Up to Jerusalem
MARCH 13-23, 2015

Our March to Jerusalem tour will mark 38 years of journeying to the land of the Bible. Never has there been a more exciting time to be in the land given to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The prophetic significance is overwhelming; and the historical significance, unprecedented. Meeting Jewish people who have come home from more than 100 countries is an exhilarating experience. And meeting Israeli believers, in Israel, will revitalize your prayer life and your commitment to Israel and its people.

A Unique Place
Israel is where history and the Bible converge. With our Bibles in hand, we will see with our own eyes how prophecy is being lived out in Israel today.

A Unique Emphasis
This is an exceptional tour, which is recommended for everyone.
• Soul-stirring visits to ancient biblical sites.
• Interacting with the people and places of modern Israel.
• Breathtaking views from the picturesque Galilee to the strategic Golan Heights to the golden city of Jerusalem to the shores of the Dead Sea.
• Walk where Jesus walked.

To request a detailed tour brochure, use the enclosed envelope or call The Friends of Israel Monday through Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. (Eastern time) at 800-257-7843 and ask for Lisa Grosso at extension 144. Or visit www.foi.org/events.

$4,090 | $2,780
LAND ONLY
PER PERSON
DOUBLE OCCUPANCY

These life-impacting experiences will touch everyone.

$100 EARLY BOOKING DISCOUNT
Our Israel in Focus calendars are as beautiful as ever, with breathtaking pictures of the Holy Land.

Our new 2015 children’s calendars, Journey Through the Bible, are one of a kind! They’ve been completely redesigned to do what no other calendars do... teach Genesis 1–11 in a colorful, fun format. They’re great for youngsters learning to read a calendar. And they’ll help them grow in God’s Word.

Available in U.S. and Canadian versions.

Our Journey Through the Bible calendars are as beautiful as ever, with breathtaking pictures of the Holy Land.

Available in U.S., Canadian, and Australian versions.

Available in U.S. and Canadian versions.

Available in U.S., Canadian, and Australian versions.

MIX AND MATCH AND STOCK UP TODAY!

Journey Through the Bible: Y15  |  Israel in Focus: Y15B
$7* each; 3 for $19*; 6 or more, $6* each.

Order online at foi.org, use the enclosed envelope, or call us at 1.800.345.8461 (USA) | 1.888.664.2584 (CANADA) *Additional shipping charges apply. In Canada/Australia, prices include GST/HST.
Israel: Forever a Fact
by Elwood McQuaid.........................12
The squeaky wheel gets the grease, and Replacement devotees are squeaking long and loud these days. Yet sometimes their impact isn’t all it’s cracked up to be.

Top 5 Flaws of the Israel Apartheid Movement
by Shelley Neese..........................18
Israel’s enemies try to make it look like Israel is as South Africa used to be. But the comparison does not hold up, as this outstanding article demonstrates.

The Art of Reframing: Palestinian Liberation Theology
by Charles E. McCracken...............20
How can Christians embrace an anti-Israel narrative? How can they claim Christian Zionism is based on violence? Read this article to find out.

Dr. Ateek’s Rose-Colored Glasses
by Lorna Simcox..........................24
Arab Christians in Israel are free to practice their faith. Not so in Muslim countries. So why does Dr. Ateek not want Israel to control the entire area? The answer may surprise you.

Pushing the Anti-Israel Agenda
by Christopher J. Katulka................28
How can Americans force the U.S. government to stop helping Israel? That was the topic of a recent conference aimed at crippling Israel.
This issue of *Israel My Glory* examines the growing anti-Zionist movement within evangelical Christianity, especially among the Millennial generation—those born between 1980 and 1996. Recent anti-Zionist events, such as the “Christ at the Checkpoint” conference in Bethlehem, have been drawing growing numbers of Millennials.

According to its website, the conference wants “to challenge evangelicals to take responsibility to help resolve the conflicts in Israel-Palestine by engaging with the teaching of Jesus on the Kingdom of God.”

God’s expectation for every Christian is to become a disciple, a follower of Jesus Christ (Mt. 28:19–20). What could be more central to being a Christian than doing all Christ commanded concerning the Kingdom of God?

But wait a minute. Exactly what did Jesus teach about the Kingdom of God? The anti-Zionist leaders are telling us it is the church’s responsibility to address injustice and bring about peace on Earth. That is indeed a noble cause, but is it biblical?

When Jesus met with His disciples in Jerusalem after His resurrection, they immediately asked, “Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” (Acts 1:6). They were eagerly looking to Him to restore the Kingdom, as foretold by the prophets.

Jesus quickly replied, “It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (vv. 7–8). Their mission—and ours—is to testify about Jesus at home and around the world.

Jesus’ response also teaches us an important lesson about the Kingdom. He never denied He would restore it; He merely said it was not their business to know when that restoration would occur. Their job was to preach Jesus, in the power of the Holy Spirit, and make disciples.

Jesus, not the church, will reestablish God’s Kingdom on Earth; and Israel is central to the restoration, which is part of God’s marvelous plan of redemption.

After Adam and Eve sinned, God announced that a male child born of a woman would crush Satan (Gen. 3:15). He further defined this male child as the Redeemer who will be qualified to restore the Kingdom.

The apostle Paul referred to Jesus in 1 Corinthians 15:45 as the “last Adam,” meaning that, like the first Adam, Jesus is qualified to administer or rule God’s restored Kingdom on Earth. The first Adam was a living being, giving physical life to all; the last Adam, Jesus, became a life-giving spirit. Jesus is called the “last” Adam because once He ascends to His throne in Jerusalem to rule the earth, He will forever be qualified to do so. There will be no need for another Adam.

Peter also taught that the times of refreshing and restoration of all things, which God spoke of through His prophets, awaits Christ’s return from heaven (Acts 3:19–21). It is Christ’s return that will lead to the restoration of God’s Kingdom on Earth.

In Matthew 19:28, Jesus referred to this future time as the “regeneration.” In New Testament Greek, “regeneration” is *palin geneseia*, meaning “genesis again.” Jesus was communicating the idea of reverting to a previous time. He was teaching there will again be a time when the earth will return to the way it was in Genesis, before the fall. This is the time the apostle Paul said all of creation groans for and eagerly awaits (Rom. 8:19–22).

The church is not the agent God will use to usher in His Kingdom of righteousness and justice. That position belongs solely to God’s Son, the Messiah. To say otherwise is to deny Jesus the glory ascribed to Him alone.

Believers who think taking up the Palestinian cause and opposing Israel is Kingdom work are sadly mistaken. The church’s mission is to make disciples for Jesus Christ. We do the most to improve this sin-cursed world when we become witnesses for Jesus and make disciples for our Savior.
It is no coincidence that Hillary Clinton’s book *Hard Choices* was released in June, two years before the American presidential election. She is without a government job, so the book launch and subsequent book tour make her publicly relevant.

“All of us face hard choices in our lives. Life is about making such choices. Our choices and how we handle them shape the people we become,” she said on the flyleaf. Before her book was launched, she referenced parts of it in a speech to a Washington, DC, gathering of Jewish supporters.

Concerning Iran and sanctions, she reassured her audience, “No deal is better than a bad deal. From my perspective, we cannot and should not accept any agreement that endangers Israel or our own national security.”

She also defended her record on Israel: “I have been proud to do my part to keep our relationship rock-solid over the years. America’s commitment to Israel’s security will never waver; that is not a hard choice.”

Indeed, for many Jewish Americans, Hillary for president will not be a hard choice either. Steve Rabinowitz, a former White House press aide to former President Bill Clinton, said, “We love her. It’s that simple. We want her to be president.” The Hillary they support is seen as pro-Israel.

Yet many Israelis and Israel advocates view Hillary with concern. They wonder if a President Hillary Clinton would be anything like First Lady Hillary, who sat silently on the same stage with Yasser Arafat’s wife, Suha, in 1999 as Suha accused Israel of using poison gas on the Palestinians when no such evidence existed.

They remember former First Lady Hillary who told ABC News’s Diane Sawyer in June she was “dead broke” when she and Bill left the White House. Yet her husband’s bank account grew by millions with Arab money from Dubai.

According to the late *San Francisco Examiner* columnist P. J. Corkery, Bill Clinton was a paid advisor and member of the board of directors of Yuccaipa Companies, which has global investment ties to Dubai in the United Arab Emirates. Dubai is in the part of the world that blatantly discriminates against women, abuses workers, and bans Israelis and their products from entering the country. Both Clintons have ties to Dubai.

Would a President Hillary be the same as Secretary of State Hillary, who former Israeli Ambassador Michael Oren said brought the two countries’ relations to their lowest ebb in 35 years?

How did she achieve this feat? First, by supporting the Obama administration’s demand that Israel put a freeze on settlements as a precondition to peace talks. She believed it was the only way to get the Palestinians to negotiate. She even appeared on Al Jazeera TV (owned by a regime that doesn’t recognize Israel’s right to exist) and said, “We want to see a stop to settlement construction, additions, natural growth—any kind of settlement activity.”

Then she bullied Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in a telephone call described by a State Department spokesman as unusually undiplomatic. *The Weekly Standard* described the call as “now-infamous.” It reported Mrs. Clinton “berated and threatened” Netanyahu for 45 minutes. Yet when Netanyahu imposed a 10-month settlement freeze in hopes the Arabs would respond, they did not. They remained silent, just as Secretary of State Clinton was silent.

So which Hillary wants to run for president? What if we answer using her response to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee when asked how and why four Americans were killed in the September 11, 2012, Benghazi, Libya, terror attack: “What difference at this point does it make?”

With Iran edging closer to becoming a nuclear threat; Hamas joining with the Palestinian Authority; and Syria and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) seeking expansion through Africa, the Middle East, and Europe, it makes a big difference which Hillary runs. Unfortunately, neither one of them would be good for Israel.
However, no matter how difficult life became after every missile shower or terrorist incursion, the townspeople kept returning home. In fact, their story becomes a microcosm of what is transpiring throughout the Middle East. Islamic fanatics aspire for global domination and the destruction of Israel. But in their drive to establish a jihadist Muslim caliphate, they underestimate the people of the little Israeli island of democracy and freedom.

From the midst of the rocket attacks comes a story that stands as an inspiring exhibition of the fiber of these Israelis who possess the will to survive and retain their chosen way of life, and it comes to us from the embattled town of Kiryat Shmona.

Her child thought for a moment, then replied, “No mother, they did not win.”

“And how do you know that?”

“Because we’re still here.”

From the lips of a child came the words the world still needs to learn: “We’re still here” echo the watchword of the Jewish nation, though they came from another place, another time: “Masada, Never Again.”

Some people have described the current generation of Americans as “the throwaway generation.” There is more to the term than a casual reference to disposable utensils. America is being ravished by a well-planned and carefully orchestrated mission to destroy the way of life that has made the nation an unequalled bastion of liberty, freedom, and human rights. Too many of our rights are being thrown away with hardly a whimper of objection or resistance from the majority of the population.

Do we have the stuff that will bring us back from the brink, as the beleaguered people of Kiryat Shmona do? Or have we become a nation bereft of the determination to preserve and protect our God-given, sacred trust? Perhaps with prayer God will bring a revival the likes of which shook the country in other days. Those possessing the “still here” spirit of love for God and faith in His power and promises believe it could happen. We pray it will be so.

Will America become a restored “Never Again” testimonial of hope, or will it lie under an epitaph that reads, “The Great Nation That Once Was”? These issues must be addressed before it is too late.

Kiryat Shmona is Israel’s northernmost city, located near the Lebanese border in the scenic Hula Valley. Until hit by a rocket launched by terrorists from southern Lebanon in July, it was primarily out of the news, giving way to southern Israel, which is terrorized regularly by Hamas missiles from Gaza.

But Kiryat Shmona is a story in itself, one that defines the Israeli determination never to surrender to those who want to destroy the Jewish state.

The town of some 23,000 residents has a bomb shelter under every building and a history certifying the necessity of the shelters. During the 2006 Lebanon war, for example, 1,015 Katyusha rockets pummeled the town. For the locals, most of whom were forced to evacuate during the worst of the conflict, the barrage was simply one more hate-filled attempt to annihilate them.

Over the years, almost indescribable terrorist atrocities have been committed against the men, women, and children who call Kiryat Shmona home. From the mid-1970s until 2000, the town was pounded almost daily by attacks from Lebanon. On April 11, 1974, three terrorists crossed into Kiryat Shmona and murdered 18 residents in an apartment building, including many Israeli children, before being killed.

One of the worst atrocities occurred in nearby Ma’alot when the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine attacked a Jewish elementary school attacked a Jewish elementary school, taking 115 hostages, 105 of them children. Ultimately, 25 hostages, including children, were killed and 68 wounded by enemy grenades and automatic weapons. Ever since it was founded in 1949, Kiryat Shmona and its environs have struggled for survival.

During one of the attacks, a mother was in a shelter with her child, awaiting the end of the ordeal. As they waited, she related incidents of the Holocaust in Europe and how the Nazis were determined to complete their proclaimed “final solution to the Jewish problem.” To be sure her child understood the lesson, she asked, “Do you think the Nazis won?”

In Israeli emergency personnel at work following the collapse of a building in Haifa hit by a Hezbollah missile in 2006 (Shaul Schwartz/Getty).
A Letter
From the Editor

Dear Friends,

Going to church with my family is among my favorite things to do. So when I visited one of my daughters awhile ago, I was thrilled to go to church with her and her family.

I knew I wasn’t going to hear the great hymns of the faith I love so much. Yet this was a good Bible-believing church. I was prepared to make concessions. What I wasn’t prepared for was the message.

The pastor told us he was going to talk about the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus, he said, went up to a mountain “that today is in modern Palestine.”

I quickly turned to my daughter. She quickly turned to me. Leaning across her husband, who sat between us, she whispered, “Mom, I have no idea where that came from. He’s never said anything like that before.”

Therein lies the problem and the reason we are devoting this issue of Israel My Glory to the evangelical battle over Israel.

More and more Bible-believing churches in North America are embracing the Arab narrative that the Israelis are illegal “occupiers” of a land that belongs to “Palestinians.” However, the Bible teaches God gave the land to the Jewish people as an “everlasting” possession.

Yet perception is everything. The late Arab terrorist Yasser Arafat (who, incidentally, was born in Egypt), cleverly changed the world’s perception of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Palestine was never an independent country. It was either part of a large empire or was ruled by Great Britain. During British rule, passports were stamped “Palestinian Jew” or “Palestinian Arab.”

At the 1939 New York World’s Fair, the Jewish Palestine Pavilion was a history lesson in what Palestinian Jews accomplished by reclaiming swamps, irrigating the desert, and cultivating farmland.

However, the Arabs have written a new narrative that depicts them as “Palestinians” and the Israelis as interlopers. Now the Arab-centered Sabeel Ecumenical Center for Liberation Theology in Jerusalem is attempting to change the church’s perception, using the Arab narrative and an Arab twist on biblical interpretation.

Three of us from The Friends of Israel attended the Friends of Sabeel–North America conference and report on it in this issue. We encourage everyone to read the articles carefully, remembering God’s promises to Israel and that “the word of our God stands forever” (Isa. 40:8).

Waiting for His Appearing,
Lorna Simcox,
Editor-in-Chief
While Palestinian Christians complain obsessively about the so-called atrocities suffered at the checkpoints, Capt. Joshua Lazarus, a Messianic Jewish officer in charge of training guards for the checkpoints, gives the real story in a short video clip produced by the Israel Defense Forces.

To view the video, go to tinyurl.com/capLaz.

Captain Lazarus oversees the training of all the soldiers responsible for guarding the border crossings and roadblocks along the Arab towns and villages surrounding Jerusalem.

Every day, tens of thousands of men, women, and children pass through the checkpoints and roadblocks. “Most of them are on their way to work, or visiting friends or family, or buying groceries,” he said in private remarks to Israel Today.

“There are pregnant women rushing up to the hospital in Jerusalem, and angry taxi drivers trying to make some money. We have to check each and every one. A lot of them are angry and try to push through without being checked. It’s a tough job.”

Some believe that the constant friction between the soldiers and Palestinians at these roadblocks causes more agitation, hatred, and even terrorism in the long run. “Sure, the people get angry at us, and sometimes it gets pretty rough,” said Lazarus. “But what alternatives do we have? How else can we stop the bombs and terrorists? Sometimes we just have to put up with a bad situation because it could be worse. It’s our job.

“It is a tense and complicated situation for these young soldiers. This is why I wanted to be an officer in the first place,” said the young captain. “A lot of my friends went to be paratroopers or air force pilots. For me, this is a really important job. We are dealing with a huge problem here, and nobody knows how to fix it. Not many soldiers want to do this job. Every day I need to remind them about how important their job is. I’ve come to realize that we don’t live in a world where everything goes the way you want. Serving here wakes me up to the harsh realities of life in Israel and just how complicated it can be.”


by Israel Today
(israeltoday.co.il)
A Look at the Persecution of Christians Around the World

Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life (Rev. 2:10).

The aftermath of a recent Boko Haram bomb attack in Nigeria (Olamikan Gbemiga/AP/Corbis).

NIGERIA—Since the Islamic extremist Boko Haram kidnapped more than 300 Christian high school girls in April, it has been relentlessly attacking Nigeria’s Christians, who now are trying to defend themselves because it appears elements in the Nigerian military are complicit in the attacks.

In June in Ataggara, three Christian leaders wrote in the Nigerian newspaper The Guardian, “Some people appeared in Nigerian Army issue in nine armored personnel carriers bearing the colors and insignia of the Nigerian Army. They announced to the villagers that they had come to assess the security situation. When the people gathered to hear them, the men that came in armored personnel carriers and in Army uniform opened fire and killed over 250 men, women and children.”

The assailants pursued those who fled into the bush and butchered them with knives or shot them to death.

“We are aware that the Nigerian military is a deeply divided fighting force,” they wrote. “As the Ataggara case above illustrates, when some Muslim commanding officers and others receive reports from our communities, they pass such reports to Boko Haram, who come in Nigerian Army issue uniforms to perpetrate pogroms in our communities.”

Suspected members of Boko Haram, which seeks to impose Sharia (Islamic law) throughout Nigeria, reportedly undertook an equally insidious ruse on June 4 in Barderi, on the outskirts of the Borno state capital of Maiduguri. Pretending to be a few of the itinerant preachers common in Nigeria, the Islamic extremists gathered villagers for a homily on “the righteous path” at about 9:30 p.m., witnesses told Agence-France Presse.

After villagers had gathered, another set of insurgents joined the false preachers; and they opened fire on the crowd, the witnesses said. At least 45 men, women, and children were killed.

Enumerating attacks that killed from two to 46 people in each of nearly 50 other villages from mid-May to mid-June, three church leaders noted that the violence took place where Christianity is the dominant faith.

Suspected Boko Haram members launched another massive attack at the end of the month near Chibok, where the high school girls were kidnapped on April 15, spraying a church service in Kwada village with bullets on June 29 before burning homes. Scores of Christians were killed there and in neighboring Kautikari, and five church buildings in the villages were destroyed.

In Abuja, the Nigerian capital, Boko Haram bombed a shopping mall at the Emab Plaza on June 25, killing 24 people. Area witnesses told Morning Star News the mall includes a Christian bookstore and several Christian-owned stores. Boko Haram sought to maximize Christian fatalities, timing the explosion for 4 p.m., 15 minutes after many Muslims had left for the 3:45 p.m. prayer time at a nearby mosque.

“The bomb was targeted at the mall because there is a Christian bookshop where Bibles, Christian literature and videos are sold,” said a resident. “Also, all the shops that sell computers and accessories are owned by Christians.”

On June 14, Boko Haram members entered the church and planted bombs the night before more than 15,000 worshipers were due to arrive for services. Vigilant security guards reportedly alerted police and soldiers, who arrested six of the insurgents.

“In 2012, in a widely publicized video recording that is easily accessible on the Internet, Abubakar Shekau... announced the mission statement of his sect,” church leaders wrote. “Among other things, he said, ‘This war is not political. It is religious. It is between Muslims and unbelievers. It will stop when Islamic religion is the determinant in governance in Nigeria or, in the alternative, when all fighters are annihilated and no one is left to continue the fight.’”

by Morning Star News (MorningStarNews.org)
What Is Palestinian Liberation Theology?

When the State of Israel received its independence in 1948, many Arab-Christian clergymen abandoned the Old Testament because they believed it was too Zionist. In an effort to reclaim it for their people, they replaced the Israelites with Palestinians.

For example, instead of adhering to the biblical context of the Exodus, they impose the interpretation of the Palestinians going to the Israeli Knesset, saying, “Let my people go!”

Palestinian Liberation Theology takes interpretive liberties with the biblical accounts and prophecies of the Hebrew Bible in order to mold it to specific political and theological agendas.

It maintains that certain Old Testament passages are outdated and irrelevant, claiming they reveal a primitive way of understanding God’s revelation to man. A majority of these “irrelevant” sections often involve God’s promise to give or return the Jewish people to their land.

Palestinian Liberation Theology is still considered fringe within mainstream Christianity. Its proponents wish to advance the cause of the Arab Christians, who desire to create a Palestinian state.

The impetus for the movement stems from Replacement Theology, a faulty method of biblical interpretation held by some mainstream denominations that claim the church has replaced the role of Israel in the Bible.

by Christopher J. Katulka
The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, Inc.

Statement of Activities
Year Ended December 31, 2013

Changes in net assets:

Support and Revenue:

Support:

Contributions:
- General ministry contributions $4,482,709
- North American ministry contributions $1,508,882
- Foreign ministry contributions $1,517,999
- Institute of Jewish Studies $40,719
- Gift portion of annuities $462,635
- Legacies $1,973,736
- Gifts-in-kind $10,209

Total support $9,996,889

Revenue:
- Ministry publications, audio and video $1,644,152
- Conferences and special functions $227,205
- Interest and dividends $73,167
- Other revenue $35,390

Total revenue $1,979,914

Total support and revenue $11,976,803

Program services:

Outreach ministries $4,230,196
North American ministries $1,920,751
Foreign ministries $1,504,576
Institute of Jewish Studies $212,220
Conferences and special functions $585,865

Total program services $8,453,608

Supporting services:

Management and general $1,694,208
Stewardship and fund-raising $443,973

Total supporting services $2,138,181

Total program and supporting services $10,591,789

Change in net assets from operating activities $1,385,014

Other changes in net assets:

Realized and unrealized gains/losses on investments $70,552
Change in actuarial value of gift annuities and trusts $393,508

Total changes in net assets $1,849,074

Net assets at beginning of year $4,438,284
Net assets at end of year $6,287,358

Our financial statements are audited by the accounting firm of Capin Crouse LLP, Certified Public Accountants. Their report on the audit for the year ended December 31, 2013, was rendered on May 30, 2014, with an unmodified opinion. The above figures are taken from that report.
On the cusp of a national election, the air is filled with promises. But when the election cycle ends and the ballots are tallied, we learn which promises have a shot at being kept and which do not.

The volatile political climate now afflicting the United States profoundly affects the future of the republic. It is imperative we have honest candidates who follow through on honest promises for the good of the country.

Entwined with a concern for the nation’s fate is growing Christian apprehension about a few other issues as well. For example, there is virtual silence on the genocidal
slaughter of believers abroad, and there are unrelenting attacks on Christians and their faith here at home.

Another battle being waged involves Israel and a campaign asserting that evangelicals are turning away from Israel to support the Palestinians and the creation of a Palestinian state on Israeli territory. (See other articles in this issue for details on the anti-Israel movement.) Marked for special scorn are Christian Zionists who have long stood by the Jewish people’s biblical, historical, moral, and legal rights to the land of their forefathers. In fact, the conservative-Christian commitment toward the Jewish people and their eventual return to Israel has endured as a distinguishing feature of evangelical belief.

Regrettable features of this anti-Israel campaign are the repudiation of clear biblical doctrine; the endorsement of Arab revisionist propaganda that creates a fictional Arab hegemony in the region; and the claim Israel is illegally occupying Arab land and imposing draconian, apartheid-like conditions on the Palestinians.

Furthermore, Millennials (18- to 34-year-olds) are being recruited as future emissaries of the movement to fashion a decidedly pro-Palestinian evangelical opinion regarding the Israeli-Arab peace process.

**Old Song, New Lyrics**

Truth be told, there is nothing new in the tide of anti-Israel propaganda. A modern feature may be the inclusion of some cultural “evangelical” notables, along with social-media devices that draw more attention to the movement. But these factors do not change the failings of the argument that evangelicals may be deserting Israel en masse.

“Christ at the Checkpoint” devotees, who are clearly pro-Palestinian, are nourished by an umbilical attachment to Replacement Theology: the belief that God is finished with Israel as a nation and has installed the church as the true and legitimate “Israel of God.”

This position negates God’s promises of (1) Israel’s future restoration; (2) a literal, Messianic Kingdom on Earth; and (3) glory laid down for Jacob and his posterity, including full land rights to the inheritance in the Middle East. Incidentally, all these promises are etched in the granite of God’s Word in both the Old and New Testaments.

Undoubtedly, the Jewish return to Israel became theologically unsettling to Replacement practitioners. So much so, that one is prompted to conclude the deterioration of the culture and the developing conditions predicted in prophetic passages have fueled the militancy against biblical, Zionist thinking.

No longer is there gentlemanly disagreement on a theological playing field. Rather, there is a united front among Replacement adherents to discredit and crush opposition to their dogma.

**Embracing the Incomprehensible**

The April reconciliation between Hamas leaders in Gaza and Palestinian Authority (PA) leader Mahmoud Abbas is a terrorist union based on an absurdity.

According to a Jerusalem Post report, a senior Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) official said the agreement between Fatah and Hamas is based on Abbas’s terms, which includes working toward a two-state solution that recognizes Israel’s existence.

Yet Hamas has fired thousands of missiles from Gaza into Jewish towns and villages in an attempt to kill as many Israeli men, women, and children as possible. Its commitment to put an end to Israel at any cost is enshrined in its charter.

As for Abbas, the former lieutenant of late master terrorist Yasser Arafat uttered feigned insistence that Hamas and the PLO embrace a two-state settlement recognizing Israel’s existence, despite his almost daily mantra that he will never recognize a Jewish state.

In addition, he oversees an unremitting incitement campaign against Israel, praising the most vicious suicide attackers who have drenched Israeli streets with innocent blood and urging Arab children to emulate them.

When the PA trumpets its stance that no Jewish foot will ever touch the ground of a future Palestinian state, people everywhere should have second thoughts about justice and what such a radicalized Islamist environment will mean for those compelled to live in it.

Theology aside, professing believers in Christ who align themselves with the worst-of-the-worst anti-Semites defame Bible-believing Christians and demonize Israelis. Extreme naïveté, failure to learn all the facts, or dosing on malevolent misinformation does not produce a superior morality.

In this day of cultural obsession with radical change and shaking up the establishment, it may seem fashionable to fight for the underdog. But first make sure the underdog is truly the underdog and not the fabrication of a slick and steady propaganda campaign.

**By Any Other Name, the Same**

Accusing the Jewish people, and now Israel, of duplicity, treachery, and foul deeds qualifying them for deportation or annihilation is a story as old as time. The appellation “wandering Jew” characterized the general Jewish condition until May 14, 1948. With the miraculous restoration of at least part of the Jewish homeland, it appeared a new era of peace and stability might at last be at hand.

After World War II, few people, particularly Christians, would have questioned the propriety of recognizing a legal Jewish nation to which the children of Jacob could return after 2,000 years. Unanticipated, however, was the radical Arab inhabitants’ genocidal fervor.

The Israeli struggle for survival suddenly became a constant fact of life. But against seemingly insurmountable odds, Jewish perseverance, ingenuity, love for the land, and willingness to
fight for life prevailed. In less than half a century, Israel became a model of progress, humanitarian excellence, technological innovation, and medical achievement that have touched the lives of people around the globe.

Under ordinary circumstances, one would logically expect the world to accept with deep admiration what this tiny refugee country has accomplished in so short a time. In fact, a New World Order was the flavor of the era at the United Nations. Toleration, civility, non-violence, and respect for all characterized speeches, resolutions, and humanitarian programs. In such a progressive environment, how could Old World, hate-riddled anti-Semitism emerge?

In a world with an inexorable sin problem, old specters never die; they just lie in wait. Recent incidents offer disturbing reminders. In countries where Jewish people were murdered by the millions during the Holocaust, anti-Semitism still lingers.

Hungary, France, and Poland are prime examples. The Anti-Defamation League’s recent global survey found that 45 percent of Poland’s citizens, 41 percent of Hungary’s, and 37 percent of France’s have anti-Semitic attitudes.

In Ukraine, the recent political upheaval and accompanying anti-Semitism have sent Jewish emigration soaring. Aliyah to Israel has risen by 70 percent.

France, plagued by Muslim militancy and a bad economic situation, saw 3,280 Jews activate their Right of Return privilege and move to Israel in 2013—a 70 percent increase over 2012.

The increase of unjustified anti-Jewish, anti-Israel demonstrations and incidents underscores the necessity of a secure Jewish state.

Irrevocable Promise

Although the anti-Zionist left is working zealously against Israel, all is not lost. Israel is a vibrant reality and will not be going anywhere. God has made a promise, and there is reason to believe there are countless more supporters of Israel’s rightful place among the nations than some would like us to believe.

The God of the universe has issued a land deed to Abraham and his descendants in perpetuity:

*And the Lord said to Abram, “... Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are—northward, southward, eastward, and westward; for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever” (Gen. 13:14–15).*

Considering the fact that Israel is the only true democracy in the Middle East and the number-one ally of America and the West, the clamor to dismantle the state appears demented.

What Israelis have asked from the beginning is that the armistice lines where fighting ceased in 1948-49 be exchanged for negotiated, safe borders so Israelis can maintain their security without the constant threat of imminent annihilation. For professing Christians to side with jihadists who vow to erase Israel from the map is, to say the least, bewildering.

Israel still has more friends than foes. Although opposition to Israel exists, we must not become unduly agitated by stories of massive evangelical defections from loyalty to Israel. Yes, it is a concern. However, the movement is a noisy, activist sliver among evangelicals. The mature remnant of believers, and a solid group of Millennials, stand firmly with Israel’s right to the land. They have wisely chosen truth over unbiblical fabrications. That will not change.

Mohammad is a 16-year-old Arab Muslim who is a citizen of the State of Israel. He openly declares himself a Zionist who believes Israel is the true hope for a lasting democracy in the Middle East.

In his opinion, international policymakers should stop attempting to force a peace plan and recognize peace will only be achieved when Arabs stop hating Jews.

This courageous young man quotes the late Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir who said, “Peace will come when the Arabs will love their children more than they hate us.” Anti-Israel evangelicals would do well to take Mohammad’s advice.

1 “PA assures reconciliation agreement requires Hamas recognition of Israel’s existence,” The Jerusalem Post, April 24, 2014 <tinyurl.com/JP867>.

Question: Why should Christians never return to the Law?

Answer: “If righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain.”

—Galatians 2:21

Question: What is the destiny of the Jewish nation?

Answer: “Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them, and it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; I will establish them and multiply them, and I will set My sanctuary in their midst forevermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them; indeed I will be their God, and they shall be My people. The nations also will know that I, the Lord, sanctify Israel, when My sanctuary is in their midst forevermore.”

—Ezekiel 37:26–28
Christmas and Hanukkah Will Be Here Before You Know It!

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

Yes, the word comes down to us,
To Bethlehem town He came.
Brought the hope this world cannot,
Our Saviour Christ His name.

Wishing you and yours a blessed Christmas.

Yea, the word comes down to us,
To Bethlehem town He came.
Brought the hope this world cannot,
Our Saviour Christ His name.

Wishing you and yours a blessed Christmas.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

Now is the time to place your order for our unique and meaningful greeting cards.
We have a limited supply this year. So order soon!

And remember, with each Christmas card, you can also give a free, one-year subscription to Israel My Glory! A card with a gift. What could be better?

Happy Hanukkah

Do not rejoice over me, my enemy; when I fall, I will arise;
when I sit in darkness, the LORD will be a light to me.

Micah 7:8

In hope that this Hanukkah will be one of happiness, health, and prosperity for you and all of those you love.

Christmas Card (K14)
$11* (20 per pack)

Hanukkah Card (K14A)
$5* (5 per pack)

Order online at foi.org, use the enclosed envelope, or call us at 1.800.345.8461 (USA) | 1.888.664.2584 (CANADA) *Additional shipping charges apply. In Canada/Australia, prices include GST/HST.
His financial clout is being used in an attempt to reshape how evangelicals view the conflict in the Middle East, and the result is not pro-Israel.

According to the NGO Monitor, a nonprofit organization in western Jerusalem, Soros has allegedly used the Open Society Foundations (OSF) to shift U.S. public opinion against Israel, fund anti-Israel organizations seeking to delegitimize Israel globally, and support fringe opposition groups within Israel.1

You may have heard of multibillionaire George Soros and his liberal, global agenda. You may not have heard that he provides significant funds to an organization with ties to the broader evangelical community.
Soros, born in 1930 in Hungary, is a Jewish atheist who emigrated to England in 1947 and New York City in 1956, where he made his vast fortune.

An NGO Monitor report also reveals Soros’s foundation “funds close to thirty organizations that spend inordinate time and resources condemning Israel.” OSF has provided up to half of Telos Group’s funding since its inception.

Headquartered in Washington, DC, the Telos Group (formerly the Kairos Project) was founded in 2009 by Gregory Khalil and Todd Deatherage. Khalil is an Arab-Christian lawyer who was an advisor to Arab leaders involved in peace negotiations with Israel. Todd Deatherage is an evangelical Christian from Arkansas who once served in the State Department.

Sean Savage, reporting for the JNS.org news service, suggests the goal of the funding is “to undermine support for Israel among the Evangelical Christian community.”

**Convinced that a two-state solution is the only viable option in the Arab-Israeli conflict, Telos Group uses three primary means to communicate its vision: pilgrimages, speaking tours, and national outreaches.**

Each year it hosts pilgrimages to Israel to enable “influential Americans to personally encounter multiple Israeli and Palestinian narratives.” The appeal is “human connection and immersion into the cultural, religious, and social facets of the region.”

Offering home stays, interfaith activities, environmentally friendly tours, wilderness treks, and cycling tours through the West Bank, the trips are designed to attract college and university students.

The Telos message is skillfully framed with emotional snapshots and sound bites for the evangelical audience, and the itinerary is carefully controlled to maximize the impact of a one-sided message that Palestinian-Arabs are the so-called victims of Israeli oppression.

Using language that creates the illusion of fairness, the message ignores the Arab refusal to recognize Israel as a Jewish state, Arab terrorism against Israeli civilians, and corruption within the Palestinian Authority.

Exposing the Telos Group’s peace messaging as a cover for anti-Israel bias, Dexter Van Zile, Christian Media Analyst for CAMERA (Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America), called Telos “a group that gives Palestinian leaders access to influencers in the Evangelical community that they would not otherwise have. These influencers then lend their credibility to the anti-Zionist cause.”

Although Telos’s mission statement claims to be “pro-Israeli, pro-Palestinian, pro-American, and pro-peace, all at the same time,” its speakers are predominantly pro-Palestinian, anti-Israel, and sometimes anti-American.

Rev. Mitri Raheb, for example, promotes the belief that the Jewish people are not the true people of the land of Israel. “From his point of view,” wrote expert Tricia Aven, “Palestinians are the indigenous people of the land, and Jesus was a Palestinian.” She said Archbishop Elias Chacour, a former Melkite Catholic bishop, fallaciously asserts Israelis are the new Nazis.

The Telos Presidential Advisory Council even includes a member of the Muslim Public Affairs Council. As a result, the Israeli narrative is buried under a skewed version of the Palestinian-Arab story that appears to be at the heart of the Telos Group’s messaging.

For those who want to undermine Israel on the world stage, the strategy is simple: Divide and conquer. In this case, polarize the group providing Israel’s strongest support—the evangelical Christian community—and weaken its influence.

Though mature Christians firmly grounded in God’s Word may not be influenced by the slanted Arab story, the narrative resonates with young people who did not witness God’s hand in the rebirth of Israel and are either unfamiliar with or uninterested in Bible prophecy.

It is vital that young people receive a biblical perspective on Israel. Or, as David Brog has said, “We who care about sharing the truth in the Middle East need to find the funds to compete with these very deep pockets.”

**Endnotes**

3. Ibid.
7. Aven.
8. Savage.
10. Ibid.
11. Savage.

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

**Questions and Answers**

**Question:** Why does Satan always try to divide the church?

**Answer:** “If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand.”

— Mark 3:24–25
This year campuses across America held their 10th annual Israeli Apartheid Week (IAW). As the name suggests, the protest organizers aim to equate the government of Israel with South Africa’s former apartheid regime. The protestors want to paint Israel as a racist, bigoted country that deserves international condemnation. By successfully creating a link between the South African system of apartheid and Israel’s treatment of its Arab citizens, the goal is for Israel to lose all legitimacy in the eyes of the world.

Just like the anti-apartheid movements in the 70s and 80s helped bring down the forced system of racial domination in South Africa, the organizers of IAW hope their movement can bring down the nation of Israel.

Modeling the former anti-apartheid strategies, the IAW groups are using boycotts, divestment, sanctions, and synchronized protests to isolate the Jewish state on all fronts.

The Israel apartheid analogy has now gone mainstream—gaining especially wide acceptance in the academic community. In 2006, former President Jimmy Carter titled his best-selling book *Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid*. Anti-Israel signs, apparel, literature, and documentaries run with the semantics of the apartheid comparison: “Zionism is racism,” “Tear down the wall,” and “Wrong for South Africans, wrong for Palestinians.”

There is one obvious problem, however. Israel is not an apartheid state. To accuse it of such requires a real imaginative stretch. Here are the top five reasons why the apartheid analogy is fatally flawed:

1. **Equality.** During South Africa’s apartheid system, the majority black population was oppressed and persecuted by the minority whites. In Israel, all citizens—including Arab citizens—are equal before the law, regardless of their race, religion, or minority status. Of all the countries in the Middle East, Israel is the only true democracy with full freedom for its citizens.

2. **Citizenship.** In the 1970s in South Africa, all nonwhites were stripped of their South African citizenship. In 1948, Israel did the opposite. When the dust settled from Israel’s war of independence, Israel gave full citizenship to the Arabs who remained in Israel and did not flee. They did this even though it was a defensive war. Today 20 percent of the Israeli population is Arab. That’s a million and a half Arab citizens living in Israel and enjoying all the same rights as Israeli Jews.

3. **Democracy.** In South Africa, nonwhites were not allowed to be in government or even vote. In Israel, Arabs have been represented since the very first Knesset. Israeli Arabs vote and have been elected to every level of local and national office, including appointments to the Israeli Supreme Court and government minister positions.

4. **Freedom.** The South African apartheid regime strictly regulated the lives of nonwhites with a host of separation laws. Black South Africans were confined to Bantustans, defined labor areas that they were not permitted to leave.

Israel, in contrast, has extensive antidiscrimination laws. Israeli Arabs work in all sectors, attend universities, and open businesses. While much of the Arab population lives in concentrated Arab municipalities in Israel, this is an informal segregation as a matter of choice. For South African blacks, segregation was a matter of force.

5. **Security.** The security fence separating Israel from the West Bank is often denigrated as the “apartheid wall.” During Israeli Apartheid Week, a common tactic on campuses is to build mock “apartheid walls” at protest sites. Admittedly, Israel must strictly enforce border control between Israel, Gaza, and the West Bank. However, this restriction is due to legitimate security concerns and not racism. The fence is credited for a drastic reduction in the number of mass-murder attacks carried out in Israel after reaching a peak in the second intifada.

In South Africa, racism formed the basis of segregation, not terrorism. Blacks living under South African apartheid did not seek the destruction of South Africa, only the regime of apartheid.

**Perhaps the best proof** that Israel is not an apartheid regime is the fact that the vast majority of Israeli Arabs want to retain their Israeli citizenship. Israeli Arabs both privately and publicly say they would not want to leave Israel and move to a Palestinian state should one be created.

When former Prime Minister Ehud Olmert suggested in 2007 that he would hand over Arab neighborhoods in East Jerusalem to the Palestinian Authority, the Arabs in Jerusalem rose up in protest.

Nabil Gheit, an Arab mayor of one of these neighborhoods, said, “If there was a referendum here, no one would vote to join the Palestinian Authority (PA). We will not accept it. There would be another intifada [uprising] to defend ourselves from the PA.”

Those who are demanding to “Stop Israeli Apartheid” from the comfort of their campus parade grounds, should first stop and ask the Arab citizens and alleged victims in Israel one question: Where in the Middle East would you have it better?
Highway to Nowhere

When the hot days of summer began to descend, two significant legal issues were heating up in Washington. One was the well-known case involving Christian-run Hobby Lobby Stores, Inc., on which the U.S. Supreme Court ruled on June 30 in favor of Hobby Lobby.

The other issue was probably missed by most Americans, as it concerned a complex matter before the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Yet the FCC issue may well have the greater impact on the fundamental liberties of most Americans for decades to come.

The FCC proceeding was titled “In the Matter of Protecting and Promoting the Open Internet.” It represents the FCC’s third attempt in six years to lay out a plan to regulate the big telecommunication companies like AT&T, Comcast, and Verizon that provide Americans with Internet access. The first two plans were struck down by the Court of Appeals.

So the FCC has proposed a third set of rules. And if history is any indication, it is likely to adopt the rules it proposed.

That is where you and I come in because the average citizens who use the Internet are the most neglected in the deliberations in Washington, DC, regarding their right to free speech.

Only a scant number of references appear in the proposal concerning the rights of citizens to voice their opinions over the Internet, and the phrase free speech appears only once: in a single footnote that quotes a legal scholar who was making an unrelated point.

Why is free speech so critical here? Because it seems clear that a handful of megapowerful Internet tech companies (Facebook, Google, and Apple are leading the way) have persistently censored viewpoints they don’t like; and the problem seems to be growing.

Facebook suspended the postings of former Arkansas governor and current Fox News personality Mike Huckabee when he supported traditional marriage. It also suspended those of Fox News commentator Todd Starnes when he voiced his conservative opinions.

Similar censorship has been used against former U.S. military personnel involved in special operations when they criticized President Barack Obama and against an Israeli journalist who took the Palestinian Authority to task for corruption.

The river of these actions against free speech first started flowing when the late Christian leader Chuck Colson’s “Manhattan Declaration”—a statement of Christian orthodoxy regarding family, faith, and freedom—was stripped off Apple’s iTunes App Store in 2010 in response to a petition by gay rights activists. The flood tide has not abated since.

How do these examples fit into the FCC’s current set of proposals can be demonstrated by a simple analogy: Let’s pretend the Internet is an interstate highway. To get on, you must pass through a toll gate where you pay a broadband provider (a telecom company) like AT&T or Comcast or Verizon a fee to get on.

Once you are on the “highway,” you notice exits that can take you to various places: “Googletown” (if you want to use the famous information search engine), “Facebookville” (if you want to post on your Facebook page), or “Apple City” (if you want to use Apple’s iTunes store).

But when you take the exit ramp, you notice signs outside each of these “towns” that say things like “Conservatives stay out,” “No preaching by Bible-believing Christians allowed,” or “This is not a pro-Israel town.”

The “towns” in my example are called “edge providers” by the FCC. So far, the federal agency only seems interested in regulating the toll-gate operators (the broadband providers). Consequently, the edge providers like Facebook, Google, and Apple can continue to censor what they deem to be politically incorrect speech on all their web-based devices and platforms.

I am no fan of federal regulation. Too often, when Washington steps in, it makes matters worse. But all of us need to wake up to the fact that someday soon, unless something changes, we may get on the “Internet expressway” and find out that because of our Christian beliefs, the titans of the web have forced us to drive in circles.
Palestinian-Christian community.

It began in 1989 when Anglican priest Dr. Naim Ateek convened a small committee of clergy and lay people “to implement, on a practical level” his brainchild: Palestinian Liberation Theology (PLT). He wanted to explore ways in which his theology could be developed and shared with other Palestinian Christians. Soon the Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center in Jerusalem was born—founded and directed by Naim Ateek.

It didn’t take long for PLT to reach the West, as Friends of Sabeel chapters began opening in Australia, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Canada, and the United States.

I had my first exposure to PLT when a man approached the FOI Gospel Ministry literature table at a large venue in Vancouver, B.C., Canada. His diatribe included spicy references to...
my “ignorance” about the “real” Israel.

To be honest, I was shocked—not because there are people who have no compunction about dismissing decades of violence against the Jewish people in the land, but because this man was a professing Christian from another ministry. He was so belligerent that men from other ministries who witnessed the encounter said they would have intervened if he became violent.

The topic of conversation throughout the remainder of the conference was “How could Christians embrace this unbiblical attitude toward Israel and the conflict in the Middle East?”

That was more than a decade ago. Since then, Palestinian Liberation Theology has gained much traction, and Sabeel is making inroads in North America. In March, I attended a conference sponsored by Friends of Sabeel—North America (FOSNA), hosted by the American Friends Service Committee (Quakers) at the Friends Center in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The main speaker was Naim Ateek.

It soon became obvious that the key to disseminating a message so contrary to both Scripture and reality lies in the way it is framed. Sabeel structures its information in a way that erroneously contends support for Israel is unjust, violates human rights, and is based on a theology of violence.

**DR. ATEEK, AN ISRAELI CITIZEN, IS AN ARAB**

who was born in Beisan (Beit Shean), one of ancient Israel’s cities. During the conference, he made an emotional claim that, when he was 11 years old, Israeli soldiers forced him and his family to flee for their lives during Israel’s War of Independence in 1948. People at the conference referred to the founding of the State of Israel using the Arab term *nakba*, meaning “catastrophe.”

To put things into perspective, the UN voted on November 29, 1947, to end Britain’s mandate over the land and partition Palestine into two separate, independent states—one Jewish and one Arab. Though the Jewish people accepted the plan, the Arabs resolutely rejected it and immediately vowed to annihilate the future Jewish state.

Arab militias began flooding into the area, determined to drive the Jewish people out. The UN had no army, and the British refused to enforce the partition plan, choosing instead to withdraw its troops.

During the British Mandate, Jewish communities established an armed unit known as Haganah (Hebrew for “defense”) to protect their communities from continuous Arab attacks. For six months, between the implementation of the UN plan and Israel’s independence, Jewish communities were under constant attack; and the Haganah began offensive strategies to counter the threat from Arab communities working with the Arab Liberation Army.

History records that the officials of Beisan surrendered to the Haganah on May 12, 1948, two days before Israel declared independence. When Haganah soldiers arrived on May 13, “[they] found Beisan deserted; its 3,000 inhabitants had fled.”

House-to-house searches revealed large stashes of arms and a few lingering residents. Although originally allowed to stay, the remaining residents were expelled on May 15 because of their continued cooperation with the Arab Liberation Army. Ateek’s emotive description of so-called injustice at the hands of the Jewish people reframes the historical account.

**IN JUNE 2013, A PEW RESEARCH POLL ASKED**

a sampling of Jewish and non-Jewish people in the United States, “Was Israel given to the Jewish people by God?”

Referencing the poll’s results, Ateek pointed out that the general population of Americans was more inclined to believe Israel was given to the Jewish people by God than were the Jewish people themselves. Regardless of how one feels about the accuracy of the poll, 40 percent of the Jewish people polled believed God gave the land of Israel to the Jewish people, compared to 44 percent of the general public.

Looking at the demographics, Ateek discussed what percentage of each sampling claimed to believe in God. Only among the evangelical Christian sampling did 100 percent of those surveyed say they believe in God. The statistic drew boisterous and derisive laughter, with Ateek concluding the greatest support for Israel comes from evangelical Christians (82 percent) “because they all believe in God.”

He adamantly argued that the most significant threat to ongoing peace initiatives in so-called Israel-Palestine is Christian Zionism that “blindly supports the nation of Israel.” “Less religious people,” he said, “are more objective” in the way they view the reality in “Israel-Palestine.”

In other words, those least likely to agree that God gave Israel to the Jewish people are individuals who do not believe in God. Apparently, assessment of objectivity is based on how closely conclusions align with Ateek’s presuppositions.

Those who both believe in God and are convinced He gave Israel to the Jewish people were derided as being deluded by religious zeal and responsible for exacerbating the conflict. Ateek blatantly accused evangelical Zionists of prolonging the conflict by their allegedly unjustified support of Israel.

Though he argued for a two-state solution to the conflict, he never explained why the Arabs rejected the UN’s two-state partition plan in 1947 or why he now considers it the only way to go.

“One there is a Palestinian state,” he told me after his lecture, “the conflict will be over.” When pressed about how such an entity would bring an end to violence against the Jewish people, considering the overwhelming number of times Palestinian leaders have vowed to annihilate Israel, he simply replied, “You don’t have to worry about that, trust me.”

When further pressed after I cited ongoing attacks against Israel from Palestinian-controlled areas, Ateek replied, “I’m telling you the truth; you can believe me. Once there is a Palestinian state, the conflict will end.”

**ONE OF FOSNA’S MAJOR CONTENTIONS** is that Israel violates human rights. PLT adherents use terms like colonialism to describe the Jewish state and imperialism...
since 1995, the Christian population dropped. In 2012 Christians comprised only 20 percent of the population. Today some say only 7 percent of Bethlehem remains Christian.

Sabeel also contends support for Israel is based on a theology of violence. But, as with any form of liberation theology, Palestinian Liberation Theology frames its message with a presupposition, rather than biblical exegesis.

In this case, the presupposition blends Replacement Theology with a Christianized form of socialism, focusing on a claim that Israel oppresses Palestinians. In a 2005 article about suicide bombings, Ateek wrote, “Christ is not in the tanks and jet fighters, fighting on the side of the oppressors (although many Jewish and Christian Zionists believe that). God is in the city of Gaza, in the Jenin camp and in the old city of Nablus, Ramallah, and Bethlehem.”

By framing the conflict as that of an oppressed people victimized by the Jewish state, PLT has repeatedly misrepresented Jesus as a “Palestinian” oppressed by the Roman government. The key to understanding Palestinian Liberation Theology is to recognize its interpretative approach to the Bible. “Is the Bible a tool of violence or a tool for peace and justice?” Ateek asked FOSNA conference attendees. Assuming his listeners would agree it is a tool for peace and justice, he denounced much of the Old Testament that speaks of God’s covenant relationship with the Jewish people. Instead, he focused on passages that he said “nourish the hopes and dreams of the Palestinian people.”

His goal is to find Scripture that agrees with his presupposition, regardless of the obscurity of the passage or the normal interpretation dictated by the context. According to Sabeel, the Torah (Five Books of Moses) is a Zionist text that Palestinian Christians reject as repugnant. They dismiss all Bible passages they consider unjust to the Palestinian cause, thus eliminating most of the historical books of the Old Testament. As a result, only the prophetic books are acceptable because they present a “truly mature vision of God.”

Because Palestinian Liberation Theology asserts the Bible should not be interpreted literally, Ateek uses an allegorical, metaphorical hermeneutic that results in interpretations that support his presuppositions but defy logic. A case in point is the account of David and Goliath. In the PLT interpretation, the underdog David (the future king of Israel) represents the Palestinian people suffering under the oppression of Israel, represented by Goliath (a Philistine). In another example of oxymoronic interpretation, Ateek in the past has compared Palestinian suicide bombers to Samson (a judge of Israel); and Israel he compared to the Philistines (Philistine is the root for the term Palestinian).

These interpretations would be humorous if the implications were not so serious.
Sabeel appeals to the words of the Jewish prophet Amos: “Did I not bring up Israel from the land of Egypt, the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir?” (Amos 9:7). The verse is used to undermine Israel’s deliverance from Egypt as a unique event in history. What is not read is the statement of God’s faithfulness to Israel in the next verse: “Yet I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, says the Lord” (v. 8).

Using a prophecy of Ezekiel, Ateek told conference attendees that non-Jews living in Israel have equal rights to a national homeland, along with the Jewish people: “And it shall be that in whatever tribe the stranger dwells, there you shall give him his inheritance,” says the Lord Go6” (Ezek. 47:23).

But he took the verse out of context. The verse actually recognizes Israel’s claim to the land. Verses 13–21 cite Israel’s future borders and establish Israel’s right to an area much larger than at present. The context is the Messianic Kingdom. Ezekiel also establishes Israel’s God-given authority to divide the land between its 12 tribes (vv. 14–20).

Claiming to represent the voice of tolerance and peace, Naim Ateek and Sabeel fail to exemplify that ideal. Sabeel’s message is cleverly framed to misrepresent justice with exaggerated claims of injustice, misconstrue human rights with trumped-up allegations that ignore ongoing abuses within the Arab community, and misinterpret the plain teaching of the Bible in order to appeal exclusively to the aspirations of the Palestinian people.

Ateek’s agenda is obvious; and his casual remark, “You don’t have to worry about that, trust me,” does not inspire confidence.

**Endnotes**

8 Ibid.

Charles E. McCracken is the Canadian director of FOI Gospel Ministry in Brampton, Ontario, and a Bible teacher.
Naim Ateek is not a large man. He is slender, around 5 feet 7 inches tall, with white hair and a self-effacing, gentle look about him. He is not loud or aggressive, and he would hardly stand out in a crowd except for the clerical collar underneath his black windbreaker.

But to the more than 100 people who attended the Friends of Sabeel-North America (FOSNA) conference in Philadelphia in March, the 77-year-old Episcopalian priest is a titan—a Palestinian Christian of great reputation and stature who is dedicating his life to securing justice for his people. So determined is he to rally men and women of all faiths around the Palestinian cause that in 1991 he founded the Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center in what its website calls “Palestine-Israel.” The center is located in Jerusalem, but few at the conference would have acknowledged that Jerusalem belongs to Israel.

In fact, person after person who came up to Dr. Ateek to shake his hand and offer support referred to “Palestine” as though such a country existed. The only time anyone mentioned Israel was to accuse it of being an “occupying” force that commits crimes against humanity.
Highly visible in the FOSNA mix were Jewish people who found it easier to condemn Israel for defending itself than to condemn terrorists for murdering Israelis.

As difficult as that was to understand, it was more difficult to understand how a professing Christian like Dr. Ateek expects to live peacefully in a future Palestinian state dominated by Muslim doctrine hostile to Christianity. But Dr. Ateek, an Israeli citizen, foresees no problems.

“You don’t know the Palestinians,” he told me after delivering the keynote address. “The Palestinians, Christians, and Muslims, we’re together. We’re one people. We don’t have what happens in other places.”

In other places, Muslim jihadists are torturing and massacring Christians every day. It doesn’t matter if they are fellow countrymen. Islamists are attacking Christians with stones, knives, and machetes; kidnapping and raping Christian women; burning down churches; gunning down worshipers; and executing Christians who came to faith from Islam.

Of the 50 worst nations for Christian persecution on the 2014 “World Watch List,” 36 are Muslim. The list is published annually by Open Doors, a ministry to the persecuted church.

The Palestinian territories rank 34th out of 50. Israel is not on the list at all.

In fact, Shadi Khalilou, an Aramean Christian who lives in Israel, told the Italian news media, “Israel is a paradise for us. Israel is the paradise for Christians from the Middle East. . . . In Israel we enjoy freedom and have rights, we can say what we want, organize activities, found associations, and that is why we can be so active in society.”

Israel has even rescued Muslim converts to Christianity from the Palestinian Authority (PA).

One Muslim who came to Christ spent 21 months in a PA jail, seven of them in underground solitary confinement, before the Israel Defense Forces rescued him and brought him to Israel. He gave this testimony:

I was beaten with sticks; they stripped me naked and made me sit on bottles, and on the legs of chairs that they turned upside down, and many, many other sadistic things that I am even ashamed to say. Many times they allowed lynch mobs like the Al-Aksa Brigades to come in and pull prisoners out of the cells. They were taken out and shot on the spot, their bodies then dragged through the streets for all to see.

The 1947 UN partition resolution called Palestine’s Arabs and Jews “the two Palestinian peoples.”

Arutz-7 reported that the man’s wife and eight children who remained behind “are under constant threat of harassment.”

In May, two months after Dr. Ateek said Christian persecution would not come to “Palestine,” a group of Muslims attacked Christian Arabs with stones in the village of El-Khader near Bethlehem. One Christian was stabbed.

Ryan Jones, a reporter with Israel Today, commented, “This is from the same Bethlehem where Christ at the Checkpoint organizers say Christians and Muslims live in harmony; this is from the same ‘Palestine’ the international community labels as ‘moderate.’”

Most Muslim governments do not want to live in harmony with non-Muslims. They want to dominate them under the strictures of Sharia law.

“Not in Palestine,” Dr. Ateek said. “The Muslims in Palestine know, they know the importance of the world and the Christian world to the Holy Land. They’re not going to do it [adopt Sharia].”

He also foresees democratic elections. Asked if he thinks a future Palestinian country would be secular, Dr. Ateek replied, “No, I don’t know, because we need a constitution. And probably the constitution would say that most of the people of the land are Muslims, but it’s a free country for everyone. You’re free to live your religious life.”

His description sounds like Israel, not the Palestinian Authority. According to a 2013 Pew Research Center survey, 89 percent of the people living in the Palestinian territories “favor making sharia the official law in their country.”

Furthermore, the PA already has a temporary constitution in the form of the Palestinian Basic Law. It states, “Islam is the official religion,” and “The principles of Islamic Shari‘a shall be a principal source of legislation.”

The more power the Palestinian Authority gets, the worse life will become for Christians there. Under Israeli control, Bethlehem was more than 50 percent Christian. Today, under PA control, estimates place the Christian population between 7 and 1 percent.

What would Dr. Ateek do if he could have his way? He would create a confederation of Israel, “Palestine,” and other Middle Eastern countries that would all live together in peace.

Unfortunately, Hamas does not want peace. It wants victory. And it recently united with Fatah, PA President Mahmoud Abbas’s party, a move that strengthens the Arab determination to destroy Israel.

Ironically, the peace Dr. Ateek seeks will come with the 1,000-year Messianic Kingdom he so rigorously rejects in Scripture. He created Palestinian Liberation Theology (an Arab-friendly version of Replacement Theology) because he sees the Bible as too Jewish and wants to make it more relevant to Arabs. Yet in doing so, he fights the political cause of the Muslims, builds a wall between Jewish and Arab Christians, and rejects the
rejoicing in the marvelous things God has planned for the Kingdom Age.

ENDNOTES
1 “Interview with Shadi Khalloul,” informazionecorretta.com, April 2014 <tinyurl.com/ous77ao>.
3 Ibid.

Dr. Ateek’s rose-colored glasses prevent him from seeing the unhappy truth about radical Islamists. And his theology prevents him from reality of the true peace that will come to Earth during Christ’s millennial reign.

Yet, regardless of what Ateek and his supporters believe, they cannot alter God’s Word. It says what it says. And no amount of theological gymnastics can erase the borders God has ordained for Israel. One day Israel will occupy far more territory than it does today, including everything FOSNA wants to call “Palestine” (Ezek. 47:13–21). Furthermore,

In that day Israel will be one of three with Egypt and Assyria—a blessing in the midst of the land, whom the LORD of hosts shall bless, saying, “Blessed is Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance” (Isa. 19:24–25).

In that day Israel will be one of three with Egypt and Assyria—a blessing in the midst of the land, whom the LORD of hosts shall bless, saying, “Blessed is Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance” (Isa. 19:24–25). Furthermore, in that day Israel will be one of three with Egypt and Assyria—a blessing in the midst of the land, whom the LORD of hosts shall bless, saying, “Blessed is Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance” (Isa. 19:24–25). Furthermore, in that day Israel will be one of three with Egypt and Assyria—a blessing in the midst of the land, whom the LORD of hosts shall bless, saying, “Blessed is Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance” (Isa. 19:24–25).

In that day Israel will be one of three with Egypt and Assyria—a blessing in the midst of the land, whom the LORD of hosts shall bless, saying, “Blessed is Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance” (Isa. 19:24–25).

In that day Israel will be one of three with Egypt and Assyria—a blessing in the midst of the land, whom the LORD of hosts shall bless, saying, “Blessed is Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance” (Isa. 19:24–25).

In that day Israel will be one of three with Egypt and Assyria—a blessing in the midst of the land, whom the LORD of hosts shall bless, saying, “Blessed is Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance” (Isa. 19:24–25).
Tiny Israel Brings Healing to a Big World

Anyone visiting the Dead Sea region in Israel is struck by the intensity of the heat. Hundreds of years of neglect by Gentile powers made much of the territory look something like a moonscape. Certainly the Judean Hills fit that description.

So it is that the extraordinary reclamation project undertaken by Jewish immigrants in the last century has transformed the land, a fulfillment of biblical prophecy to the discerning observer.

For example, a grove of palm trees snakes around the Dead Sea on either side of the highway. This compelling sight is due to Israeli innovation in agriculture. Specifically, drip irrigation has caused the desert to bloom.

Stories about such innovations are the hallmark of the uncommon work done by the staff at Untold News (untoldnews.org). The New York-based group collects positive stories about the Jewish state, running the gamut from advances in medicine to agriculture to technology.

In short, Israel is not the pariah state much of the world’s media and detractors claim it to be. In fact, Israel makes the world a better place.

Marcella Rosen, founder of Untold News, described what she’s found with regard to the “real” Israel:

“While the world’s attention has for decades been focused on one single dimension of Israeli life, something entirely different has been taking place away from the cameras: Israel has quietly become the little country that changed the world—and your life—for the better . . . without you even knowing it.”

Rosen saw with her own eyes the startling contrast between the real Israel and the one presented by critics. “I had something of an epiphany on one of my earliest trips to Israel,” she said.

“I was there on business; and in the course of my travels around the country, I had come into contact with a number of people who were embarking on entrepreneurial ventures of one kind or another—none connected to each other, nor even in related areas of business.

“It happened that one such meeting required me to take a road trip with an Israeli colleague. As we motored along the highway, I looked out one window at a vast and barren desert: Jordan. I looked out the opposite window at green, productive farmland that stretched to the horizon: Israel.”

Untold News catalogs stories of Israeli innovation. And the impressiveness of the list of breakthroughs that elevate the quality of life for everyone should astonish even Israel’s critics.

Yossi Fisher, CEO of Solaris Synergy, implemented an idea that makes solar energy more practical. Scientists at Solaris, a developer of solar panels, realized the chief problem associated with the panels (so effective in providing electricity to millions) is that they require the use of a lot of land. Enter Fisher’s innovation: floating solar panels, taking up space in bodies of water.

As Rosen wrote in her book, Tiny Dynamo, Fisher and his team worked until they had solved a problem.

Mr. Fisher and his partners realized that there are plenty of unused acres around the world where solar systems can be deployed: the planet is home to millions of small, medium and large bodies of water that are perfectly suited to host solar arrays. Installations from water treatment facilities to utilities, fish farms to reservoirs, maintain bodies of water that can do double duty as solar sites.

Continued on page 35
Phyllis Bennis works for the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington, DC, and has written numerous books condemning Israel and the role of U.S. foreign policy concerning Israel. In March she was a guest speaker at the Friends of Sabeel–North America (FOSNA) conference in Philadelphia, where she encouraged people to strive to turn U.S. foreign policy against the Jewish state. Bennis is Jewish.

FOSNA is part of the support system for Sabeel, an ecumenical center in Jerusalem for Palestinian-Liberation Theology. Sabeel claims to work for justice and peace in “Palestine-Israel.” But from what I experienced, the conference felt more like an anti-Israel rally than anything else.

Multiple speakers, including Bennis, coached people on America’s so-called negative role in international affairs and its strategic ties to Israel. Each session boiled down to three simple points: (1) Israel is an apartheid nation, (2) Zionism is racism, and (3) the State of Israel is illegitimate.

FOSNA is working tirelessly to advance this message in America and attract support among Christians. Speakers threw the word apartheid around like a baseball in almost every lecture,

The “empire” is dying, according to Phyllis Bennis. When Bennis says “empire,” she is not referring to the massive Roman Empire that once ruled Europe and the Middle East or even the British Empire that once controlled 20 percent of the world’s population. She is referring to what she calls the “American Empire,” which she says is declining as it tries to recover from its wars of aggression in Iraq and Afghanistan.

As for Israel, it is merely the “cat’s paw” of American imperialism; and Christians who support the Jewish state foolishly believe in a theology that encourages Israel’s colonial aspirations.

Phyllis Bennis works for the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington, DC, and has written numerous books condemning Israel and the role of U.S. foreign policy concerning Israel.

In March she was a guest speaker at the Friends of Sabeel–North America (FOSNA) conference in Philadelphia, where she encouraged people to strive to turn U.S. foreign policy against the Jewish state. Bennis is Jewish.

FOSNA is part of the support system for Sabeel, an ecumenical center in Jerusalem for Palestinian-Liberation Theology. Sabeel claims to work for justice and peace in “Palestine-Israel.” But from what I experienced, the conference felt more like an anti-Israel rally than anything else.

Multiple speakers, including Bennis, coached people on America’s so-called negative role in international affairs and its strategic ties to Israel. Each session boiled down to three simple points: (1) Israel is an apartheid nation, (2) Zionism is racism, and (3) the State of Israel is illegitimate.

FOSNA is working tirelessly to advance this message in America and attract support among Christians. Speakers threw the word apartheid around like a baseball in almost every lecture,
Bennis and company believe Israel built its roughly 400 miles of security fence as a political move to stake out its territory in the event of a future Palestinian state. They say the “wall,” as they call it, is an outworking of Israel’s desire to “ethnically cleanse” Palestinians from the land through eventual forced expulsion.

The Israeli Apartheid movement and Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement (BDS) are advancing around the world, heavily funded by pro-Palestinian forces trying to crush Israel economically and demonizing it as a colonialist power that stole Arab land and oppresses weak and helpless Palestinians.

Their primary targets are impressionable college students. These movements have a wealth of materials and lecturers to propagate their agenda and are building BDS networks that call for boycotting all Israeli products, not merely goods produced in the West Bank.

For two days I listened to speaker after speaker repeat the same message, throwing the word apartheid around for effect. The conference even had a gallery of boycott-apartheid artwork to walk through for inspiration. Yet not once did anyone mention the Palestinian terrorist activities that forced Israel to build the fence in the first place.

Between 2000 and 2003, more than 290 Israeli civilians were killed by Palestinian terrorists and 1,950 were wounded. Snipers were killing even infants in strollers and children in moving vehicles. Israel built the fence to protect its people and prevent Arabs from entering the country for the sole purpose of committing acts of terror.

Every government has a responsibility to protect its citizens. Statistically, the fence has been an overwhelming success. Since its construction, terrorism in Israeli cities has declined more than 90 percent. Even terrorists say the fence has been effective. In 2006, Ramadan Shahal, leader of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, admitted on Hezbollah’s Al-Manar TV, “There is a separation fence which is an obstacle to resistance [terrorism], and if it were not there, the situation would be entirely different.” In other words, without the fence, Islamic Jihad would have been able to kill more Israelis.

No one disagrees that life is more difficult for Palestinians and Israelis with the fence in place. But who is to blame? If there were no terrorism, there would be no need for excessive security. Protecting human life should trump the hassles of getting through a checkpoint.

FOSNA did not have a lecture called “Zionism Is Racism.” However, the sentiment was there. During one of Bennis’s lectures, someone asked, “Is Zionism racism?” Bennis’s reply was multifaceted. She believes:

- The Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) builds racism into its training with the goal of dehumanizing Palestinians.
- Reciting chants like “Zionism is racism, Zionism is terrorism” is not an effective way to educate others about Zionism because it is offensive and turns people off.
- Zionism is rooted in racism because (as she sees it) it emphasizes Jewish elitism over the Palestinians.

Not once did Bennis or anyone else mention that there are more than 50 Muslim nations in the world that are hostile to Jews and Christians. Many persecute Christians. Not one of these nations was called racist. Nor did anyone point out that Palestinian Authority (PA) President Mahmoud Abbas has vowed to keep Jews out of a future Palestinian state. Yet the PA was not called racist.

Israel, on the other hand, grants full citizenship, including the right to vote and hold elective office, to more than 1 million Arabs. But Israel is called racist.

Theodor Herzl, the father of modern Zionism, wrote in his 1902 novel Altneuland (The Old New Land), “It would be immoral if we would exclude anyone, whatever his origin, his descent, or his religion, from participating in our achievements.”

Herzl’s profound statement of inclusion has become the true slogan of Zionism, not racism. Furthermore, when Israel was established in 1948, its Declaration of Independence proclaimed, THE STATE OF ISRAEL . . . will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex; it will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education and culture; it will safeguard the Holy Places of all religions; and it will be faithful to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Israel’s citizenry is comprised of Jewish people, Arabs, Christians, Druze, and more. Israel accepts each ethnicity’s religion and grants equal rights, freedoms, and opportunities to worship. Every Israeli citizen—regardless of race or creed—has the right to vote and receives an Israeli education, Israeli national health care, and a pension on retiring.

In a Friends of Israel blog, I noted that most Israelis want the Palestinians to have a state of their own and a bright, peaceful future. Israelis are tired of war. But Israel’s neighbors have vowed to fight until they destroy the Jewish state.

For more than 65 years, Israel has required the Arab nations to recognize its right to exist in order to negotiate a final and lasting peace. So far, Israel’s demand has fallen on deaf ears, and its requirement of recognition became a running joke at the FOSNA conference. Participants mocked it, believing Israel is clawing for any reason not to make peace. The Arab refusal to recognize Israel is another way for the PA to say the Jewish state is illegitimate.

When I questioned the speakers about their vision for the future of the State of Israel, they spoke of a Palestinian “right of return,” by which all Palestinians who have refugee status around the world would move to Israel. “Would the State of Israel remain a Jewish state, and would it still be called Israel, with your desire for the right of return?” I asked.

Each speaker looked at me, shrugged, and replied, “That’s not for me to decide.” The answer was another way of saying, “I don’t care.” These people do not care about Israel’s future because they do not accept its legitimacy.

As World War I was winding down, the British seized control of Palestine from the Ottoman Turks. When they assumed administration over the area, Lord Arthur James Balfour wrote a letter to Baron Edmond de Rothschild in 1917, saying the British government favored “the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people.”

The principles of the Balfour Declaration were incorporated into the San Remo Conference of 1920, which established all of Palestine as a Jewish national homeland via international law according to the League of Nations.

Though critics shrug their shoulders at Israel’s legitimacy, they have international law to reckon with when they chuckle at Israel’s demand for recognition.

Continued on page 33
Prior to the 1967 Six-Day War, mainline Protestant denominations were among Israel’s most reliable American supporters. So Israel’s opponents targeted these denominations with mainline-friendly, anti-Israel messages. Many mainline Protestants still support the Jewish state today. But to the extent that they act corporately regarding Israel, it is to divest from it.

Meanwhile, Palestinian Christians and their American sympathizers are successfully promoting a narrative aimed at turning the rising generation of evangelicals against Israel. As a result, more young leaders are moving toward neutrality in the conflict, while others are overtly criticizing Israel. Questioning Christian support for Israel is fast becoming a key way for Millennials (roughly ages 18 to 30) to demonstrate their Christian compassion and political independence. In short, this population is in play.

There is nothing new about the efforts to drive a wedge between America’s evangelicals and Israel. Many in the anti-Israel camp have been working for years to do exactly that. Anti-Israel Palestinian Christians, such as Sami Awad and Naim Ateek, have traveled the country telling American Christians about Israeli “oppression.” Left-leaning evangelicals, such as Jim Wallis, Tony Campolo, and Serge Duss, have echoed this narrative in their corner of the Christian world. Duss’s sons, Brian...
and Matt, have worked diligently to mainstream their father’s views within the fields of Christian philanthropy and Democratic Party policy-making, respectively.

Until the past few years, however, there was little reason to believe these individuals were having much influence. Almost every significant evangelical leader who took a position on the issue came out squarely behind the Jewish state.

Now the situation is changing. With every passing month, more evidence emerges that anti-Israel Christians are reaching beyond the evangelical left and influencing the mainstream. In particular, they are penetrating the evangelical world at its soft underbelly: the Millennial generation. These young believers are rebelling against what they perceive as the excessive biblical literalism and political conservatism of their parents. As they strive to imitate Jesus’ stand with the oppressed and downtrodden, they want to decide for themselves who is being oppressed in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Whoever first defines the conflict for these young people will win lifelong allies.

### Documentaries

The year 2010 saw a dramatic escalation in the anti-Israel camp’s use of film. No fewer than three major documentaries released that year attacked Christian support for Israel. *Waiting for Armageddon* was produced and directed by secular documentarians. But two other films—*With God on Our Side* and *Little Town of Bethlehem*—were made by Christians for Christians.

*With God on Our Side* was produced by Porter Speakman, a former Youth With A Mission (YWAM) activist; *Little Town of Bethlehem* was funded and produced by Mart Green, former chairman of the board of trustees of Oral Roberts University and heir to the Hobby Lobby arts and crafts stores fortune.

These films are masterpieces of deception. They feature compelling protagonists wandering earnestly through a Middle Eastern landscape in which all Arab violence, aggression, and rejectionism have been magically erased. Thus Israel’s security measures—from the security fence to Israel’s ongoing presence in the West Bank—appear like baffling persecutions that any decent person would condemn.

In November 2013, another anti-Israel documentary, *The Stones Cry Out*, was released. It also tailors its message to Christians. The film’s website laments, “All too often, media coverage of the conflict in Palestine has framed it as a fight between Muslims and Jews.” The not-too-subtle goal of *The Stones Cry Out* is to reframe the conflict as a fight between Christians and Jews.

These one-sided narratives may be sowing the seeds of future hate.

### Christian Colleges and Conferences

The effort to delegitimize Israel on America’s secular college campuses has almost become cliché. The annual Israel apartheid weeks and repeated divestment campaigns target everything from university pension funds to cafeteria hummus. But many observers do not realize there is a major effort to demonize Israel on Christian campuses.

Perhaps the most troubling example comes from Wheaton College in Illinois, commonly referred to as the “evangelical Harvard.” Some of the most prominent church leaders in America have graduated from Wheaton, including the Rev. Billy Graham; U.S. Sen. Dan Coats (R-IN); and George W. Bush’s former speechwriter, Michael Gerson.

Wheaton is also the home of Gary Burge, one of America’s most prominent anti-Israel evangelicals. Burge travels the world accusing the Jewish state of the worst of crimes and engaging in a mockery of Judaism that borders on anti-Semitism.

When Christians United for Israel (CUIF) announced plans to hold an event at Wheaton in January 2009, Burge went on the offensive. CUIF’s student members came under such intense pressure they moved their event off-campus. There would be no pro-Israel event at the evangelical Harvard.

Another Christian school, Oral Roberts University (ORU), has deep conservative Christian roots. Oral Roberts himself was a Pentecostal televangelist and a strong friend of Israel. But things may be changing at ORU. The current vice chair of its board of trustees is Mart Green. He reportedly “saved” ORU with a $70 million cash infusion. In January 2013, the board elected Billy Wilson as the university’s new president. A few months later, Wilson was named as a 2014 speaker at the leading anti-Israel Christian conference, “Christ at the Checkpoint.”

Bethel University in Minnesota is likely more representative of the direction America’s Christian colleges are taking. Bethel’s leaders are neither leading nor funding the effort to delegitimize Israel but are the products thereof. Like many Christian schools, Bethel emphasizes racial reconciliation and cultural openness and provides opportunities for its students to study abroad. In 2010, Bethel’s President Jay Barnes and his wife, Barb, visited Israel and the Palestinian Authority (PA) to explore the prospect of building a study-abroad program there. In Bethlehem they were exposed to the standard Christian anti-Israel narrative.

Shortly after her return, Barb Barnes posted a poem on the university’s website that showed she bought into the one-sided, anti-Israel theme. In October 2012, President Barnes hosted a “Hope for the Holy Land” evening at Bethel, a blame-Israel speaking tour featuring Sami Awad, Lynne Hybels, and other longstanding Christian critics of Israel.

One need not be a student to hear the blame-Israel narrative. In recent years, the number and strength of Christian conferences focusing entirely or partially on criticizing Israel has grown.

Since its founding in 1979, Bethlehem Bible College in the West Bank has been a leading source of the anti-Israel Christian narrative. In 2010 it launched a biennial conference called “Christ at the Checkpoint.” The conference name and the photo of the Israeli security fence that forms its logo invoke the increasingly popular meme that Jesus was a Palestinian who would be suffering under Israeli occupation today, much as He suffered under Roman occupation millennia ago.

In 2010 the conference attracted 250 Christian leaders and activists; in 2012, more than 600 attended, including evangelical megachurch Pastor Joel Hunter and Lynne Hybels, wife of megachurch Pastor Bill Hybels.

The days when one had to travel to Bethlehem to hear such anti-Israel voices are now over. “Christ at the Checkpoint” is being shared at major Christian conferences in the United States, including those organized by Empowered21 and Catalyst.

Empowered21, the preeminent gathering of Pentecostal/Charismatic Christians, provides a troubling example of this trend. Its leadership is a who’s who of Pentecostal and Charismatic luminaries from around the world, including many longstanding friends of Israel. The leading critic of Israel among these leaders is Mart Green; and the 2012 conference in Virginia included a talk by Sami Awad and a screening of Green’s film, *Little Town of Bethlehem*. 
Troubling developments are also taking place at the annual Catalyst conference. First launched in 1999, Catalyst has quickly grown into the largest gathering of young evangelical leaders in America. More than 100,000 have made the annual trek to Atlanta, Georgia, to participate since its inception. Additional Catalyst events are now held in Florida, Texas, and California.

In the past, Catalyst studiously avoided the Arab-Israeli conflict. In 2012, however, Lynne Hybels was invited to address “Peacemaking in Israel/Palestine.” No one was asked to provide a pro-Israel perspective. As journalist Jim Fletcher observed after attending, “In dozens of random conversations, I noted that Millennials . . . expressed solidarity with the Palestinians and annoyance with Israel. This is a seismic shift in the American church and a serious threat to Israel’s one traditional area of support.”

In addition to speaking at major conferences, anti-Israel speakers like Burge, Awad, Hybels, and Stephen Sizer tour churches across the country. The flyer for a September 2013 evening with Burge included three lies that form the core of the new Christian anti-Zionism:

1. Zionists in Israel have created a state that wants racial purity.
2. Many Zionists want native-born Christians to leave Israel.
3. Christian Zionists in America support Israel because they believe this will accelerate the Second Coming of Christ.

**Trips to ‘Israel-Palestine’**

A growing number of organizations are bringing Christian leaders, influencers, and students to visit “Israel-Palestine.” These trips are well marketed and seek out mainstream evangelical rhetoric by claiming to be both pro-Israeli and pro-Palestinian—or simply “pro-people”—but never anti-Israel. Yet they focus on Palestinian suffering and blame Israel alone for it.

The Telos Group, founded in 2009 and funded by George Soros, is typical of these new organizations. Run by a savvy team professing a moderate agenda, Telos promotes itself as “a leading organization of America’s emerging pro-Israeli, pro-Palestinian, pro-American, pro-peace movement.” Their tours take visitors to Israel and the PA where they meet with both Israelis and Palestinians. What could be more evenhanded?

Yet these tours are carefully calibrated to teach that Israeli policy is the source of Israeli and Arab suffering and the only real barrier to peace. The Palestinian speakers include extreme critics of Israel, such as Bethlehem Pastor Mitri Raheb and Archbishop Elias Chacour (both featured prominently in The Stones Cry Out). The Israeli speakers, while not as extreme, are stalwarts of the far left who blame Israel for the region’s problems. A brief visit with an Israeli right-winger confirms this one-sided narrative. Telos organizes approximately 15 of these trips every year.

Another recent arrival on the scene is the Global Immersion Project. Founded in 2011, the project seeks to “cultivate everyday peace-makers through immersion in global conflict.” But so far the only conflict they study is that between Israelis and Palestinians, and the only trips they take are to “Israel-Palestine.”

These newcomers have joined an old stalwart, the Holy Land Trust. Founded in 1998 by Palestinian-Christian activist Sami Awad, the organization claims to promote nonviolent solutions to the conflict with Israel. However, Awad has stated clearly on his blog that nonviolence is “not a substitute for the armed struggle. This is not a method for normalization with the occupation. Our goal is to revive the popular resistance until every person is involved in dismantling the occupation.”

The Holy Land Trust promotes a strongly biased version of history in which Israel alone is to blame for the absence of peace, and it shares this message with everyone. It is unlikely older evangelicals who support Israel will abandon it en masse. There is a real danger, however, that these films, conferences, and campus movements will turn the younger generation against Israel.

Most of the evangelicals who dominate Christian political activism for the past few decades—men like Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, and Francis Schaeffer—were vocal supporters of the Jewish state. Although their children may share this perspective, they talk about it less. In fact, Schaeffer’s son Frank has become a vocal critic of “the largely unchallenged influence of Christian Zionism.”

Making matters worse, a cadre of rising young evangelical stars who are bonding on trips to Israel and the PA are pushing their peers away from the Jewish state. This is a largely well-coiffed and fashionably dressed bunch, dedicated to marketing Christianity to a skeptical generation by making it cool, compassionate, and less overtly political. Questioning support for Israel and sympathizing with the Palestinians is fast becoming a hallmark of this clique.

This generational divide is best highlighted by the example of Christian publisher Steven Strang and his son Cameron. Steven Strang publishes Charisma, a leading evangelical monthly with a consistently pro-Israel perspective.

Cameron publishes Relevant, a popular magazine among Millennial evangelicals. It claims to “reach about 2,300,000 twenty- and thirtysomething Christians a month” through its print and online publications.

Less than a decade ago, Relevant was as pro-Israel as Charisma. Then Lynne Hybels took Cameron Strang to Israel and the Palestinian territories, and everything changed. During Israel’s 2008–09 Operation Cast Lead in Gaza, Relevant published an article titled “Is Israel Always Right?” which dispensed with any balanced analysis of urban counterterror operations. The author concluded, “When I examine Israel’s choices like I would that of any other nation, I find myself appalled that they’re not doing more to protect the innocents [in Gaza].”

When Israel confronted Hamas again in November 2012, Relevant published an article by Jon Huckins, a cofounder of the Global Immersion Project, that was an extended exercise in moral relativism, noting the suffering on each side without attributing blame. Huckins never once criticized Hamas; but he did take a thinly veiled swipe at Christian Zionists by blasting the “hateful stereotyping, racism, and violent response [to events in Gaza] being disseminated by Christians.”

Relevant’s May/June 2012 cover featured Donald Miller, author of the New York Times bestseller Blue Like Jazz (2003), which was made into a 2012 movie. In August 2008, Miller delivered the first night’s closing prayer at the Democratic National Convention. He is considered a rising star among America’s 20-something evangelicals who comprise many of his 189,000 Twitter followers.

Miller visited Israel and the Palestinian territories with Strang and has since embraced the anti-Israel narrative. On November 12, 2012, Miller blogged “The Painful Truth About the Situation in Israel,” repeating a number of outrageous lies about Israel that he likely heard during his visit.

**The Response**

Freeze the frame today, and the pro-Israel side is still far ahead in the battle for the hearts and minds of America’s evangelicals. CUFI alone has more than 1.6 million members. But anti-Israel Christians are on a roll. Though small in number, they seem to have extensive...
funds and are reaching an ever-expanding network of evangelicals in the United States. The threat is not that these activists will turn the majority of American evangelicals into Israel haters. But they do not have to. All they have to do is teach a moral relativism that will neutralize them. The day that Israel is seen as the moral equivalent of Hamas is the day the evangelical community will cease giving meaningful support to the Jewish state.

Those who reject such facile moral equivalence must take this threat seriously. They cannot let the evangelical community go the way of the mainstream Protestant leadership. They must not forget that big lies must be confronted early and often. And they dare not ignore the fact that Israel’s enemies are telling extremely big lies to some extremely influential Christians—and telling them well.

**ENDNOTES**

1. The term anti-Israel does not refer to merely criticizing Israel; almost every Israeli does that on a daily basis. Its use here signifies recounting a one-sided version of history in which Israel alone is to blame for Palestinian suffering, such as the repeated condemnation of Israeli security measures without a serious discussion of the violence that necessitates them.

2. YWAM is a popular evangelical youth movement led by traditional, pro-Israel evangelicals.


---

**Pushing the Anti-Israel Agenda from page 29**

Unfortunately, the Arabs are rewriting history and claiming America and evangelical Christians are helping Israel “oppress” the Palestinians. Worse yet, these revisionists are knocking on the doors of U.S. churches and gaining entry. Christians must arm themselves with truth, or they will be pulled into the vortex of those who want to do away with the State of Israel.

**ENDNOTES**


2. The leader of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad again admits that the Israeli security fence built by Israel in Judea and Samaria prevents the terrorist organizations from reaching the heart of Israel to carry out suicide bombing attacks,” The Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center at the Israel Intelligence Heritage and Commemoration Center (IICC), March 27, 2008 <terrorism-info.org.il/en/article/18486>.


---


Christopher J. Katulka is a Church Ministries representative in Texas with The Friends of Israel and the director of ORIGINS.
Anti-Israel Lessons in America’s Public Schools

Anti-Israel and anti-Semitic curricular materials have become endemic in public schools from Massachusetts to California. Not only do the materials insidiously inculcate anti-Israel biases disguised as history and multicultural lessons, but educators, elected officials, and sometimes the mainstream Jewish community are barely complaining.

American Jewish organizations came late to the problem of anti-Israelism on university campuses. If this same poison spreads to the entire public school system, America will become a very different place for its Jews.

A few hours of simple Googling fetch dozens of examples. But starting here in Newton, Massachusetts, a leafy, heavily Jewish Boston suburb, I have seen the phenomenon up close and personal. Students in Newton were taught that Jewish people in Israel murder Palestinian women in jails. That “lesson” comes from the Arab World Studies Notebook, a work funded by the Saudis and condemned as propaganda by the American Jewish Committee.

When concerned parents and taxpayers asked Newton’s school committee (also heavily Jewish) to remove the text, they resisted for more than a year, defending it as providing the “Arab point of view.” After a year of protest, the school superintendent relented, explaining he was removing the text because it was “outdated.”

Newton students are given Palestine Liberation Organization-produced maps to learn about the history of Israeli “occupation” of “Palestine.” One of the maps labeled the Jewish Quarter in the Old City of Jerusalem as an “illegal Israeli settlement,” and another map claimed entire Palestinian cities are “walled in” by Israel.

The Newton school superintendent claimed the point of the map exercise was simply to demonstrate different perspectives, yet not a single map could be found representing the mainstream Jewish perspective.

Now for the rest of the country: In Williamson County, Tennessee, one biased text asks students, “If a Palestinian suicide bomber kills several dozen Israeli teenagers in a Jerusalem restaurant, is that an act of terrorism or wartime retaliation against Israeli government policies and army actions?” Complaints by a dozen angry parents, who were supported by their Jewish Federation, forced the publisher to remove the offending language from all electronic versions and future 10th and 11th print editions.

The local Jewish Federation then joined with parents to help school officials better train teachers about the realities of Middle Eastern conflicts.

In New York, preparatory materials for the famed Regents exam falsely claim Israel prevailed militarily in 1948 only due to strong support from the United States.

This is Arab propaganda, utilized to both demonize America and explain the failure of the six Arab armies that attacked the tiny Jewish state.

In Albany, New York, an English teacher had her students write an essay, as part of a persuasive writing exercise, imagining themselves to
be Nazis. She assigned some of them the task of describing why Jews are evil. After parents protested, the school superintendent publicly apologized, and the teacher was removed from the classroom.

At New York’s Riverdale Fieldston prep school, administrators held an Israel-Palestine day and, under the pretense of “evenhandedness,” invited Rashid Khalidi and Tony Judt as featured speakers to represent “both sides” of the conflict. Both Khalidi and Judt believe the State of Israel should not exist.

Rabbi Avi Weiss, one of the panelists, withdrew from the conference after learning about the contents and opted instead to organize a counter-demonstration.

The school refused to allow a single pro-Israel speaker at this event. Among invited speakers were noted anti-Israel advocates Sara Roy from Harvard and Fawaz Gerges from Georgetown.

Meanwhile, teachers instructed students not to speak to the protesters or the media, and the school’s principal announced at the end of the conference that they just heard a “comprehensive” analysis of the Middle East conflict from distinguished speakers and to remember, “the protesters are outnumbered.”

This event drew strong criticism from the Zionist Organization of America, the Anti-Defamation League, and several politicians.

At Campbell Middle School in Smyrna, Georgia, a parent complained about an assignment that promoted a sympathetic understanding of Islamic treatment of women. Pam Geller, a pro-Israel advocate, reported that other lessons from the same curriculum, written by InspirEd Educators, Inc., “explain” homicide bombing and Jewish hatred from the point of view of multicultural tolerance of Islam.

One lesson describes a video left by a female Hamas homicide bomber who describes her act of martyrdom as “my most wanted wish that I asked God Almighty to fulfill.” Another lesson in the curriculum is an editorial titled “A Palestinian’s Plea” that concludes with, “It is not hard to understand why people would take their anger and frustration out on somebody, and it is understandable that person would be Jewish. It is the Jews that take our land, it is the Jews that destroy our homes, and it is the Jews who have killed our children!”

The school principal defended the misogyyny assignment on the basis of teacher autonomy. But the school superintendent deemed the lesson inappropriate and declared that such materials need to be fully vetted before being placed in the hands of teachers.

**The Study of Arabic in Public Schools** has become yet another opportunity to bash Israel. This summer, the Tucson, Arizona, Unified School District requested its school board’s permission to accept money from the QFI, a Qatar-based foundation, to implement “innovative curricula and teaching materials to be used in any Arabic language classroom.”

QFI is closely associated with the Muslim Brotherhood and has named several institutions after Yusuf al-Qaradawi, the de facto spiritual leader of Egypt’s Brotherhood, who can be seen on YouTube inciting throngs in Cairo to kill all the world’s Jews. (Of note: QFI was founded by Sheikha Bint Hamad al-Thani, the founder of Al Jazeera.)

In 2011, Tucson had a problem with another Brotherhood-affiliated group, MECHA, which was trying to recruit Mexican students to attend an “occupied peoples conference” at which Palestinian and Tucson United School District students would share their experiences living in “occupied territories.” Tucson’s superintendent, Dr. Garcia, stated her concerns about the organization’s “anti-Semitic tone and tenor on our campuses.”

Can anti-Israelism, which is the new form of anti-Semitism, lead back to the older types? In Pine Valley, New York, a rash of anti-Jewish attacks took place over the course of several weeks at a local high school. One Jewish student had a swastika painted across his face; another was beaten with a hockey stick. Holocaust and anti-Semitic “jokes” were directed at Jewish students. Swastikas were left on walls for weeks on end. Some of the taunting actually took place under the watchful eyes of certain teachers.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo interceded with a terse letter to the state’s Department of Education, demanding an explanation and requesting that the police’s human rights division initiate an immediate investigation.

If the major Jewish “defense agencies” (ADL, AJC, JCRCs, Federations) respond to the kindergarten through grade 12 problem as poorly as they have responded to anti-Israelism on campus, there will be a heavy price to pay.

Charles Jacobs is the president of Americans for Peace and Tolerance in Boston, Massachusetts, and is widely known for having helped emancipate African slaves in Sudan.

_Tiny Israel Brings Healing to a Big World_ from page 27

And that’s just one story provided by Untold News. Israeli genius is put to great, practical use in the medical field, as well.

An 8-month-old Palestinian child, born with a hole in her heart, was treated using Israel’s deluxe techniques. The child’s life was saved when a procedure was performed, and an Israeli charity provided the funds. Further, Israeli doctors also provide life-saving treatment even for terrorists, Rosen explained.

The morality inherent in this tiny dynamo nation is astonishing—especially since Israel is also forced to deal with terrorism on an ongoing basis. Yet this doesn’t prevent the Israelis from springing into action when natural disasters occur anywhere in the world.

Such stories leap off the pages of _Tiny Dynamo_ and the Untold News website. In fact, pro-Israel activists around the world, especially Christian Zionists, are using the information provided by Untold News to better advocate for Israel.

“I was so moved by the stories of how this little, often-besieged country makes the world a better place,” said Miriam Smyth, a Christian who lives near London, England. “I’ve used this book _Tiny Dynamo_ in my efforts to combat the horrid media portrayals of Israel. I’ve found it to be invaluable.”

Rosen is so enthused by the response to the work of Untold News that she feels this is only the beginning. “We now have over 320,000 ‘likes’ on Facebook, and the overall response has eclipsed what I’d hoped we would be able to achieve.”

Indeed, with some good news finally entering the arena, perhaps younger generations, committed to reconciliation and building a more positive world, will begin to see Israel in a new light.
Loving One Another

In 1 John 3:10, the apostle John declared, “Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother.” These strong words depict someone living in rebellion to God and His teachings, devoid of any evidence of inner righteousness. According to God’s inerrant Word, that person is a child of the Devil. Hard to believe, but true. This negative verse sets the stage for a positive message that John then delivered on love.

The Principle of Christian Love

“For this is the message that you [Christians] heard from the beginning, that we should love one another” (v. 11). The word beginning refers to when Jesus told His disciples to love one another. John wrote often about God’s nature and His attribute of love (Jn. 3:16; 1 Jn. 4:7–8). In fact, this message was one of the first they received from Christ and one of the last messages He taught them before His departure (Jn. 13:34–35; 15:12, 17). The word love is in the present tense, meaning Christians should manifest love continually throughout their lives.

John used Scripture to illustrate what love is not. Love is “not as Cain who was of the wicked one [the Devil] and murdered [slaughtered] his brother” (1 Jn. 3:12). Here is the classic analogy of one who lacked brotherly love. Cain is referred to as being of “the wicked one,” a phrase John used earlier when speaking of the Devil (cf. 2:13).

Cain’s heart and character were filled with hatred against his brother Abel (Gen. 4:8), and he was motivated by the Devil to kill him. The Greek text uses the word slaughter, not murder, in reference to Cain’s cold-blooded violence (1 Jn. 3:12).

John then asked a rhetorical question: “And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother’s righteous” (v. 12). Cain’s sinful nature erupted with uncontrollable jealousy and hatred, provoked by the righteousness he saw in Abel. The same is true today, as sinful men hate the righteous and sometimes murder them.

The apostle said, “Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you” (v. 13). Believers are commanded not to be surprised or amazed when they see unprovoked hatred toward Christians who live righteously (cf. 2 Tim. 3:12). They should expect the ungodly to persecute them, as evidenced by Christian persecution throughout the world, even today.

A Christian’s true love for his or her brethren in Christ is one indication the individual possesses eternal life: “We know that we have passed from [the] death to [the] life, because we love the brethren” (1 Jn. 3:14). The words have passed are perfect tense, meaning believers receive everlasting life the moment they receive Christ, and they possess that life through eternity. A Christian’s love for fellow born-again believers provides evidence (it is not the means) of salvation. Notice, Scripture does not say we love some of the brethren; we are to love all the brethren. Believers who are truly in fellowship with God will love all Christians.

Likewise, the opposite is true: “He who does not love his brother abides in death” (v. 14). The absence of such love reveals that someone professing to be a Christian is actually not born again: Thus he is separated from God and remains spiritually dead.

John concluded this section with a sweeping statement: “Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him” (v. 15). The diabolical nature of hatred is that it can ultimately cause the one who habitually harbors it to commit murder. Thankfully, such people usually do not do so because they fear judgment from the law. However, in God’s eyes, they are still guilty. Anyone who fixates on such hatred certainly does not possess God’s love or have eternal life.

The Practice of Christian Love

The supreme example of genuine love is Christ’s voluntary giving of His life: “By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us” (v. 16). Believers then as well as today understand Christ’s self-sacrifice and supernatural love for mankind (cf. Jn. 10:15–18). It was the greatest expression of true love the world has ever seen.

Each Christian has a biblical obligation to follow Christ’s example: “And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren” (1 Jn. 3:16). This mindset was extremely needful in John’s day; but it remains important today, too, especially where Christians are under severe privation and persecution. Christians are to express true love to all people everywhere. However, the admonition in verse 16 applies only to those in the family of God.

Scripture here goes beyond the theoretical to illustrate how Christians are obligated to show love to brothers and sisters in need: “But whoever has this world’s goods, and sees his brother in need, if he shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth” (vv. 17–18).

There are no exceptions. Every believer is responsible to aid a Christian in need. Those who have “this world’s goods” should quickly show love by helping to relieve the suffering of other Christians. The word sees does not denote a casual glance but an ongoing observation of need. Seeing the need either prompts the able Christian to aid his brother out of love, or it “shuts up his heart from [helping] him.” The word shuts means to erect a deliberate barrier by closing the door to a brother’s need because of one’s own self-centered hardness of heart.
The love John wrote about requires the sacrifice of one’s self. Christians have a moral obligation and responsibility to sacrifice for their brethren (whom God loves) when they are in need.

If a Christian refuses to help a brother in need, John asked, “How does the love of God abide in him?” (v. 17). A person who professes to love God but refuses to help a needy brother when asked to do so is a hypocrite, and his verbal expression of his love must be questioned.

With a loving appeal as a spiritual father, the apostle exhorted his readers not to be hypocrites and to show other Christians love “in deed and in truth” (v. 18). Good deeds emanating from genuine love speak louder than words.

### The Proof of Christian Love

Showing love to fellow Christians shows a believer is walking in truth: “And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him” (v. 19). Believers know they are of the truth because their thoughts and good deeds are grounded in divine truth (v. 18).

However, John anticipated one might feel condemned in his or her heart for not showing love to a brother: “For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things” (v. 20). He did not say what things might cause these feelings of condemnation. He knew that if a believer’s conscience is filled with doubt, guilt, and failure, his service for the Lord would be minimized. So John assured believers they may bring the issue to God in prayer, and the Lord will bring them peace.

God, being greater than our hearts and knowing all things, can give a praying believer a proper evaluation of his heart. In other words, an omniscient God is a better Judge than the human conscience. He alone knows a believer’s inner life and has perfect knowledge of someone’s motives, level of commitment, and desire to serve the Lord. Therefore, it is better for Christians to trust in God’s evaluation after spending time in prayer rather than rely on a fallible conscience.

On the other hand, “if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God” (v. 21). That is, if a believer has a good conscience (a heart that is right with God), he or she can approach God the Father in prayer with confidence (boldness and freedom of speech). When believers please God, then “whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight” (v. 22).

Jesus had told His disciples, “If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you” (Jn. 15:7). This verse contains two stipulations for answered prayer: The Christian must (1) “keep His [God’s] commandments” (New Testament commandments, 1 Jn. 3:22) and (2) maintain a conduct that pleases God. When God answers prayer, it will be in keeping with His divine nature and attributes and His will for the petitioner.

God commands “that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment” (v. 23). This commandment is twofold:

First, the word believe refers to a once-for-all action where an individual puts faith in the “name” of God’s Son, Jesus Christ, as his Redeemer. This verse emphasizes the deity of Jesus Christ and the uniqueness of His Sonship within the Godhead, as unveiled to the world at Jesus’ incarnation.

Second, believers must manifest “love [to] one another” within the church. This love is to be ongoing, mutually expressed, and received by all Christians within the church. Love is the outworking of one’s faith and the test whether a person is a true Christian.

John concluded this section with a reminder: “Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us” (v. 24).

Faithfully keeping God’s commandments gives true Christians inner assurance of their unity with God the Father through Jesus Christ. This unity is mutual: Believers not only abide in God, but God takes up residence in them—a major theme in John’s teaching (cf. Jn. 14:16–20; 15:5; 17:21–26). The assurance of mutual abiding comes through the indwelling power and ministry of the Holy Spirit in the lives of all believers.

This relationship of love binds all believers together and is an ongoing witness to the world. Jesus said, “By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another” (13:35).

David M. Levy is the director of International Ministries and a Bible teacher for The Friends of Israel.

---

**Question:** Why is it useless to ask anyone but God for forgiveness of sin?

**Answer:** “I am the LORD, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King. I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake.”

—Isaiah 43:15, 25
The Wisdom of God (Part 3)

Daniel Interprets Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream

The previous article focused on the wisdom of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, plus God’s distribution of wisdom to the nation of Israel; Israel’s gifted artisans; and Joseph, Joshua, Solomon, and Ezra.

This article provides more examples of God’s distribution of wisdom.

Nebuchadnezzar, the crown prince of Babylon, came to Israel’s capital city of Jerusalem in August 605 B.C. On August 15 or 16, his father, King Nabopolassar, died in Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar rushed home to claim the throne and was crowned king on the day of his arrival, September 6 or 7, 605 B.C.

On his trip home, Nebuchadnezzar carried captive with him some of the sacred vessels of the Temple of God in Jerusalem and Jewish “young men in whom there was no blemish, but good-looking, gifted in all wisdom, possessing knowledge and quick to understand, who had ability to serve in the king’s palace, and whom they might teach the language and literature of the Chaldeans” (Dan. 1:4).

The young men were 15 to 20 years of age. The future prophet Daniel and his three companions were among the captives (vv. 1–7).

Nebuchadnezzar placed God’s sacred vessels in Esagila, the temple of Marduk, the chief Babylonian god. He probably did so for two reasons:

First, he wanted to express gratitude to his god for victories in battle. So he used the vessels of Israel’s God as a thank offering to Marduk.

Second, he wanted to exalt Marduk and humiliate Israel’s God by asserting that Israel’s God was subject to his god. To the pagan way of thinking, no nation could conquer another unless its god was more powerful than the god of those vanquished.

Nebuchadnezzar’s actions gave Israel’s God a splendid opportunity to demonstrate two things:

First, Israel’s God is not subject to any god. He is the Most High, the Sovereign One of the universe.

Second, it was Israel’s God, not Marduk, who gave Nebuchadnezzar his victories. Daniel 1:1–2 makes that fact clear. It states that Nebuchadnezzar came to Jerusalem and besieged it in the third year of the reign of King Jehoiakim of Judah: “And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with some of the articles of the house of God, which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the articles into the treasure house of his god.” God sovereignly did this to afford opportunity for a greater display of His sovereignty.

Nebuchadnezzar commanded the chief marshal of his royal court to bring the best of the Jewish captives into the royal training school. The Jewish youths were given the best education Babylon afforded.

The training lasted for three years and was designed to prepare the young men to become officers in the king’s service. They also were assigned Babylonian names that honored Babylonian gods, probably to change them from a Jewish mindset to a Babylonian one and from loyalty to Israel’s God to loyalty to Babylon’s gods.

God enabled Daniel and his three friends to learn their subjects well. He gifted them with wisdom to distinguish true knowledge from falsehood, and to Daniel God added the gift of discernment to interpret dreams and visions from God accurately (v. 17).

These abilities were crucial for the follower of God living in a land that stressed visions and dreams.

When their education was completed, all the trainees were tested before King Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel and his three friends so greatly surpassed the others in their performance that they were placed in the king’s service. They even surpassed by 10 times all the king’s experienced magicians and enchanters, not due to natural ability, but due to God’s special enablement (vv. 17–20).

Daniel’s First Test of Wisdom. In 603 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar had a disturbing dream. He called in most of his wise men in hopes of receiving an interpretation. As was their custom, they asked the king to tell them the dream so they could give their interpretation.

But this time Nebuchadnezzar demanded they not only interpret the dream, but also tell him what he had dreamt. He promised gifts, reward, and great honor if they could do so but said they would be cut in pieces and their homes converted into public restrooms if they failed. They told him no king, lord, or ruler had ever demanded their wise men perform such an impossible feat (2:1–13).

Nebuchadnezzar responded by commanding the execution of all his wise men. Although Daniel and his friends were not present at the session before the king, they were also to be executed. So Daniel went to Nebuchadnezzar and obtained time to fulfill what the king demanded (vv. 14–16).

Daniel rushed home and told his friends the threat to their lives. They begged God to reveal the necessary information. God answered their prayer by revealing it to Daniel. Daniel then uttered a great prayer of thanksgiving that emphasized God’s wisdom, power, and sovereignty (vv. 17–23).
When Daniel had the necessary information, he requested to be brought before the king and was immediately taken to King Nebuchadnezzar (vv. 24–25).

Daniel told King Nebuchadnezzar that his demand to the wise men was humanly impossible to fulfill. Only the God in heaven could do it. Daniel made it clear that it was that God who had given the king his dream. He also declared that the dream revealed what would happen in the future and in the latter days (vv. 27–29).

Daniel refused to take any credit for interpreting the king’s dream. All the credit belonged to the God in heaven (v. 30).

The Content of the Dream. Daniel told the king the dream consisted of an image and a stone. The image was human in form and was so huge and brilliant it was terrifying to see. Its head was made of gold. Its breast and arms consisted of silver. Its belly and thighs were composed of bronze. Its legs were comprised of iron, and its feet and toes were a mixture of iron and clay (vv. 31–33).

A stone had been cut out of a mountain without hands, indicating the stone was not human in origin. The stone struck the image’s feet with such force that it crushed them, causing the entire image to disintegrate into chaff. The wind blew away every remnant. Then the stone became a large mountain that filled the entire earth (vv. 34–35).

The Interpretation of the Dream. After Daniel described the dream, he said, “Now we will tell the interpretation of it before the king” (v. 36). Daniel began by asserting the sovereignty of God:

You, O king, are a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory; and wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, He has given them into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all—you are this head of gold (vv. 37–38).

He purposely called Jehovah, Israel’s God, “the God of heaven,” not merely because heaven is God’s special dwelling place but because the Babylonians believed their gods came from the earth.7

It took courage for Daniel to speak this way to the king. The pressure would have been great to win Nebuchadnezzar’s favor and avoid statements that might be offensive. Daniel was determined, however, not to sacrifice God’s truth on the altar of expediency.

It was important that, in the interpretation, Daniel moved progressively from the top to the bottom of the image. This downward movement represents the passage of time. The upper parts of the image portrayed earlier history, and the lower parts portrayed later history.

When Daniel interpreted the head of gold at the top of the image, he told Nebuchadnezzar, “You are this head of gold. But after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours” (vv. 38–39). Thus the head represented both the Babylonian kingdom and its great king.8 Orientals regarded kings and their kingdoms as synonymous.

God represented Babylon with gold for two reasons: First, Marduk was called the god of gold.9 Second, Babylon used gold excessively in its buildings, images, and shrines. The historian Herodotus, who was in Babylon 90 years after the era of Nebuchadnezzar, was astonished at the amount of gold there. Even walls and buildings were overlaid with gold.10

Babylon was to be succeeded by the kingdom of Medo-Persia, represented by the breast and arms of silver (vv. 32, 39). Two arms coming together to form one breast pictured this kingdom perfectly. Two distinct peoples, the Medes and the Persians, united together in 550 B.C. under the same king to form one great power.11

Silver was also a fitting representation of this kingdom. In ancient times silver signified money; it was the standard of value and the medium of exchange. Medo-Persia became noted for basing its power on money collected through an extensive tax system (Ezra 4:13; Dan. 11:2).12

Daniel said Medo-Persia would be inferior to Babylon. It was not inferior in military strength and size, for it conquered Babylon and was much larger than it. However, as a partnership empire, it lacked the absolute unity Babylon had.13

This portion of the dream’s prophecy was fulfilled when Medo-Persia conquered Babylon in 539 B.C.14

ENDNOTES

2 Ibid., 234.
3 Ibid.
5 Charles Boutflower, In and Around the Book of Daniel (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1963), 93, 133.
6 Schultz, 234.
7 Boutflower, 93, 133.
8 Keil, 73.
9 Boutflower, 35–36.
13 Ibid., 36–37.
14 Young, 44.

Renald E. Showers is an author and international conference speaker for The Friends of Israel.

“

At what point shall we expect the approach of danger? . . . Shall we expect some transatlantic military giant to step the ocean and crush us at a blow? Never! All the armies of Europe, Asia, and Africa combined . . . could not by force take a drink from the Ohio or make a track on the Blue Ridge in a trial of a thousand years. At what point, then, is the approach of danger to be expected? I answer, if it ever reach us it must spring up amongst us; it cannot come from abroad. If destruction be our lot we must ourselves be its author and finisher. As a nation of freemen we must live through all time, or die by suicide.”

—Abraham Lincoln
**Editor’s Note:** As we went to press with this issue of Israel My Glory, Israel was fighting Hamas in Gaza. Hate-filled anti-Israel demonstrations were breaking out around the world. So we decided to provide some facts that most of the world chooses to ignore.

### #1 The ratio

Israel is a small country, with a population of 6.1 million Jews. The ratio of Americans to Jewish Israelis is a staggering 52 to 1.

By press time, 43 Israeli officers and soldiers, most of them in their 20s, had been killed in Operation Protective Edge. This is a heavy toll for such a tiny population.

Israel’s loss would be equivalent to the United States losing 2,236 American soldiers. Statistically speaking, Israel has suffered more casualties than the United States in the war in Afghanistan. According to the U.S. Department of Defense, 2,197 American soldiers died in Afghanistan as of July 24 in Operation Enduring Freedom.

### #2 The tunnels

Global anti-Israel riots flared when 70 Palestinians in the Gaza suburb of Shejaiya died in the military action that killed 13 Israeli soldiers.

Hamas used the neighborhood to launch some 150 missiles into Israel in a single week. It was a Hamas stronghold. *Israel Today* reported Shejaiya had “a huge network of terror tunnels used to store missiles and infiltrate southern Israel.”

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the military action “revealed more tunnels, in addition to others that we already uncovered, some of which reached Israel. We found handcuffs [and] sedating drugs” that terrorists use to kidnap Israeli soldiers.

### #3 Arab strategy

Israel warned residents of Shejaiya to evacuate days before the assault, but Hamas told them to stay.

“We urged the civilian population to evacuate for days, through leaflets, broadcasts, telephone calls,” Netanyahu said. “We urged them to evacuate, because we didn’t want to see innocent civilians caught in the crossfire between Israel and Hamas. But it is Hamas that ordered the civilians to stay put. It is Hamas that wanted those civilians to stay, so it would have a human shield for its terrorist machine.”

*Israel Today* reported that former U.S. President Bill Clinton told India’s NDTV the high civilian death toll was likely part of Hamas’s barbaric plan. Hamas has “a strategy,” Clinton said, “designed to force Israel to kill their own [Palestinian] civilians so that the rest of the world will condemn them [Israelis].”

*Israel Today* said “Hamas is not even trying to hide the fact that it uses the civilians of Gaza as a human shield. . . . Terrorist rulers are openly calling on local residents to do their duty and place themselves in the path of Israeli reprisals.”

Israel Defense Forces (IDF) photos show definitively that Hamas even launches rockets from hospitals.

### #4 IDF hospital

While Hamas strives to kill and kidnap as many Israelis as possible, IDF medics in July saved the life of a terrorist who tried to kill them minutes earlier.

*Israel Today* reported that IDF soldier Daniel Albo posted to Facebook a photo of fellow army medics and himself treating the wounded Hamas terrorist.

“Today,” Albo wrote, “my unit and I saved the life of a terrorist who tried to kill us simply because we are IDF soldiers and Israeli citizens. We saved his life simply because we are human. Proud to serve in the IDF.”

*Israel Today* also reported that Israel has opened a military field hospital along the northern Gaza border to treat wounded Palestinian civilians. “In addition to trauma units, the IDF field hospital also has birthing rooms for pregnant Palestinians who are unable to reach hospitals in nearby Gaza City,” *Israel Today* said.

### #5 Electricity

Israel still supplies electricity to Gaza. Arutz-7 reported, “Hamas owes the Israel Electric Company hundreds of millions of shekels, part of the 1.4 billion shekel [approximately $408 million] electricity bill the Palestinian Authority owes. Neither the PA nor Gaza have paid for electricity for at least a decade.”

One of Hamas’s cease-fire terms is that Israel give its enemy free electricity.

### #6 Hamas’s goal

Hamas top terrorist Ismail Haniyeh again said the terror group will fight to “the last drop of blood” in its attempts to destroy Israel. “We will continue the struggle until we liberate the land, Jerusalem, and the Al-Aqsa Mosque, and return the ‘refugees’ to their homes.”

In other words, Hamas will never make peace with Israel.

### #7 Hamas’s money

Hamas has become a millionaire’s club. Since 2007, Hamas leaders have made vast fortunes by heavily taxing goods smuggled from Egypt in tunnels and by grossly overcharging for subsidized Egyptian fuel, reported *Israel Today*.

“Neither of those revenue streams would be possible without violently provoking Israel to lay siege to Gaza . . . Hamas profits are threatened by the enormous quantities of humanitarian aid and other goods Israel and the international community pump into Gaza every month, which is why numerous reports suggest Hamas blocks that aid from ever reaching local residents.

“At the same time, Hamas leaders have proved wildly successful fund-raisers in their travels abroad. . . . In recent media interviews, Professor Ahmed Karima of Al-Azhar University in Egypt noted . . . Hamas can boast no fewer than 1,200 millionaires.”

*Israel Today* said that while Gazans wallow in poverty, “Hamas leader Khaled Mashal has amassed a fortune of $2.6 billion, the Jordanian media reported.”

---

**Note:** This content is a summary of the Israel My Glory article titled “The War in Gaza: 2014.” For more detailed information, please refer to the source document.
The Truth Comes Out: Christians Suffer in the PA

Christy Anantas

I n 2012 CBS aired a notoriously dishonest 60 Minutes segment about Christians in the Holy Land. In the segment, prominent Palestinian Christians tried to dismiss legitimate concern about the suffering of Christians in Muslim-majority Palestinian society.

Now, one of the sources who appeared in the segment, Christy Anantas, a Palestinian Christian from Bethlehem, has stepped into the spotlight to reveal the truth about the suffering endured by Christians living under the Palestinian Authority (PA), a truth that is completely at odds with the 60 Minutes story.

Anantas gave a talk recently at Uppsala University in Sweden that is posted on YouTube. She directly contradicts the story by CBS’s Bob Simon. To watch her on YouTube, go to tinyurl.com/watchChristyA.

After speaking in defense of Israel’s right to exist, Christy reports she was threatened by one of her own family members who said he would put a bullet in her head if she didn’t stop defending Israel. The explanation was that she was putting her family in danger.

Christy also described how one of her uncles was shot in the head and blinded for refusing to pay protection money, or al-jizyah, to Muslim extremists in the West Bank. His life was only saved by the treatment he received in an Israeli hospital. She also describes how Palestinian judges have colluded with the theft of land from Christians in Palestinian society.

After her talk was published on YouTube by the Jerusalem Institute for Justice, she was threatened and her family harassed. Christy’s father has even denounced her in an obvious attempt to deflect hostility from the rest of her family.

In the 60 Minutes segment, a number of Palestinian Christians, including Zahi Khouri, who owns a Coca-Cola franchise, dismissed then-Israeli Ambassador Michael Oren’s concerns about Muslim oppression of Christians as a “great selling point. Easy to sell to the American public.”

Christy Anantas, now living in the United Kingdom, doesn’t see it that way. Her YouTube video is compelling.

To read this entire article by Dexter Van Zile of CAMERA (Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America), go to tinyurl.com/CAMERA-CAA.

by CAMERA (Camera.org)
There is continuous shedding of blood in the Middle East. This is the blood of hate and vengeance, not like the blood of love that our Savior shed for our salvation.

Now, because the world has rejected Him, there is shedding of blood everywhere. But as more blood is shed, there is more bitterness and hatred. It is an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.

No one considers where all this fighting will eventually lead. If only people would recognize that the blood of our Lord can bring peace, then things would be different.

It grieves me deeply to see all this spilling of blood. As a citizen of Israel, I must obey orders and be a good example as a soldier. Otherwise people would say that I am trying to get out of military service because I believe in Christ, and my actions would only justify what the enemies say about those of us who believe in the Lord according to the Bible.

Recently I had to carry a wounded guard to be treated by our medical personnel. I was splattered all over with blood. I prayed for this poor boy, and I also prayed for myself because at any moment I could be injured or killed.

I asked the Lord to be with my family who is living in constant fear that something might happen to me.

Recently I asked one of our officers, “How long will all this go on? How long will it be before all this spilling of blood is over?”

“Only God knows!” he replied.

“Now that you mentioned God,” I said, “why don’t you believe in Him?”

He looked at me and asked, “Why do you believe in Him?”

I told him, “I believe in God because I believe in Jesus who died for my sins. If everyone believed in Him, we would all have peace. He taught us to love one another.”

The officer replied, “What difference would it make what I believe? There would still be millions killing and hurting one another.”

I told him, “It is our responsibility to accept Him personally and then to make Him known among other people. That is the only way to overcome the world.” It is written, “This is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith” (1 Jn. 5:4).

He listened attentively. “Yes, I agree with you,” he said. “But peace seems to be such a long way off, and who knows when the world will accept the day of Jesus? In the meantime, wars will go on and on without end. I am afraid there is not going to be any peace, and another round of wars like last June [1967 Six-Day War] will soon come again.”

Since then, I have been called up into the army again. There is much work on the front for me, as the Arabs have sown many mines and are adding to them at night. I must defuse
these mines, and it is a most dangerous work.

Of the 30 who worked in our group, only three are left. The Lord has spared me so that I am still alive. The men who work with me respect me greatly. I am their instructor and teach them how to disarm the mines.

I visit my students in the hospitals or at their graves. If they are wounded, I give them my testimony and try to comfort them as best as I can. This war for our land is not over, and we shall have to make many more sacrifices.

Some of my friends have asked me, “How can you, a Christian, fight a war? Doesn’t Jesus say if your enemies smite you on the cheek, give them the other?”

I told them, “First of all, you should remember that I am here as a citizen, called up by the government to defend my country. The war is not my choice.” I also told them the Lord said, “Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s” (Mt. 22:21).

As a citizen, I must fulfill my obligations. So I try to make my life and service a testimony, forgetting myself, and helping others, even at the risk of my own life. I think this is what God would like me to do. Please pray for me, as we pray for you.

by Zvi Kalisher in Jerusalem, from The Friends of Israel Archives, 1968

Please continue to pray for Zvi and Naomi Kalisher in Jerusalem. Also, please pray for their grandchildren in the Israel Defense Forces.

Zvi Kalisher has lived in Israel since 1946 and has been a columnist for Israel My Glory since 1959.
Up to Jerusalem
MARCH 13-23, 2015

OUR MARCH Up to Jerusalem tour will mark 38 years of journeying to the land of the Bible. Never has there been a more exciting time to be in the land given to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The prophetic significance is overwhelming; and the historical significance, unprecedented. Meeting Jewish people who have come home from more than 100 countries is an exhilarating experience. And meeting Israeli believers, in Israel, will revitalize your prayer life and your commitment to Israel and its people.

A UNIQUE PLACE
Israel is where history and the Bible converge. With our Bibles in hand, we will see with our own eyes how prophecy is being lived out in Israel today.

A UNIQUE EMPHASIS
This is an exceptional tour, which is recommended for everyone.

• Soul-stirring visits to ancient biblical sites.
• Interacting with the people and places of modern Israel.
• Breathtaking views from the picturesque Galilee to the strategic Golan Heights to the golden city of Jerusalem to the shores of the Dead Sea.
• Walk where Jesus walked.

To request a detailed tour brochure, use the enclosed envelope or call The Friends of Israel Monday through Friday between 8:30 A.M. and 4:30 P.M. (Eastern time) at 800-257-7843 and ask for Lisa Grosso at extension 144. Or visit www.foi.org/events.

$4,090 PER PERSON DOUBLE OCCUPANCY  |  $2,780 LAND ONLY

$100 EARLY BOOKING DISCOUNT