle East.

The Friends of Israel always plants trees in Israel. The Jewish National Fund (JNF) handles tree-planting throughout the country. It even offers free trees to Christians for Christmas. With all the bad press Israel receives, I couldn’t help but think how little the world really knows about the kindness and generosity of the State of Israel.
A prominent Virginia physician went into a deep coma awhile back as a result of a life-threatening bout with meningitis. In 2012 his book about the experience was published. It detailed what he considers his brush with the afterlife, which involved being led about by a beautiful woman in an atmosphere exuding love and filled with butterflies.

The message the doctor claims to have received was this: “You are not here to stay. We will teach you many things. But you’ll be going back.” He never defined the personage issuing the communication, but his awakened understanding apparently was enough to verify the intensity of that “divine spark” said to reside in each and every one of us.

The popularity of the doctor’s book is yet another evidence of the rapidly changing religious trends in America. We have abandoned traditional Judeo-Christian beliefs and values in favor of anyone and everyone’s personally crafted faith (or lack thereof), regardless of what it may be.

According to a Pew Research Center poll taken in 2009 and somewhat revised in 2011, Americans change their religious affiliations early and often. Reasons are varied:

Two-thirds of former Catholics who have become unaffiliated say they left their childhood faith because they stopped believing in its teachings, and roughly four-in-ten say they became unaffiliated because they do not believe in God. Many people who left a religion to become unaffiliated say they did so in part because they think of religious people as hypocritical or judgmental, because religious organizations focus too much on rules or because religious leaders are too focused on power and money.

A Pew survey taken in October 2012 reveals one-fifth of the U.S. public and one-third of adults under 30 are religiously unattached, the highest percentage ever in Pew Research Center polling. An interesting twist is that many among the 46 million unaffiliated Americans claim to be spiritual in some way: “More than half say they often feel a deep connection with nature and the earth (58%), while more than a third classify themselves as ‘spiritual’ but not ‘religious’ (37%), and one-in-five (21%) say they pray every day.” To whom they pray was not stated.

In some respects, the “I’ll do it my way” religion is the fruit of situation ethics, the self-aggrandizing heresy of the 1960s that cast off the moral restraints of biblical injunctions and societal mores. Its devotees, even today, ignore absolutes in the interest of what seems good to them in any given situation, supposedly regulated by a standard of self-generated love. Situation ethics makes every individual the ultimate arbiter of his own decisions and actions. Consequently, if a lie told in love works for you better than the truth does, it’s okay to lie.

In the heat of the 2012 American presidential campaign, we were treated to lavish doses of out-and-out lies. Not that prevarication is a phenomenon reserved exclusively for the political scene. But it is most troubling that people accept in politics what they would consider libelous and slanderous under different circumstances. Sadly, the practice of lying without consequence is rapidly becoming an ugly staple of life in our country.

Sacrificing truth for self or group advantage is unacceptable if a society is to survive. Those who cynically endorse the concept that, if a big lie is told often enough, it will sooner or later be believed, look only at the short run. In the end, such folly leads to catastrophe.

There’s a biblical lesson we would be well-advised to heed. It is contained in the final words of the book of Judges: “In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes” (Jud. 21:25).

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There’s a biblical lesson we would be well-advised to heed. It is contained in the final words of the book of Judges: “In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes” (Jud. 21:25). Read the record. By and large, people had turned their backs on God. Every person was doing what he chose to interpret as “right,” and the result was chaos. Could it happen here? The movement has already begun.
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Aircraft suddenly plunged to earth and burst into flames. The cause for the crash near Imphal, India, on March 24, 1944, has remained a mystery. All nine men aboard were killed and burned beyond recognition.

Their remains were buried at Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, DC. Throughout Israel today, the copilot is remembered fondly by his Hebrew codename, HaYedid, “the friend.” The man was Maj. Gen. Orde Charles Wingate.

Born on February 26, 1903, in British-occupied India, Wingate grew up in a conservative, Christian, evangelical home. From his early years, he took God’s Word literally, and his worldview reflected that fact.

Like his father and grandfather, Orde pursued a career in the British Army. At 17 he attended the Royal Military Academy and was later commissioned to a Royal artillery brigade. He also began studying Arabic at the prestigious School of Oriental Studies in London. While in the Sudan tracking down slave traders and ivory poachers, Wingate developed a unique ambush system that replaced regular patrols.

In 1936 Wingate was posted as an intelligence officer to British-controlled Palestine (Israel). About the same time, the grand mufti of Jerusalem, Haj Amin al-Husseini (1893–1974), a Nazi and fascist collaborator, was inciting terrorist campaigns against Jewish and British targets in what became known as the Arab Revolts (1936–1939).

During this time many, but not all, British officers were pro-Arab and disliked Jews. When Wingate arrived, the Jewish people assumed he was the same. What a shock it was when he defied popular sentiment and embraced Zionism.

Wingate established a military base at Kibbutz Ein Harod, a site associated with one of his favorite Bible heroes, Gideon, in the book of Judges. He identified with Gideon, who defeated a large enemy force with merely a few men. Just as God had helped Gideon, so Wingate felt God would help him take on big challenges with few resources.

At personal risk, he initiated a plan to help the Jewish people fight back against Arab attacks. First, he clandestinely trained special night squads to ambush marauders and raiders. Second, with unofficial British support, he helped the Haganah set up a defense system. (Haganah is Hebrew for “defense” and was the
name of the Jewish paramilitary organization defending the Jewish people in Palestine.) His work later led to the formation of the modern Israel Defense Forces.

Wingate told British policy-makers the Jewish people should be given Palestine as their homeland. British authorities, however, disliked that Wingate had become so friendly with the Jews. Instigated by the mufti and those throughout the British military and government who were hostile to Jewish aspirations, Wingate was unceremoniously expelled from the land in 1939. Placed on his passport was a restriction forbidding him from ever returning.

His enemies tore him from Israel, but they could not tear Israel from his heart. Days before his departure, he and his many friends and supporters gathered in a home. In a most heartfelt farewell, he raised his hand and uttered in Hebrew the customary oath Jewish people say when leaving their revered homeland: “If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its skill! If I do not remember you, let my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth—if I do not exalt Jerusalem above my chief joy” (Ps. 137:5–6).

During World War II, Wingate successfully fought against the Italian fascists who occupied Ethiopia. Then, in 1943, the Japanese overpowered the British, pushing them out of Burma. Wingate was called in to organize a resistance. He formed a guerrilla force that took the offensive to the enemy. The Allies were so successful the Japanese failed in their 1944 offensive into India. Soon afterward, Wingate boarded the fateful B-25 Mitchell Bomber that was last seen ablaze on a hillside.

When Jerusalem received word of his death, a memorial service was organized in a synagogue. A special prayer was composed on his behalf: “Remember unto him his love for the words of your prophets concerning the return of the House of Israel to its Holy Land.” The prayer added, “May the name of Orde Wingate be remembered in the book of redemption of the House of Israel for eternity.”

Orde Charles Wingate carried a small, leather-bound Bible in his pocket wherever he went. In 1948, during Israel’s War of Independence, Wingate’s wife, also a committed Zionist, gave her husband’s Bible to Jewish fighters fending off Arab armies in northern Israel.

God used Orde Wingate to bless the Jewish people, and they will always remember him as a true friend of Israel.

ENDNOTE


Clockwise from left: In the Jewish tradition, Peter Colón places a memorial stone on Wingate’s marker at Arlington National Cemetery (Janis Colón/FOI Image Archive). Orde Charles Wingate (AP Images). Jewish people in Palestine prepare to face Arab rioters in 1938 (Hulton-Deutsch Collection/Corbis). The British force Wingate successfully led behind Japanese lines in Burma in 1943 (AP Photos).

by Peter Colón, creative resources coordinator for The Friends of Israel
Will Someone Say, ‘Holy War’?

(Viviane Moos/Corbis)
It was strange indeed to see the black flag of Islamic Jihad flying over the White House in Washington, DC. Yet that was the image on the programs handed out at the annual United American Muslim Day Parade in New York City in September 2012. Below the photograph were the words Islam the Future of America.

Though reportedly dedicated to promoting peace and harmony, the parade ended with speakers spewing such incendiary, offensive rhetoric that New York State Sen. Tony Avella—a Democrat, VIP parade marshal, and scheduled speaker—walked off the stage in protest.

Among the diatribes was one by a Brooklyn imam calling for the UN to pass blasphemy laws criminalizing language offensive to Muslims. Another came from a young Muslim woman screaming, “We have unborn martyrs in our wombs!” And Palestinian refugees were referred to as victims of Israeli aggression who are confined in camps by “Zionist Nazis.”

Ironically, the event took place a mere 12 days after the September 11 attacks on the U.S. Embassy in Cairo, Egypt, and U.S. Consulate in Benghazi, Libya, the latter of which took the lives of American Ambassador Christopher Stevens and three members of his staff. Though many Americans and Western leaders refuse to acknowledge what truly is happening around the world, it isn’t difficult to connect the dots.

In concert with the attacks, the black flag of Islamic Jihad was hoisted over the U.S. Embassies in Cairo and Tunis, Tunisia. In fact, the Middle East was in flames as American flags were trampled and burned by Islamists who concluded the time was right to gain radical Muslim hegemony throughout the region.

Looking for Someone to Blame

Supposedly fueling the outburst of anti-American hatred was a 14-minute film clip, Innocence of Muslims, uploaded on YouTube in July 2012. The trailer was heralded as the precursor of a low-grade, full-length feature film that has never been produced.

Despite the clip’s failure to generate even casual inquiry in July, insurgents seized on it in September to enflame Islamist passions and justify striking the United States. They also called for the filmmaker to be beheaded.

Emarrassingly, American leaders initially joined the condemnation chorus, fingerering the trailer as the sole cause of a “spontaneous” eruption unrelated to hatred of the United States. The scruffy filmmaker and his scurrilous film clip were deemed offenders-in-chief. As the riots spread, so did the perception that the film was the culprit. In actuality, however, almost none of the rioters had even seen the clip.

James Lewis, writing for American Thinker, got it right: “A week ago... Al Qaida’s black flag of Holy War [emphasis added] was raised over the US Embassy in Cairo on the eleventh anniversary of 9/11.”

Islamic revolution extends far beyond Africa and the Middle East. As the flag of jihadist holy war was hoisted over thousands of millings throngs around the world, the implacable enemies of freedom and democracy have launched what they hope will lead to a decisive conquest of everyone outside the umbrella of militant Islam. American and Western leaders are loath to acknowledge the ascent of terrorist elements, such as al-Qaeda and other jihadist groups. And though they refuse to abide even a mention of our being set upon by Islamist forces on a mission of holy-war conquest, the facts are there.

For an exercise in connecting the dots, you can begin by linking all of the countries and cities where anti-American riots have taken place. The list includes more than 20 countries in the Middle East. Then trace the line from Africa to Asia to Europe to North and South America, and you will be off to a good start.

Writing off this international eruption of hatred as a temporary phenomenon provoked by the work of one eccentric, misguided, Islamophobic miscreant will not produce peace, love, or cooperation. Neither will the West’s apologies or its obsequious groveling before religious fanatics.

These people are at war with us. And whether it’s a cartoon in France or Denmark; a film by a Dutch descendant of artist Vincent Van Gogh in Amsterdam; political opinions of Geert Wilders of the Netherlands; or the writings of the hapless Salman Rushdie, author of The Satanic Verses, speaking against Islam’s excesses carries a potential death sentence.

Beware of the ‘New World Order’

In his most recent appearances at the UN, Iran’s President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad received near rock-star adulation from a cadre of fellow radicals. Among other things, they adored his hate-America rhetoric, his determination to reduce Israel to ashes, his Holocaust denial, and his contempt for attempts to curtail Iran’s developing nuclear capacity.

Ahmadinejad exposed his endgame when he implied the so-called Arab Spring would one day extend far beyond the Middle East and countries currently disrupted by the revolution. What he alluded to was the Islamic vision of planting the black flag of jihad triumphantly across the known world, replacing a diminished America with a Muslim caliphate and “new world order” very different from anything Western minds can conceive.

In 2008 Americans bought the idea that “hope and change” would transform the nation in every conceivable way. Today we’ve seen what that transformational vision has fostered.

When Ahmadinejad speaks of a new world order, he doesn’t mean democracy. He means a totalitarian, religious dictatorship ruled by the messianic Muslim mahdi and enforcing all of the brutal strictures of Sharia law.

Before the rise of Islamist ultra-radicalism, many Muslims were moderate secularists. They allowed themselves to become integrated through immigration and practiced their faith within
those bounds. Turkey, for example, though having a Muslim majority, was recognized as secular. Lebanon also operated as a mixture of Christians and Muslims sharing power and running a relatively peaceful system.

One would therefore suppose Muslims could be broadly described as secular, moderate, or jihadist. One could say millions of secular and moderate Muslims did not participate in the jihadists’ bloodthirsty war of aggression, but fear prevented their overt opposition to it.

Historically, Islamic radicals have waged war in two ways: militarily and through infiltration. With military force virtually out of the question in America and Europe, infiltration became the approach. The tactic has transformed much of Europe and is beginning to change the United States.

Muslim enclaves are cropping up everywhere, not merely in the traditional strongholds of Detroit and Dearborn, Michigan. In Murfreesboro, Tennessee, for example, a huge mosque is being constructed, obviously to prepare for an influx of immigrant Muslims. We have already heard the inflammatory hate speeches and shouts of “Allahu Akbar” (“Allah is great”) that rang through the streets not far from where the World Trade Center once stood. Islamic terrorists in 2001 took more than 3,000 innocent lives there as they slammed airplanes into the towers.

A war from within is attempting to alter the demographics and governments of democracies. Enclaves dominated by Islamists and radical clerics may someday elect local, state, and federal officials from within their ranks. Already, Muslim authorities in some of these enclaves are demanding Sharia courts be established within their jurisdictions.

**Where Is the ‘Love’?**

We are repeatedly told Islam is a loving, peaceful religion and that anyone daring to say otherwise should be charged with a hate crime and prosecuted. If the hallmark of Islam is peace, love, and neighborly tranquility, how does one account for the thousands of Christians and others who are being slaughtered in Muslim countries?

On my desk is a photograph of what was a beautiful church in Pakistan engulfed in flames, along with a school attended by both Christian and Muslim children. The school was destroyed by an out-of-control mob. How can any religious group justify, in the name of its God, laying waste to communities that have done it no harm? And, to be fair, no harm was done by an insensitive film clip or cartoon, either. Yet people half a world away from America slashed, burned, and destroyed property and innocent men, women, and children.

To their shame, most of our leaders refuse even to acknowledge the dimension of the problem, while churches are being burned to the ground. Yet how many mosques are being attacked by Christians? It is time to stop coddling the perpetrators and hold them accountable for their crimes.

Secularists and moderate followers of Islam who claim to shun terrorism and radical objectives should be in the forefront of those calling for a halt to terror and suppression. If they truly desire to live in democratic freedom, it is in their own best interest to do so. Should the Islamic “new world order” be achieved, all people—including Muslims—who refuse to march under the black flag of militant jihad will be the first to fall under the hard hand of Sharia.

A holy war is being waged. And the black flag of jihad is waving a warning to all free people.

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**Endnote**

When Pastor Youcef Nadarkhani was finally released from prison in Iran in September 2012 after an ordeal of many years, people around the world rejoiced. They did the same recently when Rimsha Masih, the 14-year-old Christian girl (many say she is only 11) jailed for allegedly burning pages of the Qur’an, was released from jail in Pakistan.

However, these cases are merely the tip of the iceberg. Many Christians languish in prisons where they are tortured for their faith. Gospel for Asia said in October there has been a 400 percent increase in persecution of Christians in the 10/40 window, a geographic designation for the rectangular area extending from West Africa to East Asia and from 10 degrees south to 40 degrees north of the equator. Four billion of the world’s 7 billion people live there.

Raymond Ibrahim, with the David Horowitz Freedom Center and the Middle East Forum, wrote that, while Rimsha’s blasphemy ordeal was making headlines around the world, other atrocities were going unnoticed. Here is an excerpt from his report:

On August 14, another Christian girl, 12-year-old Muqadas Kainat (which means “Holy Universe”) was ambushed in a field near her home in Sahawil by five Muslim men who “gang raped and murdered her.” At the time, her father was at a hospital visiting her sick mother. He and other family members began a frantic search, until a tip led them to the field where his daughter’s body lay.

The postmortem revealed that she had been “gang raped and later strangled to death by five men.” Police, as usual, did not arrest anyone.

Similarly, on August 20, an 11-year-old Christian boy, Samuel Yaqoob, went to the markets of Faisalabad to buy food for his family, never to return. According to Wilson Chowdhry, chairman of the British Pakistani Christian Association, “After extensive searching his body was found near a drain in the Christian colony, bearing marks of horrific torture, with the murder weapon nearby. His nose, lips and belly had been sliced off, and his family could hardly recognize him because the body was so badly burnt. Some 23 wounds by a sharp weapon have been identified in the autopsy. When sending his body for an autopsy, police raised the possibility of sodomy. Parts of Pakistani culture have a strong homosexual pederast culture, and Christian and other minority boys are especially susceptible to rape and abuse because of the powerlessness of their community and their despised status. In one case fairly recently, a Christian boy was kidnapped, raped, tortured and killed by a police officer, his body similarly being dumped in a drain.”

These were just some of the stories concerning the sexual abuse and murder of Pakistan’s Christian children that occurred last August—even as the world stood in awe at the Rimsha Masih blasphemy case.

Ibrahim then supplied a long list of gruesome details involving Christian children who were savagely tortured and murdered.

In another article, he reported that Muslims in Tunisia sawed off the head of a young convert to Christianity while crying, “Allahu Akbar!” meaning “Allah is great.” It takes nearly two minutes of graphic knife-carving to sever the Christian’s head, which is then held aloft to more Islamic cries and slogans of victory,” he reported. Ibrahim said a top Egyptian leader has openly stated no Muslim has the right to apostatize or leave Islam, “based on the canonical hadiths, including Muhammad’s command, ‘Whoever leaves his religion, kill him.’” To learn more, go to tinyurl.com/meforumIbrahim.

Some Westerners believe public pressure will help stem this vicious tide of Christian persecution in the Islamic world. We urge you to pray fervently and to contact your elected officials for the sake of your brothers and sisters in Christ.

Endnotes:


4 Ibid.

Since the birth of modern Israel in 1948, a new form of anti-Semitism has emerged. Rather than attacking the Jewish people directly, it claims to oppose only Zionism and the sovereignty of the Jewish state. Most Christians who manifest it hold to Replacement Theology and have no use for Christian Zionists who believe Israel has a divine, biblical right to the Promised Land.

Consequently, a schism of sorts has developed within Christianity, with Replacement theologians on one side and dispensationalists on the other. And the schism is widening rapidly.

Unfortunately, Replacement Theology and anti-Semitism often go hand in hand. Over the past two millennia,
many who believe God has rejected the Jewish people and replaced Israel with the church despise the Jewish people’s very existence.

Of course, not everyone who holds to Replacement Theology is anti-Semitic. And some who attend Replacement churches love Israel and believe God has a future for it.

Historically, however, most of the churches involved in anti-Semitism believe the church has become the “new Israel,” and all the glorious things God has promised Israel now belong to them. Christian Zionists see Israel and the church as separate entities, with separate divine programs and destinies.

**The Attack on Christian Zionism**

Proponents of this new anti-Semitism claim Christian Zionism unduly influences the U.S. government to support Israel and empowers Israel to resist peace and maintain its so-called occupation and oppression of Palestinian Arabs.

They champion the plight of Palestinian Arabs in Israel, who hope their anti-Israel, anti-Christian-Zionist rhetoric will force Israel to withdraw from the West Bank as it withdrew from Gaza in 2005, thereby creating what they feel will be a lasting peace through the establishment of a sovereign Palestinian nation.

Though the idea of land for peace contradicts reality, its proponents aggressively pursue their cause, lobbying for boycotts of Israeli products, divestment from companies doing business with Israel, and economic sanctions against Israel. They also attack Dispensationalism and Christian Zionism, calling them racist obstacles to peace.

These people would have us believe they are not anti-Semitic. However, to threaten a nation’s sovereignty is to threaten its people. The new anti-Semitism deceitfully repackages the age-old venom against the Jews—and it is effective.

A March 2012 survey by the Anti-Defamation League reported anti-Semitic attitudes are at alarming levels in 10 European countries. Compared to 2009, “levels of anti-Semitism have increased most dramatically in Hungary, the United Kingdom and Spain,” resulting in Holocaust denial and increased attacks on Jewish people and synagogues.

Perhaps most troubling is the extent to which this new anti-Semitism is being embraced by church leaders in Europe, America, and Israel. Unfolding before our eyes is a church-led campaign against Israel and Christian Zionism that not only threatens Israel’s existence but is also driving a wedge between Christians who hold toReplacement Theology and those of us who believe God has a future for ethnic Israel.

Denominations and parachurch organizations participating in this retreaded anti-Semitism include the United Church of Christ; Presbyterian Church (USA); the Church of England; the United Methodist Church; the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA; the Church of Scotland; the Reformed Church of America; the Methodist Church of England; the Roman Catholic Church; Bethlehem Bible College, Bethlehem, Israel; World Vision; and the World Council of Churches.

The movement’s most prominent leaders over the past dozen years are:

- Donald E. Wagner, ordained Presbyterian minister and director of the Center for Middle Eastern Studies, North Park University, Chicago, Illinois.
- John Stott, the late theologian and rector emeritus of All Souls Church in London.
- Hank Hanegraaff, president of the Christian Research Institute and host of the “Bible Answer Man” radio program.
- Tony Campolo, Baptist minister, author, and professor emeritus of sociology at Eastern University in Pennsylvania.

Naim Ateek, founder of Sabeel, the Palestinian Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center in Jerusalem.

Mitri Raheb, pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Christmas Church, whose website lists its address as “Bethlehem, Palestine.”

Sizer is the recognized champion of Christian Palestinianism, a term coined by Dr. Paul Wilkinson of Lancashire, UK, to describe this new anti-Israel crusade. Sizer has written numerous books on the subject, led and spoken at conferences on it, cofounded an anti-Christian-Zionist organization, and joined Palestinian Muslims and terrorists in opposition to Israel.

Christian Palestinianism claims modern Israel has no biblical connection with, or justification for, owning the Promised Land; therefore, it concludes, Israel has become an apartheid state, occupying territory belonging to the Palestinian Arabs.

Christian Palestinianism sees Christian Zionism as hindering Israel’s removal from the West Bank. Replacement adherents have long differed with dispensationalists (who are Zionist) about Israel and the land. However, Christian Palestinianism has launched an all-out assault on Dispensationalism and Christian Zionism.

Sizer’s two most influential books are *Christian Zionism: Road-map to Armageddon?* (2004) and *Zion’s Christian Soldiers? The Bible, Israel and the Church* (2007). He presents Christian Zionism as an incredibly powerful political force whose dangerous heresy fuels the Arab-Israeli conflict and encourages the destruction of millions of people.

The late John Stott, a well-known British evangelical scholar and author, denounced Christian Zionism as “biblically anathema to the Christian faith.” Stott added, “I myself believe that Zionism, both political and Christian, is incompatible with biblical faith.”

Endorsing Sizer’s books, Hank Hanegraaff wrote, “Christian Zionist beliefs and behaviors are the antithesis of biblical Christianity.”

“According to the New Testament, God’s people is [sic] to be identified on the basis of grace, not of race,” said Gilbert
Bilezikian, a founding leader of Willow Creek Community Church in South Barrington, Illinois, and professor emeritus at Wheaton College.7

Tony Campolo said Christian Zionists “have embraced a theological perspective that has encouraged justice for Jews but has also led to the oppression of Palestinian people and extreme hostility between Christians and Muslims worldwide.” In an article in 2010, Campolo wrote, “The most serious threats to the well-being of the Palestinians in general, and to the Christian Palestinians in particular, come not from the Jews, but from Christian Zionists here in the United States.”9

Popular British theological scholar N. T. Wright wrote in 2001, “The American obsession with the second coming of Jesus—especially with distorted interpretations of it—continues unabated. Seen from my side of the Atlantic, the phenomenal success of the Left Behind books appears puzzling, even bizarre.”10

Barbara Rossing, an ordained minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, opened her 2004 book, The Rapture Exposed, by saying, “The Rapture is a racket. . . . We are not Raptured off the earth, nor is God. . . . God will never leave the world behind.”11

Opponents often accuse Christian Zionists of being selfishly motivated. The truth, however, is that we are Zionists because that is what the Bible teaches, not because we believe we can force God’s hand.

Dispensational Theology threatens the Palestinian people’s myth that Jesus was a Palestinian sent to free them from oppression, as Palestinian Liberation Theology teaches. Determined to counter Zionism, Jack Sara, president of Bethlehem Bible College, has said Ezekiel 37 refers to the West Bank; and the dry bones God resurrects are those of the Palestinian people. (It actually speaks of God resurrecting ethnic Israel.)

These people even charge Christian Zionists and Israelis with using guilt for the Holocaust to shield Israel from criticism. Today Palestinian Arabs are portrayed as the latest “Holocaust” victims. Regina Sharif, a secular historian, maintains, “On the theoretical as well as on the practical level, the Nazis and the Zionists saw eye to eye. . . . Zionism, racism, and anti-Semitism are all part of one phenomenon.”12

British journalist Alan Hart went so far as to state on his website, It’s time to give Israel’s hardcore Zionists their real name. They are the New Nazis. . . . If Europeans and Americans don’t stop the New Nazis, it’s likely their endgame will be the extermination of millions of Palestinians.13

**Pushing Their Propaganda**

The Christian Palestinian movement gets its message out. Conferences bring together like-minded theologians and church leaders to develop their arguments. Conferences provide a stage from which to wage a propaganda war against Israel and Christian Zionism.

Sabeel’s many international conferences have been sponsored by the World Council of Churches, the Presbyterian Church (USA), and the Church of England.14 The last two years have seen Christ at the Checkpoint conferences organized and sponsored by Bethlehem Bible College, and printing presses are busy cranking out books that hype Christian Palestinianism.

One of the greatest propaganda tools is the Kairos Palestine Document, adopted in 2009. Modeled after the 1985 Kairos documents in South Africa, it calls the Israeli “occupation” of the West Bank an “evil” and a “sin,” for which there should be repentance.15

It blames the Israeli government for the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, argues that Israel is an apartheid state, condones all forms of resistance, calls for an end to the “Israeli occupation of Palestinian land,” and seeks “an independent Palestinian state with Al-Quds [Jerusalem] as its capital.”16 The document further calls on governments around the world to apply political and economic pressure on Israel—the key tools being boycotts, divestments, and sanctions.17

Many of the denominations and organizations aligned with the Christian-Palestinian cause have adopted resolutions condemning both Israel’s presence in the land and Christian Zionism; and some have called for boycotts of Israeli goods, divestment from corporations operating in Israel, and economic sanctions. They charge Christian Zionists and dispensationalists with misrepresenting biblical truth and standing in the way of peace. In 2009, the World Council of Churches called for an end to what it considers the illegal occupation of “Palestine” and endorsed establishing a Palestinian state.

**Strange Bedfellows**

It is interesting to see the bedfellows a cause will draw together. In their zeal to accomplish their goals, the Christian-Palestinian movement has aligned with Muslim scholars, clerics, and even terrorists. Stephen Sizer, Gary Burge, and Donald Wagner participated in the Evangelical Christian-Muslim Dialogue meetings and the extended conversation with Islamic scholars sponsored by the World Islamic Call Society.

Muslim scholars and clerics have received Sizer warmly in his travels, including in Iran and Lebanon. Christian-Palestinian leaders have shared the platform with people committed to Israel’s destruction, including Hamas and the Palestine Liberation Organization, and have gone so far as to express support for and solidarity with these terrorist groups.

With God On Our Side, a film released in 2010, is a biased documentary critiquing Christian Zionism; but its ultimate aim is to denounce it. The film contains interviews of many key players in the Christian-Palestinian movement, including Sizer and Burge, and has been shown in churches and universities in both the United Kingdom and America. Sadly, it is contributing to anti-Semitism in Replacement Theology churches.
Christian Palestinianism is fomenting anti-Israel, anti-Christian-Zionist rhetoric that is not supported by Scripture or by reason. The movement’s penchant for over-simplifying the issues and refusing to acknowledge radical Muslim terrorism as the biggest obstacle to peace shows its true face. As Golda Meir, late prime minister of Israel, once said, “If the Arabs put down their weapons today, there would be no more violence. If the Jews put down their weapons, there would be no more Israel.”

As Christian Zionists, we must be vigilant against the efforts of the Christian-Palestinian movement. There is much we can do for Israel. We can purchase Israeli goods and support companies that do business with Israel. We can share our support of Israel from the Bible. We can stand up for Israel whenever it is under attack. And taking a trip to Israel is a tangible way of helping Israel and receiving a blessing at the same time.

God has promised the Jewish people will never cease to exist (Jer. 31:35–36). No matter what the anti-Zionists do, God will not permit His beloved Israel to be wiped off the map.

ENDNOTES

3 Ibid., 10.
4 Cited in Donald E. Wagner, Anaxim for Armageddon (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1995), 80.
6 Ibid.
7 Ibid.
8 Ibid.
14 Wilkinson, 6.
16 Ibid.
17 Ibid.

James A. Showers
is executive director of The Friends of Israel.
The WCC: No Friend to Israel

Companies on the anti-Israel hit list include (clockwise from top) Ahava, a Dead Sea cosmetics company based in Israel (Naum Chayer/age fotostock/SuperStock); Motorola (John Gress/Corbis); Caterpillar (Shawn Lowe/iStockphoto); and Hewlett-Packard (Imaginechina/Corbis).

The World Council of Churches’ negative attitude toward Israel has been evident from the organization’s formal inception in 1948. Its website speaks of helping “displaced Palestinians” following World War II but says nothing about helping Jewish people who had endured the horrors of the Holocaust. Nor did it help Jewish settlers who were continually besieged by Arab gangs and militias in the years leading up to the official reestablishment of Israel.

On the one hand, the World Council of Churches (WCC) avows neutrality and commitment to “ensuring the well-being and security of both the Israeli and Palestinian peoples.” On the other hand, it demonstrates a decidedly anti-Israel bias.

Its spurious policy of June 3, 2012, advocating for “justice in Palestine,” is erroneously based on what it calls a “conviction that has grown as 40 years of illegal occupation of Palestinian territory has claimed lives, distorted the rights of both peoples and deepened the conflict between them.” The WCC emphasizes, “This is the core of World Council of Churches policy toward the [Arab-Israeli] conflict.”

The World Council of Churches’ thrust deeper into social welfare programs and redistribution of wealth over the past decade explains why it not only provides relief for Palestinians but actively promotes the Palestinian cause while disparaging Israel.

The WCC’s blatant pro-Palestinian bias and brazen geopolitical revisionism is evidenced in its frequent use of the term Palestine Israel: the Palestine Israel Ecumenical Forum (PIEF), the Ecumenical Accompaniment Program in Palestine Israel (EAPPI), the Policy on Palestine Israel, and World Week for Peace in Palestine Israel.

Every year, under the EAPPI umbrella, the World Council of Churches sponsors “around 100 ‘ecumenical accompaniers’ (EAs) from different countries to vulnerable communities in Palestine, where their task is to protect and show solidarity with the latter, and advocate on their behalf.”

The work purportedly “exposes the violence of the occupation, violations of human rights and humanitarian law, and advocates for their end.”

In July 2012, Arutz-7 reported, “It came to light that EAPPI had issued a publication, entitled ‘Chain Reaction,’ which calls on supporters to stage sit-ins at Israeli embassies, to hack government websites in order to promote its message and declares EAPPI’s support for the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions campaign against Israel.”

Whitewashing Terrorism

In November 2009, the Kairos Palestine Document was issued, subtitled “A moment of truth: A word of faith, hope and love from the heart of Palestinian suffering.” It was accepted and endorsed by the Palestine Israel Ecumenical Forum and promoted by the World Council of Churches. Yet it distorts reality, demonizes Israel as a ruthless government oppressing the Palestinian people, and refers to Palestinian terrorism as “legal resistance.”

It also wrongly blames Israel for the entire conflict: “If there were no occupation, there would be no resistance, no fear and no insecurity.” Of course, it never mentions the countless Arab attacks on Jewish people in Israel in the 1920s through 1940s, prior to the so-called occupation.

Dexter Van Zile, an American Christian who is a media analyst for the Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America (CAMERA), sized up the situation:

In the WCC’s narrative about the Arab-Israeli conflict, all of humanity’s worst traits are projected onto Israel while its adversaries are portrayed as forced into wrongdoing by Israeli policies, as if they have no moral agency, will or agenda of their own. This is dishonest.
The Big Convergence

Powerful evidence is mounting that we are in the middle of worldwide convergences—stunning unifications taking place across the planet on at least four fronts: economic, legal/political, religious, and technological.

Everyone knows that when financial markets in Asia or Russia sneeze, NASDAQ and the New York Stock Exchange get colds. Ideas about a one-world currency, once relegated to the zany-conspiracy category, are being taken seriously. In an article titled “Dream of Universal Currency Just Won’t Die,” Wired editor David Wolman now writes, “It would behoove us to seriously analyze the pros and cons” of a one-world currency.

On the legal and political fronts, never before has the United States become so entangled in both the letter and spirit of so many international treaties and tribunals. The World Trade Organization (WTO) is but one. Both presidential candidates in the last election boasted about their past or proposed use of the WTO. Before leaving office, President Bill Clinton attempted to tie the United States into the UN’s International Criminal Court, which could have been disastrous for American sovereignty. President George W. Bush reversed that move.

However, with President Barack Obama enjoying the luxury of a second term, much could change. Obama is perhaps the most international-leaning chief executive since Woodrow Wilson, and he may be even more so. America has invitations to join a host of international conventions that would usurp existing federal law. The Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement, for example, would revise American copyright law. Our State Department already has thrown U.S. support behind UN Human Rights Council Resolution 16/18, which is fundamentally at odds with the traditional understanding of the First Amendment.

There is also a convergence of religions, even going beyond the Christia movement that seeks to create a theological partnership between Christianity and Islam. (See chrislam.org.) When President Obama was reelected, the Dalai Lama, Tibet’s Buddhist head of state, congratulated and praised him as the man who “inspired the world with a call to take responsibility for the problems we face as global citizens.” This “call” is creating a religious melting pot focused on issues like environmentalism and eradication of world poverty, with a spiritual component.

Religion blogger Paul Brandeis Raushenbush said Obama’s victory will produce “a new day for religion in America” by creating a “pluralistic and inclusive” spiritual environment where Christianity will be merely a single part of a “wider circle of fellowship” among religions that address “poverty, environmentalism,” and a “more peaceful foreign policy.”

Though he stopped short of intimating the minting of a new, global theological ethic, one only has to read my newest novel, Brink of Chaos, or the predecessor, Thunder of Heaven, both co-authored with Bible prophecy expert Tim LaHaye, to see how easily that could occur.

The last convergence binds the others together—a type of one ring to rule them all, to borrow a phrase from J. R. R. Tolkien’s Lord of the Rings. It is global media technology centered on Internet communications.

Satellite and Web-based media technology provide instant connectivity around the planet. In the November/December 2011 issue of MIT Technology Review, researcher Aaron Brady noted that uniform “interoperability and standards” among Internet devices have made it far simpler for personal and “behavioral” data on all of us to be disseminated instantaneously across the earth. Congress is so concerned that it has held hearings on Google, wondering whether the Web giant has become too powerful; and the Senate has investigated the implications of facial-recognition technology used in conjunction with discrete cameras in restaurants, parks, and public venues to identify and track people remotely.

If we followed 19th-century German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, we would simply throw our hands up at these powerful, seemingly unstoppable trends. But Hegel wrongly believed people are simply prisoners of history. Christians know God is the great architect of our history and future. We also know the Word of God is inspired, certain, and infallible. Jesus said in Matthew 24:14 the “end will come” only after the “gospel of the kingdom” is preached “in all the world as a witness to all the nations.” These global events should not frighten us; rather, they should be a reason for rejoicing. After all, we have the assurance that, in His sovereign and compassionate will, our Lord is fully capable of directing all these vast, rushing convergences toward the completion of His eternal plan.

Craig L. Parshall is senior vice president and general counsel for the National Religious Broadcasters.
Getting to Know the World Council of Churches

Top: Britain’s former Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Rowan Williams, admired by the World Council of Churches (Ady Kerry/EPA/Corbis).
The World Council of Churches (WCC) describes itself as “the broadest and most inclusive among the many organized expressions of the modern ecumenical movement.”

Its website boasts that it “brings together 349 churches, denominations and church fellowships in more than 110 countries and territories throughout the world, representing over 560 million Christians and including most of the world’s Orthodox churches, scores of Anglican, Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist and Reformed churches, as well as many United and Independent churches.”

The banner under which it operates is the Greek word oikoumene (literally, “inhabited world”), which is prominently displayed in its logo; its website is oikoumene.org.

Yet the World Council of Churches is far from loyal to traditional Christian theology. It concentrates on socioeconomic issues and ecology, believes in redistribution of wealth, and is overtly pro-Palestinian. (See “The WCC: No Friend to Israel” on page 18.)

In its early years, it operated on the basis of a Christocentric-universalism: Everyone will go to heaven based on Christ’s atoning work. Then, in the mid-1990s, under the leadership of General Secretary Konrad Raiser, it moved even farther from biblical doctrine to a more pluralistic form of universalism. Its paradigm today calls for a new understanding, in which “the institutional distinctions between church and world and church and society fall in to the background.”

In other words, the WCC likes to think of the world as one enormous family and itself as helping that family socially and economically.

Trying to Heal the World

Raiser argues against Christian exclusivism and believes all religions somehow envelop Christ: “Wherever people have an experience of grace and salvation in their religions, they are encountering the “hidden

Redistribution of Wealth

The WCC’s Commission of the Churches on International Affairs was “among the first non-governmental organizations to obtain consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.”

Under the umbrella of the AGAPE (Alternative Globalization Addressing Peoples and Earth) reference group on Poverty, Wealth and Ecology (PWE), the World Council of Churches promotes programs to repair the disparity between wealth and poverty. In other words, it promotes redistribution of wealth.

According to the WCC, the “agro-industrial-economic complex” of the “global North” (i.e. industrialized countries like the United States) is primarily responsible for the planet’s perceived economic and environmental crises. Because the bulk of today’s WCC churches are in the developing nations of Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America, the Middle East, and the Pacific, it sees regions like Europe and North America as perpetrators of the current global predicament.

Convinced that climate change and poverty are due to man’s impact on the planet and that the church is complicit by “perpetuating a theology of human rule over the earth,” the WCC advocates “recognition and application of a concept that expresses a deep moral obligation to promote ecological justice by addressing our debts to peoples most affected by ecological destruction and to the earth itself.”

Apparently, the WCC has also taken upon itself the responsibility for this global redistribution of wealth. The WCC, PWE, and AGAPE published a joint statement suggesting, “As part of the study’s recommendations, it would be helpful to discuss taxation (as an explicit mechanism for redistribution of wealth and reparation for ecological damages) as well as measures to strengthen corporate accountability and responsibility (e.g. integrity pacts between corporations and communities).”
Many churches allocate funds for the WCC in their annual budgets. According to its website, its “church families” include the following denominations: African Instituted, Anglican, Assyrian, Baptist, Catholic, Disciples of Christ / Churches of Christ, Evangelical, Friends (Quaker), Holiness, Lutheran, Mennonite, Methodist, Moravian, Old-Catholic, Orthodox (Eastern), Orthodox (Oriental), Pentecostal, Reformed, The Salvation Army, Seventh-Day Adventist, United and Uniting, and Free and Independent churches.\(^{13}\)

If you want to know if your church helps fund the WCC, we recommend consulting your church leadership.

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ENDNOTES

2 Ibid.
4 Ibid., 57.
5 Ibid., 90.
9 Ibid.
10 “What is the World Council of Churches?”

Charles E. McCracken is the Canadian director of FOI Gospel Ministry in Brampton, Ontario.

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Quoteworthy

“What was right for King David is right for me. Jerusalem is the capital of Israel. . . . What differentiates Israel from other countries is the creativity. Israel is successful because it is one of several countries whose economy revolves around the human mind, and it is really a light unto the nations.”

—Rupert Murdoch
Founder and CEO of the media conglomerate
News Corporation, including
Fox Broadcasting
and The Wall Street Journal

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(REGENRY)

BY20 $19.95* US/CAD/AUD
In 1898, English engineer John Henry Patterson was sent to Kenya to build a bridge over the Tsavo River. But two ferocious lions were terrorizing and eating his workmen. Patterson hunted them down and killed them both, enabling the bridge to be completed; and the hides of the beasts are on display today in the Field Museum in Chicago, Illinois.

Patterson became a legend. However, a lesser known fact about this brave man is that he was a bold Christian Zionist.

John Henry Patterson (1867–1947) was brought up in a devout Christian home. He was well-versed in Bible prophecies about the Jewish people and their Promised Land and knew Genesis 12:3: “I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

At the outbreak of World War I in 1914, Patterson offered his services to the British War Office. Around the same time, two influential Jewish men were attempting to form a Jewish brigade to help the British and ANZAC (Australian and New Zealand Army Corps) forces fight the Ottoman Turks. The men’s major obstacle was the British High Command’s anti-Jewish disposition.

While visiting Alexandria, Egypt, Lt. Col. Patterson met the two men; and, with his help, they formed a Jewish brigade. It was composed mainly of volunteers from Israel, though at the time their homeland was still insultingly referred to as “Palestine,” a name meaning “Philistine,” which the Romans inflicted on the land in the second century to rid it of its Jewish identity. This Jewish group was to be a simple transport auxiliary unit. It received quite a designation: the Zion Mule Corps!

Persistence resulted in the formation of at least three more Jewish Royal Fusiliers units. But generally, the British High Command did not want Patterson and his Jewish Legions in active service at the front. Perhaps the illustrious empire did not want the world to see Jewish people as valiant warriors.

However, British losses were excessive, and soldiers were needed. Reluctantly, the High Command allowed the Jewish Legion to fight. The men fought bravely and with distinction. As a dazzling reward from anti-Semites within the British government and military, Patterson and the Legion received no official combat recognition.

In response, Patterson wrote two books praising the Jewish brigades: With the Zionists in Gallipoli (1916) and With the Judeans in Palestine (1922). For years after the war, Patterson stayed in contact with his Jewish friends, sharing their longing for the rebirth of the Jewish nation in its biblical homeland.

When war began again in 1939, Patterson and a former brigade member knew that this war would be horrific for European Jewry. As fearless as lions, they approached the British government to form a Jewish army of 100,000. The idea was rejected. They then appealed to the United States about raising a massive Jewish army to fight Nazi Germany. That appeal, too, was rejected.

Early during World War II, perhaps as reports of Nazi atrocities were emerging, Patterson felt led to write and publish a scathing article titled “Behind the Palestine Betrayal.” It condemned the British Colonial Office for frustrating the implementation of the 1917 Balfour Declaration, which publicized the British government’s support of a Jewish homeland in Palestine.

Disgusted with Britain’s persistent anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism, John Henry Patterson finally moved to the United States. Although well into his seventies, he channeled all his energies into Zionist organizations.

He died peacefully in his sleep in 1947. Six months later, the State of Israel was born. His cremated ashes rest in Israel. The Tsavo lion hunter who dared to stand up to the lion of England is forever remembered as the fearless lion for the cause of Israel.
Incoming freshman Ariel Kaplan and his parents had no idea what they were walking into when they arrived on the campus of the University of California (UC), Berkeley, several years ago. As they strolled to an orientation seminar, they were confronted by students chanting slogans for Israel’s destruction and carrying signs that spewed hatred for all to see: “Israel Fascist!” “Israel Racist!” “Free Palestine!” “Holocaust in Palestine!”

“My dad tried to engage them in conversation,” Ariel said. “I think he thought he could change their minds.” Instead, his father was shouted down with demeaning, hateful, and vulgar language.

The rally, sponsored by Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP), was Ariel’s welcome to UC Berkeley, the university he had chosen to attend because it is liberal, even radical, elite, and public. He felt it had a “mystique” about it.

Yet there was nothing mystical about SJP. The incident helped birth Ariel’s passion for Israel advocacy. It also gave him a firsthand look at anti-Semitism and what he calls its
college chapters that it is virtually everywhere. And it has ties to al-Qaeda and Hamas.³

Former FBI special agent John Guandolo told CBN News, “The MSA serves as a recruitment tool to bring Muslims into the Brotherhood.”⁴ Even worse, terrorism expert Patrick Poole told CBN, “The Muslim Students Association has been a virtual terror factory. Time after time after time again, we see these terrorists—and not just fringe members: these are MSA leaders, MSA presidents, MSA national presidents—who’ve been implicated, charged and convicted in terrorist plots.”⁵

UC Berkeley is only one of the MSA’s many chapters. Its website, msanational.org, lists more than 200 “affiliated chapters” in North America, including Harvard; Yale; University of Chicago; University of Pennsylvania; Brandeis in Waltham, Massachusetts, a suburb of Boston; McGill in Montreal, Quebec, Canada; Ohio State; Smith in Northampton, Massachusetts; most State University of New York (SUNY) campuses; the University of Florida; Middlebury College in Vermont; Georgetown University in Washington, DC; Texas Christian University; and the list goes on.

There are also hundreds of non-affiliated chapters, as well as chapters in high schools and technical schools. Some operate under different names. The website explains how to set up a chapter and receive tax-exempt status.

According to The Investigative Project on Terrorism, The Muslim Students Association (MSA) is the most visible and influential Islamic student organization in North America.⁶ MSA has gained legitimacy on American campuses as a benevolent collegiate faith club; however, under this moderate veneer MSA advances a different agenda among impressionable college students. Through conferences and events, publications, websites and other activities, MSA has disseminated and promoted militant Islamic ideologies.⁶

Daniel Greenfield, with the David Horowitz Freedom Center, reported in his book Muslim Hate Groups on Campus that the MSA “has also raised money for terrorist support groups such as Global Relief Foundation, an al-Qaeda front, and the Holy Land Foundation, a Hamas front.”⁷

The MSA magazine, Al-Talib (Arabic for “the student”), the largest Muslim student news magazine in America,⁸ praised Osama bin Laden as a “freedom fighter.”⁹

While the MSA tries to maintain the appearance of being a cultural and religious organization, Students for Justice in Palestine takes a more overtly radical approach and freely calls for the obliteration of Israel.

Founded at Berkeley in 2001, SJP has spread widely. An Anti-Defamation League report says in 2010–11, new SJP chapters emerged at Tufts University in Medford, Massachusetts, outside Boston; Ohio University; and the University of Vermont. “There are now SJP chapters on more than 75 campuses across the country,” the report said.¹⁰

Wrote Greenfield, Originally describing itself as a coalition, SJP was constructed by experienced Islamist and Marxist activists for the sole purpose of waging a campus war against the Jewish state. The year 2000 marked the beginning of the Second Intifada against Israel, the Intifada of the suicide bombers. This Intifada also coincided with a growth in the power of Hamas and an intensification of the political left’s animus against Israel and the Jews. It was the backdrop against which SJP was born.¹¹

SJP has ties with the MSA and its parent organization, the Muslim Brotherhood, and has the same types of associations as the MSA. “In practice,” wrote Greenfield, “Students for Justice in Palestine has no priorities higher than those of the MSA, Hamas, and the Muslim Brotherhood.”¹²

"venomous, vile hatred of the idea of Israel.” The Anti-Defamation League called SJP “the primary organizer of anti-Israel events on campus.”¹

Unfortunately, Ariel’s experience is not unique. SJP is part of a comprehensive Islamic plan to change the face of America by molding its young people to hate Jews, hate Israel, and embrace Islam. Apparently it’s working because polls show that, while 66 percent of Americans are pro-Israel, merely 32 percent of college students are—and that number is only expected to decline.²

The Long Arm of the Muslim Brotherhood

SJP is one of two major Islamic organizations on American campuses today. The other, the Muslim Students Association (MSA), was created more than 50 years ago by the Muslim Brotherhood. It has so many affiliated and unaffiliated
When he enrolled at UC Berkeley, Ariel had no idea he would face such animosity toward Jewish people and Israel. So he became involved in Israel advocacy (See “Ariel and Israel Advocacy” on page 27). Humanly speaking, he faces an uphill battle against a well-oiled, well-funded Muslim machine. Can Israel advocacy help stem the tide of anti-Semitism sweeping the world today? One can hope. Jesus’ words come to mind: “With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible” (Mt. 19:26).

Steve Herzig is the director of North American Ministries for The Friends of Israel.
Ariel is a native Californian. He considers himself moderately religious, though he possesses a strong Jewish identity due to his family’s affiliation with “modern Orthodox” synagogues and his own trip to Israel in 2004.

His experience with anti-Semitism and hatred for Israel at the University of California (UC), Berkeley, compelled him to Israel advocacy. But no organization he looked into on campus was equipped to compete with the well-organized, effective Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP), a far-reaching arm of the Muslim network.

One day he responded to an invitation to the Israel Action Committee sponsored by Hillel, the largest Jewish campus organization in the world. Excited about the prospect of taking action to counter the lies he had heard, he attended a meeting. What he found were students who were more interested in eating pizza paid for by Hillel than in advocating for Israel. While SJP was working feverishly to spread lies, this group was watching movies and hanging out, he said.

So in 2007, while a junior at Berkeley, Ariel Kaplan helped start the pro-Israel advocacy group he was looking for—Tikvah: Students for Israel (SFI). Tikvah is Hebrew for “hope.” Its website, tikvahsf.berkeley.edu, explains that Tikvah “is a group of students at UC Berkeley dedicated to advocating for Zionism—the national movement of the Jewish people for self-determination in their homeland, Israel.”

Finding professors interested in helping Tikvah is difficult, however. While most pro-Israel professors are unwilling to express their views publicly, pro-Palestinian professors are vocal and plentiful, Ariel said. With such an imbalance, many pro-Israel people keep silent out of fear.

Even Ariel’s Jewish studies class had a pro-Palestinian instructor who taught that Jewish people living in Arab countries in the 1940s and 1950s “left on their own.” In a telephone interview, Ariel told us his classmate challenged the instructor, explaining they were forced to leave. The professor dismissed the objection, calling it a “typical Zionist response.” Yet the man knew firsthand what he was talking about: He is of Iranian-Jewish descent, and his family was among the thousands of Jewish people forced to flee the Middle East due to extreme anti-Semitic persecution.

Ariel is also up against people like Rutie Adler, an Israeli Jewess who has been teaching Hebrew at Berkeley since 1986 and is an outspoken supporter of International Solidarity Movement, a nonviolent, pro-Palestinian, anti-Israel group.

In 2011 she was one of 30 UC Jewish Studies professors defending radical Muslim students. The professors were asking the Orange County district attorney to drop all charges against members of the University of California, Irvine (UCI) extremist Muslim Students Union who conspired to disrupt Israeli Ambassador Michael Oren when he spoke at the invitation of UCI’s School of Law and Department of Political Science in 2010.1

Although a minority of students belong to SJP, Ariel said, many are almost “professional students” (graduate students on campus for years). “You find cases of 35-year-old graduate students who seem to spend more time doing anti-Israel advocacy on campus” than studying, he said.

To Ariel, it seems like he’s a soldier in a war, fighting for the minds of students. His goal is to make people aware of the anti-Israel bias permeating college campuses and to exhort Americans to stay informed, correct misinformation when they see it in the news media by contacting the editors, and write their congressmen.

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1 “UC Faculty: Jewish Studies Faculty at the University of California Ask D.A. to Drop Charges,” Stand with the Eleven, March 3, 2011 <tinyurl.com/927yrd>.

by Steve Herzig
Israel’s Legal Right to Its Land
Based on international law, April 24, 1920, was when modern Israel was given the legal right to become a nation. As Bible-believing Christians, we all believe that, at the end of the day, it only matters what the Lord has promised in Scripture.

The Bible teaches God gave the Jewish people the land of Israel. This fact is repeated many times throughout the Bible. But what is the true history of the rise and development of modern Israel among the community of nations? And what is its standing based on international law?

**The Balfour Declaration**

The Balfour Declaration issued by Great Britain on November 2, 1917, expressed British foreign policy: “His Majesty’s Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object.”

Britain backed up its stated policy when General Edmund Allenby and the British military took control of Jerusalem on December 11, 1917, toward the end of World War I. This conquest set the stage for the postwar division of what had been the Ottoman Empire.

After the First World War, the British controlled the area because they had captured it militarily. Wrote British historian Jonathan Schneer, “The Paris Peace Conference in 1919 and the San Remo Conference in 1920 ratified her rule and extended it indefinitely within the mandate system established by the League of Nations.”

The Balfour Declaration merely stated the official policy of the British government but did not have the status of international law. The Paris Peace Conference ended without a final solution concerning the status of Palestine, even though there was much discussion about it.

**The San Remo Resolution**

A meeting to deal specifically with the unfinished business of Palestine, which was to be seen as an extension of the Paris Peace Conference, convened on April 19, 1920, in San Remo, Italy. Present at the San Remo Conference were the four principal Allied Powers of World War I, represented by the prime ministers of Britain (David Lloyd George), France (Alexandre Millerand), and Italy (Francesco Nitti) and by Japan’s Ambassador K. Matsui. The San Remo Resolution adopted on April 25, 1920, incorporated the Balfour Declaration of 1917 issued by the British government.

**The Mandate**

On July 1, 1920, the British military administration that had controlled Palestine since December 1917 was replaced by a British civil administration covering all of Palestine on both sides of the Jordan River, with its headquarters in Jerusalem.

The Mandate instructed Great Britain to oversee Palestine with the goal of establishing a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine. Thus Great Britain was told to oversee the immigration of Jews to the land; and when there were enough to constitute a sovereign nation, Palestine would become the national homeland for the Jewish people.

A similar arrangement was made for Britain to oversee Mesopotamia (Iraq) and Transjordan (Jordan); France was chosen as the Mandatory authority for Syria.

Britain granted independence to Iraq in 1932 and to Transjordan in 1946; France gave independence to Syria in 1936. But Israel never received a grant of independence from Britain, even though this was the specific goal of British oversight.

**Why Britain Failed**

Great Britain failed to fulfill its obligations under the Mandate to shepherd the Jewish people into a Jewish state. The complicated and difficult 30-year period...
should have resulted in a peaceful recognition of what was legally established on April 24, 1920. But it did not.

First, the Treaty of Sèvres (1920) was the legal document that originally governed the carving up of the remains of the Ottoman Empire. Sèvres recognized Palestine was for the Jewish people, but it was superseded by the Treaty of Lausanne (1923) after Kemal Ataturk of Turkey overthrew the last Ottoman sultan and did not recognize San Remo. Thus the Treaty of Lausanne confused many as to whom really was given certain territories.6

Second, Arab opposition to Jewish immigration to Palestine began in April 1920 and continued for much of the next two decades, creating an obstacle to Israeli autonomy. The leader of these pogroms against the Jewish people was Haj Amin al-Husseini (1893–1974) who became the grand mufti of Jerusalem and the father of modern Arab terrorism.

The attacks of Arabs against Jews in Palestine occurred periodically until April 1937 when civil-war conditions broke out for about a year and a half, prompting the British to do something about it. British authorities attempted to arrest al-Husseini, but he escaped the country. Even while exiled in Beirut, al-Husseini was able to direct many terrorist operations in Palestine for another year and a half, ending in 1939. Al-Husseini’s Arab revolt, wrote American journalist Chuck Morse, “would result in the deaths of 2,652 Jews, 618 British and 6,953 Arabs.”7 The British became weary of the conflict and developed the view that fulfilling their mandate of forming an autonomous Jewish state was impossible.

Third, in addition to the difficulties of managing the Mandate in Palestine for Great Britain after the Lloyd George government passed from the scene in October 1922, the new governments that followed were increasingly less supportive of the Jews. Britain had made promises to the Arabs that sometimes conflicted with their mandate responsibilities, and too often they did not provide protection for the Jewish inhabitants in Palestine. Over time Britain changed the San Remo Resolution and their Mandate over Palestine with the issuance of The White Paper of 1939, which recommended partitioning Palestine into Jewish and Arab sectors. However, The White Paper did not change the constraints of international law since it was merely a statement of British policy. The British shift of policy had the effect of causing the international community and even Israel herself to forget her legal rights as the great storm cloud of World War II loomed on the horizon.

**Conclusion**

In the last decade, such legal scholars as Israeli Howard Grief and Canadian lawyer Jacques Paul Gauthier have demonstrated beyond a shadow of a doubt that the modern State of Israel possesses the legal right to its land based on clear international law. “The establishment of a Jewish homeland meant eventual statehood and hence the transfer to the Jewish people of sovereignty to all parts of the homeland including Judea, Samaria and Gaza,” concluded Grief.8

“After our examination of the principles of international law pertaining to belligerent occupation,” declared Gauthier, “we have concluded that Israel has the right to occupy the territories under its control since 1967, including East Jerusalem and its Old City, until a peace treaty is concluded.”9

In Israel during July 2012, a panel of judges headed by former Israeli Supreme Court Justice Edmond Levy issued a report. The Levy Report “did not present anything new in saying Judea and Samaria are not occupied territory according to international law.”10

The report recognized that Israel’s right to its land was founded on the San Remo Resolution. Current Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu commissioned the panel to “investigate the international legal status of these towns and villages and to provide the government with guidance relating to future construction of Israeli communities beyond the armistice lines.”11

It is exciting to see in the last year or two, in the Israeli discourse about the legality of the Jewish state, a growing awareness of its status beginning in 1920. Wrote Israeli-American journalist Caroline Glick,

> The international legal basis for the establishment of the Jewish state in 1948 was the 1922 League of Nations Mandate for Palestine. That document gave the Jewish people the legal right to sovereignty over Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem, as well as all the land Israel took control over during the 1948–49 War of Independence. Not only did the Mandate give the Jewish people the legal right to the areas, it enjoined the British Mandatory authorities to “facilitate . . . close settlement by Jews on the land, including state lands and waste lands not required for public purposes.”12

Israel has the legal right to its land based on international law. It also has the divine right on the basis of God’s promise to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and their descendants. Future history will bear this fact out, but not without great pain and suffering in the process. Maranatha!

**End Notes**


2 Schneer, 374.


5 Gauthier, 369.

6 Grief, 268–69.

7 Chuck Morse, The Nazi Connection to Islamic Terrorism: Adolf Hitler and Haj Amin al-Husseini (New York: iUniverse, 2003), 49.

8 Grief, 10.

9 Gauthier, 848.


12 Ibid.

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The WCC: No Friend to Israel from page 18

In addition to portraying Israel’s actions to defend its citizens as morally equivalent to those of terrorists murdering unarmed Israeli civilians, the WCC exorciates Israel while whitewashing its Islamic neighbors.

A recent incident is a case in point. During a two-year rampage, the Islamic Boko Haram in Nigeria killed more than 900 Christians—routinely robbing and raping them, slaughtering them in their homes, and burning them in their churches. The WCC entered into dialogue with the Royal Aal al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought to study and develop a plan to resolve the situation.

On July 12, 2012, the joint committee issued its report: “The primary causes of the current tension and conflict in Nigeria are not inherently based in religion but rather, rooted in a complex matrix of political, social, ethnic, economic, and legal problems.”11

So, in the wake of the horrendously brutal murders of more than 900 Christian brothers and sisters, the World Council of Churches had a chat with Islamic clerics and decided religion was not to blame. In the face of such atrocities, it issued hardly a word of condemnation.

Always Israel’s Fault

The WCC is extremely vocal about Israeli settlements, however. It routinely clouds the issue by using the phrase illegally occupied territories to describe the geographic areas that form the heart of biblical Israel. And it conveniently ignores the fact that the Jewish people built most of the “settlements” on the sites of ancient Hebrew towns and villages; on land they actually purchased with money before the State of Israel was born; and on reclaimed, non-arable land abandoned by Arabs who considered it worthless.

Whether it’s the Kairos Palestine Document, the Amman Call, the PIEF Strategic Plan, or member responses to these documents, the WCC fallaciously claims Israel illegally occupies land belonging to Palestinians.

In “Women Respond to the Kairos Palestine Document,” the WCC’s attitude is clear: “Whether the solution is one state or two, the occupation must end.”12 In other words, the only viable solution is to remove Israel from the land.

By promoting the Kairos Palestine Document, the World Council of Churches endorses the position that the “occupation” has generated a mass emigration of Christians from “Palestinian” areas.

Michael Oren, Israeli ambassador to the United States, countered that claim in a March 9, 2012, article in The Washington Post. Palestinian Muslims, not Israel, he said, are responsible for Christians leaving Palestinian-controlled areas. He said 200,000 recently fled Egypt, and 500,000 fled Iran due to Islamic persecution:

“The only place in the Middle East where Christians aren’t endangered but flourishing is Israel. Since Israel’s founding in 1948, its Christian communities (including Russian and Greek Orthodox, Catholics, Armenians and Protestants) have expanded more than 1,000%.”13

Kairos Palestine preferred to side with the Islams: “We refuse to be pitted against our Palestinian Muslim neighbours [sic] and friends,” the document said, “and we refuse to let our collective oppression be manipulated in a way that fragments us, obscures us, or masks the oppression’s true cause, which is the Israeli occupation.”14

Rather than admit Islamic persecution is driving Christians from cities where they have lived for generations, signatories of the Kairos Palestine Document, along with the World Council of Churches, falsely insist Israel is to blame.

The WCC routinely encourages member churches to use economic policies to cripple Israel and bring about change. In its June 2012 newsletter, PIEF reported the status of measures designed to bring an end to the so-called occupation. Here are a few:

- The Friends Fiduciary Corporation (Quaker), with $200 million in assets, pulled $900,000 worth of shares out of Caterpillar, Inc.15
- FinnChurchAid and EAPPI Finland are demanding “the government ban labelling [sic] of settlement products as ‘Made in Israel.’”16
- The Presbyterian Church (USA) entertained a motion at its General Assembly in July 2012 to divest from Caterpillar, Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola Solutions because, reported Arutz-7, these corporations “supply equipment to Israel, which, it alleges, enforce Israeli control in the occupied territories.” By a margin of only 333–331, with two abstentions, the motion failed.17
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In June 2011, the United Church of Canada voted to boycott six companies (Caterpillar, Motorola, Ahava, Veolia, Elbit Systems and Chapters/Indigo), joining others that support the Palestinians.18

Wrote Italian journalist Giulio Meotti, “Today, most of the divestment campaign against Israel is driven by Christian groups.”19 Unfortunately, many of those groups are influenced by the World Council of Churches.

Nearly seven decades after its formal debut, the WCC brokered intrusiveness that manipulates perceptions, while purposefully driving its own global agenda.

It’s not enough to be informed. Christians of biblical faith must raise a clear, strong, opposing voice and then act with conviction to quell the turbulent tide.

ENDNOTES

3 Ibid.
4 Ibid.
6 Ibid.
8 The Kairos Palestine Document,” World Council of Churches, 2009 <tinyurl.com/94488m>.
9 Ibid.
16 “…and we refuse to let our collective oppression be manipulated in a way that fragments us, obscures us, or masks the oppression’s true cause, which is the Israeli occupation.”
17 Ibid.
18 “The Churches Against Israel,” FrontPage Magazine <tinyurl.com/94998m>.
20 “The Churches Against Israel,” FrontPage Magazine <tinyurl.com/94998m>.
21 Ibid.
22 Ibid.
24 Ibid.
29 “…and we refuse to let our collective oppression be manipulated in a way that fragments us, obscures us, or masks the oppression’s true cause, which is the Israeli occupation.”
30 Israel is to blame.
31 The WCC routinely encourages member churches to use economic policies to cripple Israel and bring about change. In its June 2012 newsletter, PIEF reported the status of measures designed to bring an end to the so-called occupation. Here are a few:
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38 It’s not enough to be informed. Christians of biblical faith must raise a clear, strong, opposing voice and then act with conviction to quell the turbulent tide.

Charles E. McCracken is the Canadian director of FOI Gospel Ministry in Brampton, Ontario.
A Superior Revelation

God is in the process of revealing Himself to people who cannot see Him. We cannot know God apart from God making Himself known to us because we live in a physical world.

These points bring us to the fifth key to history: Christ crucified. Scripture calls Jesus “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (Rev. 13:8). From eternity past, God had a plan. Jesus is the central figure of human history. Three things we needed, Jesus provided.

We live in a world that is deeply influenced by evolution and supposed scientific theory. To have a rightly ordered life, we must understand (1) God is the Creator, (2) we are sinners with a responsibility to glorify God, (3) the earth is young, and (4) God created Israel to communicate His existence and essence.

(1) A Superior Revelation

God is in the process of revealing Himself to people who cannot see Him. We cannot know God apart from God making Himself known to us because we live in a physical world.
He lives outside that world. So we needed a superior revelation.

At various times in history, God gave mankind responsibilities (stewardships by which it might fulfill its purpose of glorifying Him). Mankind failed. People did not glorify God. Instead, they “worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator” (Rom. 1:25). Eventually, the world grew so evil God regretted He had made mankind and destroyed everyone but Noah and his family through a universal flood. But the government God established afterward, through the Noahic Covenant, also failed.

Later the Israelites failed to glorify God by living in obedience to the Law. He gave them on Mount Sinai. So they went into captivity and were dispersed throughout the earth.

God had been revealing Himself in stages through what is called progressive revelation. Each stage manifested more of His person and plan so that people might glorify their Creator. Yet, despite additional information, they turned away from Him.

We needed still greater revelation. So God provided it:

God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; . . . being the brightness [radiance] of His glory and the express image of His person (Heb. 1:1–3).

Jesus came to flesh out the revelation of God—to be, among other things, the exact representation of God’s nature:

John 1:18. “No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.”

John 14:9. “Have I [Jesus] been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me . . . ? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”

Colossians 1:15. “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.”

Colossians 2:9. “For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.”

Scripture says Jesus is the perfect balance of grace and truth. As such, He manifested God’s exact nature, speaking grace and truth in every situation: with a woman taken in adultery, with the Pharisees, with the disciples. Even when He appeared harsh, His balance, unlike ours, was perfect. Jesus provided a superior revelation.

(2) A Superior Sacrifice

People needed a better sacrifice for sin, as well. The Law was powerless to justify (make righteous) anyone who kept it. Jesus came “apart from the law”:

By the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe . . . For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:20–23).

Animal sacrifices could not impart righteousness or remove sin. “But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins” (Heb. 10:3–4).

Godly Israelites understood that fact. They brought their sacrifices with a contrite heart and humble, repentant spirit, and they received God’s grace when He covered their sins temporarily. The majority, unfortunately, brought sacrifices with the wrong attitude and did not receive God’s forgiveness.

Either way, however, the note would eventually become due. God’s solution was to prepare a body for Jesus:

Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: “Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but a body You have prepared for Me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You had no pleasure. Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come—in the volume of the book it is written of Me—to do Your will, O God’” (vv. 5–7).

Jesus came to offer a better sacrifice than the blood of bulls and goats. It was necessary that someone be qualified to die for the sins of the world. I wouldn’t be able to do it because I’m a sinner, which makes me an unfit sacrifice for a holy God. Neither is any other human being fit for the job for the same reason. Jesus was the only perfect One. Before the Incarnation, He was the eternal Son of God—the second Person of the Trinity. At the Incarnation, He became Jesus, the God-Man, as He took on Himself human flesh and emptied Himself of the glory that was His “before the world was” (Jn. 17:5).

The process is called the kenosis, from the Greek verb for “empty.” He left behind the external manifestations of who He was:

Being in the form of God, He did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation [emptied Himself], taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross (Phil. 2:6–8).

Jesus humbled Himself to become human, so He could die for us. Our redemption comes through Him:

[Christ] committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth”; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed (1 Pet. 2:22–24).

He offered a superior sacrifice: But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption (Heb. 9:11–12).

Jesus’ sacrifice was not confined to Earth. He went into the heavens with it: For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven.
itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; not that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood of another (vv. 24–25).

It was a better sacrifice offered with better blood in a better Temple, which is why it was made “once for all” and is sufficient to pay for the sins of the entire world. But people must appropriate that sacrifice individually by placing their faith in Jesus alone.

(3) A Superior Leader

Though the Bible is filled with people of great faith, Jesus transcends them all. He is the “author and finisher [perfecter] of our faith” (12:2). Moses, Joshua, and David were all illustrious leaders. But Jesus is greater than them all. One day, Jesus will sit on the throne of Israel and rule the world.

In Revelation 5, He stands as the Lamb before the throne, while the apostle John weeps, thinking there is no one to open an important scroll:

But one of the elders said to me, “Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals.” And I looked, and beheld, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth (vv. 5–6).

The story of Revelation is the story of the Lamb coming to the Father, taking the scroll from the Father’s hand, and opening it. In so doing, He unleashes judgment on the earth.

This same Jesus will return to Earth, and “out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations” (19:15). He is the Joshua. He is the Yeshua:

He Himself will rule [the nations] with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS (vv. 15–16).

Jesus is Prophet, Priest, and King. He is the Revealer (Prophet) par excellence. He is the Substitute, the One who offers Himself and then continues to function as High Priest. He is the King who one day will return. When you put these three offices together, you have the Messiah—the Anointed One who brings all things to fruition in God’s ultimate program.

It is no wonder we worship Him. It is no wonder the world revolves around Him and celebrates His birth. And it is no wonder that, one day, every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Phil. 2:10–11).

Adapted in part from the “Seven Cs of History” presented by Answers in Genesis.

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Jesus the ‘Palestinian’

In some Christian circles, the theological justification for gaining freedom from Israeli “occupation” is Christian Palestinianism, a form of liberation theology that emphasizes Jesus’ humanity and portrays Him as the great liberator of the poor and oppressed of this world. It replaces the Jewish Messiah of the Bible with a Palestinian martyr.

One of the first church leaders to connect Liberation Theology with the Palestinian cause was Naim Ateek, a Palestinian Anglican serving as canon of St. George’s Cathedral in Jerusalem. In 1989 he published Justice and Only Justice: A Palestinian Theology of Liberation, and he founded Sabeel, the Palestinian Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center in Jerusalem. (See “Palestinian Liberation Theology” by Christopher J. Katulka in the July/August 2012 issue of Israel My Glory.)

Palestinian Liberation Theology has redefined Jesus Christ. Ateek wrote in 2008, “Palestinian liberation theology focuses on the humanity of Jesus of Nazareth, who was also a Palestinian living under an occupation.” The belief that Jesus was a Palestinian who suffered under occupation has become popular among Palestinian Christians and is an effective propaganda tool against Israel.

Ateek’s 2001 Easter message equated Jesus’ sufferings 2,000 years ago with the struggle of modern Palestinian Arabs: “Jesus is the powerless Palestinian humiliated at a checkpoint... It seems to many of us that Jesus is on the cross again with thousands of crucified Palestinians around him. ... Palestinian men, women, and children are being crucified. Palestine has become one huge golgotha. The Israeli government crucifixion system is operating daily. Palestine has become the place of the skull.”

To arrive at their views, purveyors of Christian Palestinianism redefine God. No longer is He the God of Israel presented in Scripture but a God of their own making. They adopt a low view of Scripture’s authority and fail to develop their views of God and Israel from a thorough study of God’s Word.

First, they create a God who favors the Palestinian Arabs and writers off Israel. Then, they work to support their theories from the Bible. This is the opposite of how Scripture should be studied.

Ateek argues for a new hermeneutic, a new way of interpreting the Bible: “When confronted with a difficult passage in the Bible... one needs to ask... Does this fit the picture I have of God that Jesus revealed to me?... If it does, then the passage is valid and authoritative. If not, then I cannot accept it as valid or authority.”

In a book he authored in 2008, Ateek spoke of the Old Testament as needing to be “de-Zionized” and saw the unique role God assigned to Israel for His sovereign purpose as racist.

continued on page 41

10 Errors of Christian Palestinianism

What’s wrong with Christian Palestinianism? A great deal. Here are 10 of its most obvious errors:

1. It blames Israel for much of the conflict between Israel and the Arabs living in Israel and not only dismisses Islamic terrorists, but aligns with them in opposition to Israel.

2. It attacks Israel’s sovereignty but ignores the fact that Israel came to control the land because of Arab wars that sought to eliminate Israel. Its leaders fail to admit peace cannot be obtained simply by Israel withdrawing from the West Bank. Palestinian Arabs must recognize Israel as a nation and promise to live peaceably with it.

3. It ignores the biblical names for Israel. In the Bible, the West Bank is called Samaria and Judea. The biblical name for the entire land is Israel, not Palestine. The Romans renamed the land Palestine after they squelched the second Jewish revolt in A.D. 135. The renaming plays into the desire of Israel’s enemies who say, “Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation, that the name of Israel may be remembered no more” (Ps. 83:4). Refusing to call the land Israel identifies one as an enemy of Israel and of God, according to Psalm 83.

4. It ignores the biblical people of the covenant. There are no Palestinian people in Scripture. There has never been a Palestinian nation in the Bible or in history. However, Israel is referenced from Genesis 12 through the end of the Bible as the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. These descendants are the recipients of God’s everlasting covenant promise of the land.

5. It manufactures a Palestinian history that does not exist, and it redefines Jesus as someone He was not. In the process, it changes the purpose for which He truly came: to save the world from sin.

6. It is founded on a bias against Israel, rather than from a careful study of Scripture. The fact that Christian-Palestinian scholars say difficult passages should be ignored and the Bible should be “de-Zionized” confirms this error. God’s Word says, “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (2 Tim. 3:16, emphasis added).

7. It diminishes God and the authority of His Word. Twisting Scripture to justify one’s position violates the basic rules of language. Christian Palestinianism ignores context and literal meaning and selectively infuses its own meaning for some texts, while outright dismissing the meaning of other texts. The apostle Paul warned his protégé Timothy to be diligent in “rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15).

8. It corrupts the understanding of what God is doing on Earth—His plan for the ages as revealed through His written Word—by redefining God’s purpose for history and for His Redeemer, Jesus Christ. The Bible warns against preaching a gospel that differs from the true one (Gal. 1:6–9).

9. It presents God as covenant breaker by stealing the promises He gave to Israel, as well as Christ’s promised earthly inheritance.

10. It greatly exaggerates the Christian-Zionist influence on U.S. foreign policy. Christian Zionists wish they had such power. But in reality, it does not exist.

by James A. Showers
A Final Exhortation

The final eight verses of Hebrews 13 conclude the Epistle to the Hebrews. In them, the author exhorted Jewish believers one last time through a beautiful prayer he offered on their behalf.

He promised to visit them soon and possibly bring Timothy with him. Meanwhile, he greeted the readers and their spiritual leaders, who were selected to shepherd, strengthen, and encourage the believers to submit to the Lord, who cares for their souls.

The exhortation focuses on Christ’s shed blood, His resurrection, and the New Covenant, while telling believers to persevere to spiritual maturity. The final verses ask them to “bear with” (listen seriously and willingly to) the words of the letter.

A Final Prayer

First, however, the author requested prayer for himself and those with him: “Pray for us, for we are confident that we have a good conscience, in all things desiring to live honorably. But I especially urge you to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner” (Heb. 13:18–19).

His request is encouraging and reveals his humility, as well as his need of and confidence in prayer. He did not view himself as superior to others less mature than he in the faith. He was “confident” that he and those with him had “good” (clear) consciences in their motives and actions and that they ministered in the will of God.

The author’s ongoing desire was to live and minister honorably, with integrity before all men, but especially before the Jewish believers to whom he was writing. Prayer was all the more needful during his absence from them. The text implies something prohibited him from reuniting with his readers, but it is not specified.

He began his benediction by praying for his readers:

Now may the God of peace who brought our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen (vv. 20–21).

Many fascinating elements here provide a beautiful message.

First is the peace of God (v. 20). The focus is on peace secured through God the Father raising Jesus from the dead—not on any supposed discord between the author and those he addressed in the epistle, as some believe. It is through faith in Jesus Christ and God’s grace that people are justified and receive peace with and from God (cf. Rom. 5:1–2).

Second, the power comes through God, “who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead” (Heb. 13:20). This is the first explicit mention of Jesus’ resurrection in the book of Hebrews, although it is assumed throughout the epistle. Christ’s substitutionary sacrifice for us provided God’s power and peace, as God declared when He raised Christ from the dead.

Third, Jesus is the preeminent Shepherd, “that great Shepherd of the sheep” (v. 20). The spiritual shepherds within the church care for the souls of the sheep; but over them is Jesus Christ, who oversees the path, provision, and protection of believers.

Fourth, the price paid for our salvation was “the blood of the everlasting covenant” (v. 20). Christ’s blood was efficacious for the remission of humanity’s sins. It paid the price for the penalty of sin and brings believers into a New Covenant relationship with God (Mt. 26:28; cf. Heb. 8:6–13; 9:15–10:18). This covenant is called “everlasting” since it provides eternal life and cannot be annulled, abrogated, or replaced.

Fifth, the author prayed believers would be prepared for service, made “complete in every good work to do His will” (Heb. 13:21). The word complete means “equipped” for whatever service the Lord calls someone to do. God is able to work through equipped believers to accomplish His will.

Sixth, all believers should strive to please God. This goal is accomplished by allowing Him to work in us “what is well pleasing in His sight” (v. 21). To have such a life, Christians must not serve the Lord through the work of the flesh, but rather by yielding complete control of their lives to the indwelling and filling of the Holy Spirit.

The prayer concludes with a doxology of praise “through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen” (v. 21). The doxology can be addressed to God the Father, who is the subject of the prayer; Jesus Christ, the nearest antecedent within the prayer; or both. Praise and glory are attributed to God the Father and Jesus Christ, who provided the salvation mentioned in this prayer—but especially to Jesus, who provided reconciliation in the plan of salvation. This praise is to ascend to God “forever and ever.” The benediction concludes the epistle’s message, but not the epistle.
Verse 22 makes a final appeal to listen patiently to one more word of exhortation: “And I appeal to you, brethren, bear with the word of exhortation, for I have written to you in few words.” The author spoke affectionately, calling his readers “brethren,” which indicates he viewed them as believers in the Lord Jesus, loved them, had a close personal relationship with them, and cared for their spiritual well-being.

With tenderness and heartfelt concern for them, in humility and sincerity, he pleaded with them to “bear with” (listen to) him one more time. Some may have been ambivalent about remaining in the church because they were slothful in their walk with Christ and needed to be stirred up and reproved. So he gently and humbly asked them to pay conscientious, deliberate attention to his final exhortation without becoming exasperated.

The phrase word of exhortation refers to the exhortation given throughout the epistle. He implored them to stay committed to Christ; some had wavered due to persecution and the apostasy of others (cf. 2:1; 3:1, 12; 4:1, 11, 16; 6:1; 10:22, 35; 12:1; 13:1–3, 5, 7, 9, 13–17). Many needed to embrace the sound doctrines taught throughout Hebrews and leave the Jewish sacrificial system, with its ritual and ceremony.

While Hebrews might have seemed like an enormous, detailed letter to its readers, to its author it seemed like “few words.” The phrase few words refers to the length of the epistle in view of the enormity of the issues with which it deals. The letter is a brief compendium of the vast subject matter relating to the importance of Christ and His ministry; volumes could have been written on the issues (cf. Jn. 21:25).

Abruptly, the author included a note concerning Timothy: “Know that our brother Timothy has been set free, with whom I shall see you if he comes shortly” (Heb. 13:23).

Timothy is the only Christian in Hebrews mentioned by name. A full understanding of this verse requires information the author did not share. He did say Timothy was “set free,” meaning “released” or “set at liberty”—but from what? Most likely he was released from prison, but no New Testament reference confirms that the Timothy whom the apostle Paul mentored was ever in prison.

Since Timothy is called our brother, a phrase Paul used (2 Cor. 1:1; Col. 1:1; 1 Th. 3:2; Phile. 1), many believe it refers to him. Paul took that Timothy on his second missionary journey (Acts 16:1–3). He was with Paul in Corinth and was with him in Rome during Paul’s first imprisonment. During Paul’s second imprisonment, he asked Timothy to come to him quickly (2 Tim. 4:9). For these reasons, some commentators believe Paul wrote the epistle to the Hebrews. Nevertheless, there is no indication in the New Testament that Paul was the author.

Whoever Timothy was, he was not yet with the author, who hoped he would come soon and accompany him to visit the readers. Timothy’s whereabouts is not known, nor is it known where the author resided while writing the letter. We do know he was not in prison.

The author closed the epistle with a word of greeting and grace: “Greet all those who rule over you, and all the saints. Those from Italy greet you. Grace be with you all” (Heb. 13:24–25).

First, he greeted the spiritual leaders with warmth and affection, giving them special recognition over those within the church. Second, he greeted the “saints,” a common word for true believers—in this case, Hebrew Christians. Third, the Italians sent their greetings.

Commentators disagree as to the Italians. Where were they at the time this letter was written? Were they with the author? Were they inside or outside Italy? The verse gives no insight. It simply tells of their origin. They likely had some relationship with the Jewish believers or they would not have been mentioned. If they had no relationship with the readers, the author evidently explained the situation thoroughly to the Italians, who became deeply concerned for the readers’ spiritual conditions.

The epistle closes with a blessing and benediction: “Grace be with you all. Amen” (v. 25). This benediction was common in the first century and often concluded other New Testament books (cf. Rom. 16:24; 2 Th. 3:18; Rev. 22:21). Grace can be defined as “that intrinsic quality of God’s being or essence by which He is spontaneously favorable in His disposition and action to bestow unmerited favor, love, and mercy upon whom He chooses within undeserving humanity.”

God’s special grace to believers is manifested in their salvation, sanctification, serving, and suffering and is sufficient to strengthen them in every situation of life. This grace is marvelous, infinite, matchless, and freely bestowed on all who believe—as written in the hymn “Grace Greater Than Our Sin.”

God’s grace had been bestowed on and was experienced by the Jewish believers addressed in the epistle, resulting in their salvation. Now they needed to prove their commitment by living out their faith, which required being obedient to Christ and moving forward to maturity in Him. We must do likewise.

Editor’s Note: This concludes our series on the book of Hebrews, which began in the March/April 2008 issue of Israel My Glory. In the next issue, David Levy will begin a series on the First Epistle of John.

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The Grace of God (Part 2)

As we have seen, the two key Old Testament words for “grace” are hanan and hen. The Hebrew verb related to grace is hanan.¹ In one form, it means “be gracious” or “show favor.”² In another, it means “seek favor.”³ It always refers to “active acceptance and active favor.”⁴ And it always expresses a “positive” attitude of favor toward a person.⁵

The Hebrew noun counterpart is hen.⁶ It has two basic meanings: “grace” and “favor.”⁷ The word favor refers to “the positive disposition” one person has toward another.⁸ The noun hen can also mean “respect.”⁹ For example, Proverbs 28:23 refers to a man finding “more favor.” The noun “appears most often in the familiar” expression “find favor in someone’s eyes.”¹⁰ Another Hebrew word most often translated “favor” is panim, which means “face.”¹¹

Another word related to “favor” or “grace” is the verb pana, which means “turn.”¹² The fact that the verb pana is related to the noun panim, which means “face,” indicates God is asked to “turn and show His face (in mercy or kindness).”¹³ Thus “to show one’s face means to be favorably disposed toward a person.”¹⁴

God’s Declaration of His Gracious Nature

After the people of Israel had committed the grievous sin of making and worshiping the golden calf while Moses was on Mount Sinai with God, God threatened to destroy them but then relented (Ex. 32:1–14). Later He revealed He could make that decision because He is “The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth” (34:6).

God’s Sovereign Control Over His Administration of Grace

God thereby asserted He alone determines and controls the administration of His grace.

Old Testament Examples of God’s Grace

God’s Grace for Noah. Between the Fall of Man and the days of Noah, people became progressively perverted. When God looked at mankind during Noah’s lifetime, He “saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intend of the thoughts of [everyone’s] heart was only evil continually” (Gen. 6:5). As a result, the earth was filled with corruption and violence (vv. 11–13).

This condition was so intense and widespread “the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart” (v. 6). Thus God determined to “destroy man” and many land animals and “birds of the air” through a worldwide flood (v. 7).

By contrast, “Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord” (v. 8). God determined to favor Noah and his family by preventing them from being destroyed with the rest of humanity because “Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations,” and Noah “walked with God” (v. 9; cf. Ezek. 14:14).

God gave Noah and his family specific instructions for building and occupying an ark to preserve their lives from perishing in the flood (Gen. 6:14–21). God’s Grace for Joseph. Because the wife of Joseph’s Egyptian master falsely accused him of trying to have an illicit relationship with her, Joseph was thrown into prison (39:1–20):

But the Lord was with Joseph and showed him mercy, and He gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison. And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph’s hand all the prisoners who were in the
God's Grace for Benjamin. Because Joseph had been in Egypt apart from his family for many years, he had not seen his younger brother, Benjamin, for a long time. When he finally had opportunity to speak to Benjamin after the long separation, he said to him, “God be gracious to you, my son” (43:29).

God's Grace for a Man Who Has Lost His Garment. When God gave His law to Israel through Moses, He told the Israelites, “If you ever take your neighbor’s garment as a pledge, you shall return it to him before the sun goes down. For that is his only covering, it is his garment for his skin. What will he sleep in? And it will be that when he cries to Me, I will hear, for I am gracious” (Ex. 22:26–27).

God’s Grace for Moses. When God commanded Moses to lead the people of Israel from Mount Sinai to the land He had promised to give them, Moses reminded God that He had said to him, “I know you by name, and you have also found grace in My sight” (33:12). Then Moses said to God, “Now therefore, I pray, if I have found favor in Your sight, then show me a sign that it is You who talk with me” (v. 17). He was asking for God’s grace.

David and God’s Grace. After the child who King David fathered illegitimately through Bathsheba died, David said, “While the child was alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, ‘Who can tell whether the LORD will be gracious to me, that the child may live?’” (2 Sam. 12:22). David’s statement demonstrates God has authority to withhold His grace when it suits His sovereign purpose.

God’s Grace for the Northern Kingdom of Israel. God allowed Hazael, the king of Syria, to oppress the northern kingdom of Israel all the days of Jehoahaz, the northern kingdom’s evil king. “But the LORD was gracious” to the people of the northern kingdom, “had compassion on them, and regarded them, because of His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not yet destroy them or cast them from His presence” (2–Ki. 13:22–23).

The Prospect of God’s Future Grace and Mercy for the Southern Kingdom of Judah. God said He would be gracious to the people of Judah if its people returned to Him. When Assyria was a threat to the southern kingdom as a result of Judah’s spiritual decline, the prophet Isaiah declared to the people of Judah, “For thus says the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel: “In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and confidence shall be your strength.” But you would not, and you said, “No, for we will flee on horses”—therefore you shall flee! And, “We will ride on swift horses”—therefore those who pursue you shall be swift! One thousand shall flee at the threat of one, at the threat of five you shall flee, till you are left as a pole on top of a mountain and as a banner on a hill. Therefore the Lord will wait, that He may be gracious to you; and therefore He will be exalted, that He may have mercy on you. For the Lord is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for Him. For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem; you shall weep no more. He will be very gracious to you at the sound of your cry; when He hears it, He will answer you ( Isa. 30:15–19).

ENDNOTES

2 Ibid., 23. 3 Ibid. 4 Ibid., 24. 5 Ibid. 6 Ibid., 22. 7 Ibid., 24.
8 Ibid. 9 Ibid. 10 Ibid. 11 Ibid. 12 Ibid. 13 Ibid. 14 Ibid.
Irony of Ironies

Many people in the world do not realize Israel supplies its enemies in the Gaza Strip with electricity. Not long into the Israeli government’s Operation Pillar of Defense, designed to stop the steady flow of Hamas rockets into Israel from Gaza, Knesset Member Danny Danon called for Israel to cut off Gaza’s power supply.

According to The Jerusalem Post, Hamas owes Israel 103 million shekels ($26.3 million) for electricity. Angered by the proposal, Kuwaiti supporters of Hamas hacked into Danon’s website and shut it down.

However, if they were concerned about loss of electricity, they probably should have worried less about Israel and more about Hamas. Where were many Hamas rockets landing? In Ashkelon—the very site where the power plant supplying Gaza is located.

In fact, Arutz-7 recently published photos sent by a reader showing an Israel Electric Company (IEC) employee “hoisted on a crane in order to fix a malfunction that denied electricity to Gaza City. The operation . . . has to be carried out with military protection, because Gaza terrorists regularly target Israelis on the perimeter fence, including those they know are trying to assist them by fixing infrastructure or letting in goods. Numerous Israelis have been killed and wounded in precisely this way since 2000.”

The news service reported, “Soldiers therefore fan out around the electrical pole where the fixing needs to be carried out. The IEC workers are briefed and they put on helmets and flak jackets. To top it all off, a large metal wall is hoisted into the air by a crane in order to protect the IEC worker as he supplies power to Gazans, including the very people who will shoot him dead if they get a clean shot.”

A word from Meotti

Israel will be 65 years old this year, and it has lived with war throughout its existence. According to statistics provided by Italian journalist Giulio Meotti in IsraelNationalNews.com in November 2012, Israel endured more than 60,000 rocket attacks from its birth as a nation to that point.

The figure translates to 937 rocket attacks each year, or an average of more than two attacks a day. In 12 hours alone during recent hostilities, Gaza-based terrorists fired more than 100 rockets into southern Israel.

Meotti, who has consistently voiced his support for Israel, had this to say:

“Twenty years after the first Gulf War, Israel remains the only ‘bunkerized’ democracy in the world and is now even more relentlessly demonized and ghettoized. Israel is a small country. . . . It is the only country whose neighbors declare its very existence an affront to God and make its destruction a paramount national goal.

But if in 1991, Israel responded with understatement and quiet civil courage, let’s hope that today it will react differently to genocidal terrorism. Because, as Joe McCain wrote a few years ago, “The Jews will not go quietly again.”

And there is another big difference between London in 1940 and Tel Aviv in 2012: While the West backed the British resistance against the Nazi monster, Israel is alone in fighting a battle for all of us.

As Israelis are heading to shelters these days, the questions in their minds are two: Will the West come to our aid? How many friends can the Jewish state really count on these days?

Take a step forward and say that you are one of those friends. I did.”

Ulpan in Sderot

Despite the rockets falling in southern Israel, two new ulpan classes have opened in Sderot to teach Hebrew and other basic subjects to children of Ethiopian immigrants who arrived in Israel in October 2012 and have been residing at the Ibim Absorption Center near Sderot.

Forty Ethiopian children are enrolled. The school’s facilities are sheltered and rocket-proof. “The kids are actually safer at the school than in their homes,” said Shmulik Klein, a spokesman for AMIT, the organization running the school.

Rabbi Amit Orenbuch, who heads the boys’ class, welcomed the young immigrants and applauded Sderot students by saying, “Giving to the other, despite all difficulties, is the biggest virtue.”

The Jerusalem Post (jpost.com)

Gas leak under Haifa Bay

A geophysics research team from Haifa University has discovered a series of active gas springs on the sea floor under Haifa Bay. According to Dr. Uri Schattner, the springs his team discovered are at relatively shallow depths.

Seismic data identified pockets of gas beneath the seabed. “Based on this evidence, the researchers went out to sea four times to collect more data from the seabed and from under the sea floor. Geophysical information enables us to research beneath the sea floor and map out the entire system, from the gas sources to their penetration of the sea waters,” Schattner said.

What they found, however, exceeded all expectations: a gas deposit of 72 square kilometers (27.8 square miles) on the continental shelf, at depths of between 37 meters (121 feet) to 112 meters (368 feet). While many of the gases remain in the reserve, some still manage to escape into the sea.

“We don’t know yet what kind of gas we’re talking about, but its role in undermining the stability of the seabed is clear,” warned Dr. Michael Lazar, a member of the research team. “This means that any discussion of marine infrastructure development must seriously relate to this shallow gas stratus.”

Arutz-7 (IsraelNationalNews.com)
Jesus the ‘Palestinian’ from page 35

Ateek is not alone. Armed with Replacement Theology and a new hermeneutic, other Christian theologians are championing the cause of Christian Palestinianism. Determined to prove the nation of Israel has no modern-day, biblical right to the Promised Land, they redefine Jesus’ reason for coming to Earth to argue against Israel’s divine land grant.

In doing so, they are attempting to repackage Replacement Theology into what they call “Fulfillment Theology.” Colin Chapman, a lecturer in Islamic studies at a theology school in Lebanon, claims everything the Old Testament prophets said about the land and people of Israel was spiritually “fulfilled” 2,000 years ago through Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection. Therefore, Israel has no future or prophetic significance because the church is “the new Israel.”

Similarly, Gary Burge of Wheaton College claims, Jesus does not envision a restoration of Israel per se but instead sees himself as embracing the drama of Jerusalem within his own life. . . . The initial restoration of Israel has already begun inasmuch as Christ, the new Temple, the New Israel, has been resurrected.

Burge is on record as saying, “Some of my friends will accuse me of Replacement Theology. . . . There is another way to write this equation. I think I might call it ‘Messianic Fulfillment.’”

Acts 1:6–8 anticipates a future for Israel. As they gathered together, the disciples asked Jesus if He would at that time restore the Kingdom to Israel. However, in explaining this ancient conversation about reestablishing the Kingdom, Donald E. Wagner, director of the Center for Middle Eastern Studies at North Park University in Chicago, Illinois, says, “Here Jesus was telling the disciples not to place their trust in nor devote their energy to end-time prophecy or the militant Zionist ideology of the Zealots.”

The Christian-Palestinian arguments against any biblical justification for modern Israel’s possession of the land misrepresent the God of Scripture. God is no longer the covenant keeper; He is the covenant breaker. He is not the God who has promised a grand future for the nation of Israel; He is the God who has rejected Israel.

Replacement Theology is a seductive misrepresentation of Scripture; and people who believe God has given the church all the covenant promises He made to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and their descendants have no choice but to deny the covenant promise of the land to Israel.

The land issue is critical, for if modern Israel has a biblical basis for living there, then it also has a divine right to possess biblical Samaria and Judea (West Bank), the territory Israel is accused of “occupying,” thus denying Christian Palestinianism its most compelling argument.

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by James A. Showers

ENDNOTES

5 Ateek, A Palestinian Christian Cry for Reconciliation, 55.
7 Gary M. Burge, Jesus and the Land (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010), 60–61.
9 Donald E. Wagner, Anxious for Armageddon (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1995), 83.
Living in Israel is like living on a volcano. We are surrounded by enemies who want to destroy us. Those of us who believe in the mighty Lord, our Savior Jesus Christ, even have enemies among our own people. Most of them are ultra-Orthodox, and they do everything they can to fight against those of us who believe in the Lord according to the Holy Bible.

They try to make much trouble for us. I am on their blacklist. Some of them believe they are fighting a holy war against us. But despite everything they do, I am not afraid of them because I put my trust in the Lord, who said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you” (Heb. 13:5). So to whom do I speak most about the salvation that is in Jesus Christ? To the ultra-Orthodox!

For many years I went to them to show them the truth from the Holy Bible. I wanted them to read passages they never saw before so that they would understand more about our great God and Savior and go from darkness into light.

Not long ago, some of the ultra-Orthodox came to me at home. Not one or two came, but four! They had never been to our home before, but they all knew about me. And each one wanted to prove himself more active than his friends in fighting against someone who believes in Christ. For me, this was nothing new.

I have lived in this neighborhood in Jerusalem for 38 years. Most of the people here know me, and I am good friends with them. They come to me seeking help with home repairs. The Lord has blessed me with the ability to do carpentry and work with electricity. So I gladly go to people in need and fix their homes for free. I try to treat all of them with love.

The four ultra-Orthodox men first went to my neighbors, trying to turn them against me. They were surprised no one wanted to listen to them and instead cast them out of their homes. My neighbors’ support for me gave me more courage to speak about faith in the Lord. If the ultra-Orthodox knew what a great help they have been to me, they would not come here. They thought they could make people hate me,
but instead my neighbors showed me more love.

The four men were not happy. They came to my home and made a great scene, shouting at me. My neighbors began to gather, and the men yelled at them, “Do not listen to him. He is a traitor to Israel!”

But my neighbors defended me. They know I received the highest decoration the Israeli army gives because I fought in all of Israel’s wars until I retired. “If he were such a traitor,” one declared, “why would a general in the army come to him and give him such a decoration? We have seen it.”

The four were surprised. After a while they started to be friendly and wanted to know more about me. I did not have to say anything. My neighbors spoke for me. One said, “He is not a traitor but a great hero in Israel! An Israeli general came to him and gave him a great decoration. We have seen it with our own eyes. You call him a traitor because he has believed in the living God, according to the Holy Bible. And you call yourselves holy, but you are doing what is not right. You follow after your rabbis and not after what is written in the Bible.

“You say he is a traitor. But he fought for the land that the Lord has given to His Chosen People, Israel. And he follows what is written by the Holy Spirit of God.”

The ultra-Orthodox men were extremely surprised. One looked at me and said, “We are very sorry. We have made a big mistake. We have a lot to think about. Please forgive us.”

I replied, “The Lord gave Himself for our sins. So who am I to reject you? I receive your forgiveness.”

How grateful I am to God that He fought the battle for me, and all I had to do was stand still and see His deliverance. What a great God we serve.

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