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ABOUT THIS ISSUE
The late American revivalist Vance Havner had the gift of foresight when he warned us 25 years ago about the course of the church in America. “We are living,” Havner said, “in the worst period of deception in history.” He feared false teaching would fool many, including church leaders who would endorse a false gospel. Other good people, he said, unable to discern what is happening, will be afraid to oppose the teaching. This issue of Israel My Glory outlines the dimensions of some of the changes occurring in today’s church and reveals the great need for discernment among God’s people. There is, of course, much more also, including valuable insights into how these changes affect our relationship with Israel. It’s a timely issue you’ll want to share with others. Our cover is an aerial view of Kibbutz Ein Dor, established in 1948 (Duby Tal / Albatross / Israel Images).

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The world is a strange place. What it needs the most is often what it hates the most. Of all the countries in the world, Israel is probably the most hated. People call it racist, try to impose sanctions against it, don’t want to trade with it, and don’t want to let it defend itself. Yet almost no nation does more to help its fellow man than Israel.

In fact, Israel Today reported in April that Israeli doctors operated on and saved the life of the three-year-old daughter of a top Hamas official and then allowed a Jordanian helicopter to transport her to Amman. To no one’s surprise, however, the father thanked Jordan, never mentioning Israel. And few news services carried the story.

Israel is always providing life-saving aid and relief to those struck by disaster. People around the world expressed shock when news of Haiti’s 7.0-magnitude earthquake began to flow from the island nation earlier this year. But Israel went into action. Within three days, Israel had established round-the-clock relief operations and set up the first on-the-scene hospital in a soccer field near the Port-Au-Prince airport. It immediately treated hundreds of victims, performed 104 lifesaving operations, and delivered seven babies. One grateful mother named her newborn Israel to honor the country that helped her with his birth.

Israel’s field hospital staffed 40 doctors, 25 nurses, several paramedics, a pharmacy, children’s ward, radiology department, intensive-care unit, emergency room, two operating rooms, a surgical department, internal medicine department, and a maternity ward. CBS news reported that the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) hospital was the “Rolls Royce of medicine in Haiti.”

According to Daniel Biran, Israel’s ambassador of Administrative Affairs who served as Israel’s chief administrator in the Haiti relief operation, “In less than three weeks of the first patient being treated, 230 doctors, nurses, and rescue workers from the Israeli Army and the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs worked day and night to assist more than 1,200 cases. Life-saving operations were performed on 370 patients.” Israeli doctors helped 19 mothers give birth and gave new hope to Haiti. “We did everything according to the Jewish and Israeli spirit,” he said.

Two search and rescue teams, including the IDF’s Canine Unit, conducted rescue missions with people from other countries and local authorities. A rescue team of ultra-Orthodox men worked 38 continuous hours with others to pull eight students from the rubble of a collapsed eight-story university building. Amid the debris, they recited Shabbat prayers. Many Haitians sat quietly in the rubble, staring at the debris, they recited Shabbat prayers. Many Haitians sat quietly in the rubble, staring at the men wrapped in prayer shawls as they prayed facing Jerusalem. Then they crowded around the Israeis and kissed their prayer shawls.

The IDF’s National Search and Rescue Unit, founded in 1983, is a well-trained, highly skilled force of IDF regulars and reservists who are ready to leave at a moment’s notice. Israel’s search and rescue personnel include doctors, engineers, heavy-equipment operators, and rescue-dog teams. They are deployed 24 hours a day, even to countries that have no diplomatic relations with Israel, whenever there is a disaster, such as an earthquake or tsunami or terrorist attack.

State-of-the-art, specialized equipment is used, including Israeli-developed devices for locating trapped victims by detecting the seismic and acoustic emissions they give off.

Israel’s worldwide humanitarian efforts have included assistance to earthquake victims in Mexico (1985), Armenia (1988), Turkey (1999), Greece (1999), and India (2001). Israel responded to terrorist bombings in Buenos Aires, Argentina (1984), and Nairobi, Kenya (1998). Israel also provided humanitarian aid to refugees of the Rwandan Civil War (1994) and the Kosovo conflict (1999). And when the catastrophic Hurricane Katrina hit the southern coastal areas of the United States in 2005, Israel rushed 80 tons of food, beds, blankets, generators, and medical equipment to the disaster site.

Isn’t it ironic that the country much of the world loves to hate responds to the world’s needs with a volume of disaster relief and humanitarian aid far in excess of its size and population? While Israel’s enemies direct hatred and violence against the Jewish state, the heart and soul of the people of Israel are reflected in actions that bring blessing to the world—friends and foes alike.

We shouldn’t be surprised by Israel’s disproportionate compassion to those struck by tragedy around the world. The Bible provides the prophetic framework as God’s covenant with Abraham is confirmed to Jacob through Isaac in Genesis 28:14: “And in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

William E. Sutter is the executive director of The Friends of Israel.
Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin (Bibi) Netanyahu has said the area in question is totally Jewish and would belong to Israel in any peace settlement. It is a continuing fact of political life that both houses of Congress have overwhelmingly confirmed Israel's right to Jerusalem as the undivided capital of the Jewish state. And it has repeatedly voted for the Embassy of the United States to be moved from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, even though every president has refused to do so.

Furthermore, Indyk, along with other members of the Obama administration, has either asserted or implied that the primary obstacle to peace in the Middle East is Israel's refusal to forfeit the right to build in Jerusalem.

Netanyahu to offer to cede the Golan Heights. Given Israel's dependence on the United States to counter the threat from Iran and to prevent its own international isolation, an Israeli prime minister would surely want to bridge the growing divide.

The news service said Indyk failed to mention the thousands of rockets and mortar shells Hamas has rained down on Israel following the expulsion of Jewish residents and military forces from Gaza. Indyk was also silent concerning the unyielding refusal of Palestinians and militant Islamists to recognize Israel's right to exist in the Middle East.

Arutz-7 said Indyk “castigated” Netanyahu in The New York Times and on Israel's IDF Army Radio, “saying the prime minister prefers a nationalist government over being friends with the United States.” But in whose interest, exactly, should any prime minister of a sovereign nation act? In the interest of his own country or someone else’s? And how can one country tell another, “You do what we say or we won’t be friends”?

Israel never agreed, nor was ever asked, to refrain from building within the city limits of Jerusalem. This entire controversy is the concoction of a U.S. administration that calculatedly decided to create the issue and announce that Israel has stymied the entire Middle East peace process by granting building permits. Delighted, the Arabs viewed the confrontation as a gift they hadn’t even asked for or expected.

Most Israelis understand what is at stake: the Palestinian and Arab worlds want “peace” with Israel only by taking it “one piece at a time.”

Make no mistake: the Congress of the United States is right on this one. Jerusalem is the eternal city of the Jewish people by divine right. And Yaakov Katz was correct when he said, “We survived Pharaoh, and we will survive Indyk.”

by Elwood McQuaid
Who Writes the Last Chapter?

Just when some of the “leading lights” of the international diplomatic community thought progress might be brewing in the quest to tame the Iranian mullahs through UN sanctions, the lid came off.

The world’s insatiable conviction that talking softly and carrying no stick, big or small, will one day bring Tehran’s dictators to heel is a fantasy of futility. And while well-intentioned Western leaders talk peace, Iran’s President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad keeps telling the world he is not interested.

Strategy summits are answered by smoke-trailing missiles; boasts of genocide against the State of Israel; and, most recently, a posted notice that Iran will soon have a three-stage ballistic missile capable of reaching the United States. To top it off, the mullahs recently staged a spectacular weapons parade that brought back memories of the Nazis’ colossal military extravaganzas of the 1930s.

Common sense, now in extremely short supply in most nations’ capitals, would suspect this elaborate preparation of weapons is a prelude to the first excuse to use them. With time on Iran’s side, its road to nuclear capability is all but assured as Western diplomats dither away the months and years with fruitless consultations. Eventually their conversations will turn to reactions as mushroom clouds appear over their cities.

Squarely on the table these days for all to see are the problems that grow out of a faulty concept of the nature of man and a failure to recognize evil in the world and that people and regimes are out to kill us. This wickedness did not develop because people were deprived of material baubles or were spanked as children or were reared in socially deprived situations. The all but universally denied fact these days is that sin is real, all people are sinners, and no divine thread flows through the offspring of Adam. In the vernacular of another time, we are sinners by nature, practice, and choice.

A prominent preacher who moves in the sphere of the positive thinkers was quoted recently as saying his mission is to be positive. “I don’t deal with the sin stuff,” he said. How then do you confront the issue where the remedy for the universal human need actually begins? Transformation of life, character, and conduct are a direct consequence of what the Bible refers to as the new birth. And for all of the present prejudice against any such notion, 2,000 years of testimonials tell the story of the gospel’s efficacy when internalized by the new birth.

Recognizing its substance affords us three positive choices:

- Develop national security based on strength and the willingness to deal with evil forces with unremittingly unified commitment.
- Turn back to God both personally and corporately. It’s called repentance in the words of the Book. The biblical record is replete with instances of Israel, God’s Chosen People, drifting out of the orbit of God’s will, only to encounter dire circumstances that called for repentance and a return to its roots.
- Revival. It’s rather striking that in a time when it is unquestionably needed most, national revival is rarely thought of or spoken of, and little effort is made to pray for it. Most noteworthy is the fact that many evangelicals have given up on the mandate and turned in other directions to address community needs.

The question is often asked whether it is possible for God to move in transformational ways in the current climate of militant rejection of everything associated with God, the Bible, Christianity, and our churches. The answer is to examine the record—biblical and postbiblical.

Nineveh, a mecca of godlessness in ancient days, was about to experience the fiery wrath of an offended God. The reluctant prophet Jonah was sent to spread the news of impending destruction. That’s not merely Bible lore. It’s fact. When all was said and done, the nation turned en masse to God and was spared. Nor can it be denied that in the history of decadent Europe and the United States, revivals at strategic times swept the land and brought new hope and life to the nations.

Revival, of course, originates with God, not with us. But when He decides to step in, whatever the mechanism, things change; and individuals find the “abundant life” Jesus promised.

Yes, evil is what it is. But the last chapter will be written by the Creator of the universe, with whom all things are possible.
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We all leave footprints on the sands of time, made by the imprints of our devotion to Christ and the effect of our lives on others. And the impressions we leave behind enhance the lives of our friends and loved ones, giving them footprints to follow.

Thoughtful estate planning is one means we have to make an imprint that helps others recall our priorities. For example, consider the effect of a plan that provides for family members and leaves resources for the Lord’s work through The Friends of Israel.

When you include The Friends of Israel in the final disposition of your estate, you declare to your family and friends that you believe in and care about the mission of The Friends of Israel.

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Estate gifts are especially valuable because they often come at critical times. They provide the extra boost to the budget that can make the difference between moving ahead or having to cut back on programs. Estate gifts can be designated for a specific purpose or they can be unrestricted for use where needed most.

There is something about a well-planned estate gift that influences others to “go and do likewise.” When you leave this earth, you can take with you nothing that you have received of the goods of this life—only what you have given. By God’s grace and careful planning, your footprint can be one worth following.
A More Perfect Union

by Craig L. Parshall

It all started when the Christian Legal Society (CLS), a fellowship group of Christian law students and lawyers, sought official recognition at the Hastings Law School, a part of the California public university system.

Official recognition brings with it access to student organization funds and the right to use campus facilities, including university communication channels to announce meetings and events. An officially sanctioned student group on campus, Outlaw, whose self-styled mission is to “eradicate homophobia,” objected to recognizing CLS because it excludes homosexuals from leadership and voting. CLS admitted that fact, of course, because of its belief in Scripture’s clear teaching regarding homosexuality. Yet CLS pointed out that everyone is welcome to attend its Bible studies and other events.

However, Hastings decided to bar CLS because it “discriminates” based on “sexual orientation.” CLS filed a lawsuit, arguing that its First Amendment rights were being violated; but a California federal judge ruled in favor of the school. So did the San Francisco-based 9th Circuit Court of Appeals, which didn’t even give the case the benefit of a fully developed opinion. Rather, it affirmed the school’s actions in a two-sentence decision.

Enter the U.S. Supreme Court. It accepted the case for argument and review, and by the time you read this column it will have issued its opinion. Regardless of the ultimate ruling, this case will be critically important for three reasons.

First, there is the heart of the case. A ruling against CLS means a public institution can require a Christian organization to deny a basic tenet of its faith as a condition of official recognition. Imagine the student chapter of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) being forced to accept deer hunters into its leadership; or the local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) being required to give Ku Klux Klan members top positions.

One could argue that losing “official recognition” is trivial and doesn’t impact CLS’s core functions. That is exactly what the lower courts decided. But such reasoning ignores the fact that CLS is being discriminated against because it believes in the moral dictates of the Bible.

This case represents such a clear affront to the freedoms of belief, religion, association, and speech that one of the 100 Amicus Curiae (“friend of the court”) briefs filed with the Supreme Court in support of CLS was actually from a group called Gays and Lesbians for Individual Liberty. Even it had to admit CLS had been wronged.

Second, the CLS case brings into focus a nationwide attempt to force America to embrace homosexuality. The single most effective obstacle to that effort is the church. I testified last year in the U.S. Senate in opposition to a recent homosexual-rights bill dealing with employment. The proposed legislation gave little legal protection to Christian organizations that resisted hiring homosexuals. The organizations would then be faced with expensive lawsuits, large damage judgments, and attorneys’ fees.

A senator supporting the legislation made the political agenda crystal clear. The object, he said, was not merely to require Americans to tolerate homosexuality but to force full-blown acceptance of it. Up to now, most Americans have resisted. More than 30 states have amended their constitutions to disallow same-sex marriage.

Lastly, if the Supreme Court rules against CLS, the resulting legal principle will devastate the autonomy of Christian organizations. Any time a Christian group is viewed as having received some public “benefit,” such as tax exemption, it could be required to deny a fundamental principle of its Christian faith.

I have always argued that granting tax-exempt status to Christian nonprofit groups is not a matter of government bestowing a “privilege,” as some advocates of strict separation of church and state might argue. To the contrary, as the late Supreme Court Justice William J. Brennan, Jr. once noted, tax exemption for faith-based organizations is the only way government can effectively be kept from meddling with the inner workings of religious groups.

After all, the power to tax brings with it the power to investigate, harass, and destroy. If Thomas Jefferson’s use of that unfortunate phrase wall of separation between church and state meant anything in his famous letter to the Danbury Baptist Association in 1802, it meant this: the federal government should stay out of the business of controlling or regulating religion.

Yet many liberals view tax exemption as an unearned favor, a generous public benefit. The wrong ruling in the CLS case could encourage the IRS to require every tax-exempt church or Christian ministry to adopt a “non-discrimination policy” regarding homosexuality.

There is always the chance, though, that the Supreme Court will get it right. If that happens, Christian ministries will escape the governmental chopping block—at least for now. But pardon me if my enthusiasm for that prospect is tempered. A victory for CLS would be the fourth time since 1981 that the Supreme Court has had to warn a public institution to stop discriminating against Christians.

Craig L. Parshall is a leading trial attorney who argues cases involving civil liberties, constitutional rights, and religious freedoms. He is also the senior vice president and general counsel for the National Religious Broadcasters. His newest novel, Edge of Apocalypse, coauthored with Tim LaHaye, is now available.

Craig L. Parshall
Every parent of teenagers has, at one time or another, lived through a period of greater or lesser anguish. The question “Why can’t I be like the other kids?” often initiates a running battle of wills. The cry for liberation from family standards usually is not motivated by style, conduct, or adult opinion. Rather, it comes from a desire to assimilate into a peer group where bad taste or bizarre behavior often is “cool,” and not being “cool” results in ostracism.

Having said that, there are, nevertheless, two sides to the assimilation story. For example, when people immigrate to another country, it is imperative they assimilate into that country’s culture, language, and laws. However, there are those who immigrate with the intention of not conforming. Worse yet, they attempt to impose the ways of the place they left on the country that took them in. These people should make a decision: assimilate and become a participating citizen, or pack up and go back to where you came from.

Bad Choices, Dire Consequences

Ancient Israel showed us how bad decisions can produce unanticipated consequences. One such decision is recorded in 1 Samuel. Israel had emerged from the chaotic period of the judges to be led by the prophet Samuel. Toward the end of Samuel’s life, there was a stirring among the people. They had surveyed the pagan nations around them and came to a conclusion. No longer did they wish to be a national phenomenon, a “special people” set apart to God (Dt. 26:18). So they approached Samuel at Ramah and informed him of their decision: “Look, you are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now make us a king to judge us and go out before us and fight our battles” (1 Sam. 8:5).

The age-tempered prophet responded by enumerating all of the problems inherent in their proposal. But they persisted: “Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, ‘No, but we will have a king over us, that we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles’” (vv. 19–20).

The Israelites unwittingly opted to forget their unique position as a light to nations that were mired in a world of dead-end
paganism. They had been warned that they were taking a long step down, but the attraction of assimilation was irresistible. They did not want to lead any longer. Instead, they chose to settle for a seat among the people bent on their eventual annihilation. It was a bad decision—one for which they would, in the short term, pay dearly.

And, as is often the case, one bad decision is followed by another. The Israelites made a flawed appraisal of the type of man who would make a good king. King Saul—best described as tall, dark, and handsome—was ill-equipped to take the reins of responsible leadership. They were enamored with him, not based on his qualifications, but on the externals that made him an attractive image. Their hue and cry had been for change. Yet they would suffer the dimensions of that change after reality set in and the image they were taking a long step down, but the attraction of assimilation was irresistible. They did not want to lead any longer. Instead, they chose to settle for a seat among the people bent on their eventual annihilation. It was a bad decision—one for which they would, in the short term, pay dearly.

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The matter was in higher hands; and His, after all, are the hands of the Master Planner who would set things right.

Old Paths, New Pilgrims

King of the Hill was once a game kids played on every playground in the country—that is, when it was still in fashion for kids to play outdoors. It was simple. The guy at the top of the hill was chief. But he was never secure. There were always contenders ready to knock him off the pinnacle. Yet there will always be someone at the top. In this world, someone will always be king of the hill.

Nations, movements, and organizations constantly exhibit the principle seen in the experience of ancient Israel's bad choices: someone is going to lead, and choosing to be merely one of the guys at the powwow—to be like all of the others—will not do. Not if the rare gift of exceptionality has been bestowed on you.

America, at this juncture, is a glaring case in point. We are in the midst of a movement—a revolution, really—that unilaterally wants to disenfranchise the country of its place of leadership among the nations. This statement is not a partisan attack on politicians we don't happen to approve of. We are simply observing the hammers of disintegration falling on many fronts:

- The radical fringe has become the center.
- Freedoms of individual citizens are being diminished.
- Our traditions and foundational tenets are scorned.
- Christian relevance is under attack.
- Moral restraints central to survival are being undercut.
- Fidelity to the Constitution is treated with disdain.
- Sworn enemies are treated with deference.
- Steadfast friends are belittled or left to fend for themselves.

For more than two centuries the United States has been loyal to and sustained by the four freedoms articulated by President Franklin Roosevelt who shepherded the country through World War II: freedom of speech and expression, freedom of religion, freedom from want, freedom from fear.

When Roosevelt made these declarations in January 1941, he was not creating a new national moral currency; he was reaffirming the obvious and committing the nation to prepare to fight enemies who threatened our existence. The tone was not surrender but, rather, assurance of victory and undying support for our friends in the democracies then under attack.

When you build a house, you do not tear down a foundation that is sound, enduring, and trustworthy. You build on it. The direction is up, never down. Today, unfortunately, we are tearing down every foundation that has held us up; and we are pursuing a descent to a level that will make us like everyone else.

A New Face for Christianity

Some of the articles in this issue of Israel My Glory report on the excesses of the self-described emerging church, a movement that says, “Let’s be like everyone else.” In some ways, it is a spectral visitation of the old “modernist” movement of a century or so ago, proposing that God’s Word is obsolete and that a new theology has emerged.

The difference is that emergents have moved a step beyond the old-guard liberals of a former generation and imbibed a large dose of unvarnished paganism. They find Christianity as we have known it for more than 2,000 years too restrictive and the Gospels of the Bible criminally narrow. The new beat is to concentrate on one’s own actions and chosen path rather than on the restrictive call to “the [exclusive] way, the truth, and the life,” which is, of course, Jesus. But what about the plethora of other claimants to religious inclusivism? Are they not as legitimate as we?

Here the issue gets much broader than the emergents. It encompasses the fashion of the hour, which mainstream religionists and secular critics stamp with endorsement. They are all joining hands to create a type of one-size-fits-all garment that universalizes religion and sweeps Bible-believing Christians into the scrapheap of the so-called intolerant.

As in the prophet Samuel’s day, we have been warned. In today’s realm of militant, religious political correctness, the big losers will be those who refuse to bend the knee to the mores of the popular “liberation” movement. If you want a look at what may be around the corner, turn to page 13 in this magazine and read about the physical persecution assailing Christians around the world.

The consuming spirit of this new-order religion is a return to Babel, with a one-world unity tower of mankind’s own making. It is a march down Mars Hill into the pagan agora of ancient Athens with its multiplicity of gods made by human
agree with them. But there are. Their argument is, “Why should we be different? We can live in a country that is open to all because Zionism, as it has been known in the past, is irrelevant to us.”

And yes, the post-Zionist devotees bring us back to square one. We want to be like everyone else. The key word: assimilation.

It seems ironic that not many years ago, the greatest fear among American Jews was assimilation into Gentile society. Intermarriage was seen as the diluting element that would eventually scoop up and destroy Jewish identity in the country with the then-largest Jewish population on Earth.

Then came the rebirth of Israel. With a Jewish country, the assimilation bogeyman almost seemed to fade from view. However, with the rise of the notion of the every-man nation of Palestine, it is returning.

It is true that the more things change, the more they stay the same. Turn the clock back to the days when the Israelites lived among pagan nations and told Samuel they wanted to be like everyone else and lose their identity as a chosen people for the Lord. “Let’s just be one of the gang.” That, my friends, never works.

The Imperative for Divine Intervention

All this brings us to an arresting conclusion: we are not living in the last chapter of the volume of the history of man. This delinquent compulsion to join the crowd, to be content with uselessly squandering exceptional qualities and valid expectations, has long been anticipated and ruled out of order. But to find out where we’ve been, where we are now, and where we are going, there is only one accurate source. It is the Word of God. God is going to step in, and we’re admonished to be ready.

Israel Is Not Immune

There’s an interesting new development in the story of modern Israel. It’s called post-Zionism, and it has much the same ring as post-Christianity. The defining characteristic can perhaps be seen in the little-noticed flap over the identity of the Jewish state. As one would expect, Israel’s Arab and Muslim antagonists refuse to acknowledge the existence of a Jewish state. They will only endorse an entity dubbed Palestine—minus the Jewish stamp. Their intent, to no one’s surprise, is to accomplish the final liquidation of the “Jewish problem.”

It would, therefore, seem rather shocking to hear there are Jewish people who agree with them. Their argument is, “Why should we be different? We can live in a country that is open to all because Zionism, as it has been known in the past, is irrelevant to us.”

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Elwood McQuaid is executive editor for The Friends of Israel.

Nothing Can Match Alva J. McClain’s THE GREATNESS OF THE KINGDOM

This 311-page hardback has no equal. It is a rare book that we actually went looking for and are thrilled to be able to offer to you in this fully indexed volume for only $24.99.

The Kingdom of God is the grand central theme of all holy Scripture. And nowhere is it more fully examined through inductive study than in this remarkable classic by the late Dr. McClain, a past president and professor of Christian theology at Grace Theological Seminary.

Written in 1959, The Greatness of the Kingdom grows more relevant each day. Here is an excerpt from Dr. McClain’s preface:

It has become a serious question whether men can any longer trust themselves with the appalling things they have made. . . The community of nations is now existing precariously in the delicate balance of . . . an “equilibrium of terror”; . . . it seems quite certain that we shall never again be even measurably safe here on earth until . . . God Himself breaks once more into human history supernaturally—this time to establish with divine omnipotence a Kingdom of righteousness and compassion upon earth.

This hard-to-find treasure will teach you more about the Kingdom of God than you thought possible. Don’t miss out. Purchase your copies today!
Sometimes statistics are not enough. Those of us who report on the persecution of our brothers and sisters in Christ in so many parts of the world live in a constant state of frustration. Here’s what I mean.

Compass Direct News reported in March that Christians in the southern Karnataka state in India are suffering an unprecedented wave of violent persecution. In 500 days, Compass Direct reported, they faced more than 1,000 attacks. Church leaders said attacks have so escalated that they are being carried out every day. “The spate began on Sept. 14, 2008, when at least 12 churches were attacked in one day in Karnataka’s Mangalore city,” the news service reported.

On March 17 a mob of about 150 people led by Hindu extremists stormed the funeral of a 50-year-old Christian, pulled the coffin apart, and desecrated a cross relatives of the deceased were carrying. “They threw the body into a tractor and dumped it outside, saying his burial would have contaminated Indian soil and his body should be buried in Rome or the United States,” said Compass Direct.

The statement that the body of a Christian would contaminate the soil of India expresses succinctly the war between two worlds: Christianity and those who would annihilate the followers of Jesus Christ. One must wonder what is forecast by the onslaught against Christians, which is growing rapidly in both intensity and frequency. Here in the West, groups like the American Civil Liberties Union are virtually criminalizing conservative followers of Jesus through passionate rhetoric designed to blot out every public reference to Christian associations and traditions. Even more astonishing is the level of success they have achieved thus far.

As we report consistently in Israel My Glory and other Friends of Israel ministry sources, much of the world scorns Christians and operates on the rationale that slaughtering them is a legitimate undertaking that will bring little or no punishment to the murderers either in their own countries or internationally.

Most disturbing is the lamentable lack of outcry from the churches and some Christian leaders who should be in the forefront of raising awareness about the situation and explaining what it portends for the body of Christ.

In 1563 the landmark book by John Foxe, Foxe’s Book of Martyrs, was published. The accounts of atrocities that assailed faithful Christians from the early days of the church mesmerized readers. So compelling was the impact of the book that one writer commented, “We can understand the deep impression that the book produced; and how it served to mold the national character [in Britain].”

The question that begs to be answered is this one: Given the extent to which Christian suffering today equals or, indeed, exceeds that chronicled by John Foxe, can it even be hinted that anything is being achieved that will “mold the national character”? Or even afect the character and conduct of a few?

No matter how many words are written laying out the facts and extent of the suffering, words and statistics apparently are not enough to make the case and bring the Western church of Jesus Christ to its knees.
Why Christians Should Be Zionists
One of my favorite toys as a child was my bicycle. It was a purple, five-speed, automatic-shift beauty with a comfortable banana seat (it was the 1960s!). Often I would be riding it when I should have been doing something else—like homework. My parents encouraged me to study, but when encouragement didn’t work, they resorted to strong, loud lectures and threatened to take away my bike.

I don’t remember if they ever made good on that promise, but I do know that even if they had, the bike would still have been mine. They would have denied me access to it temporarily, but it would have belonged to no one other than me.

Possession and ownership are not the same. Many people own things they do not possess. So why would it be wrong for the Jewish people to own the land God gave them even after He took it away temporarily as a punishment for disobedience? If there is one theme in Scripture that recurs time and again, it is God’s promise to restore Israel to its “own” land. Zionism is the movement that accompanies that restoration.

Today Zionism has become a dirty word. Israel’s enemies are convincing the world Zionism is racism. Contrary to all logic, they claim it is racist for the Jewish people to possess a single, miniscule country the size of the state of New Jersey but not racist for Muslims to possess the 22 surrounding nations totaling 640 times Israel’s land mass. Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter joined the chorus when he claimed Israel practices apartheid even though its Arab citizens have the same rights as Jewish citizens, but he said nothing about Muslim countries that overtly discriminate against Jews. Saudi Arabia, in fact, bans Jewish people from entering its borders even as tourists.

Sadly, many Christians are being pulled into the vortex. Yet, if any people should be Zionists, it should be Bible-believing Christians because, if we cannot trust God to keep the promises He made to the Jewish people, how can we trust Him for anything?

A Little Background

The word Zionism comes from Mount Zion, an ancient designation for Jerusalem and the Jewish homeland (Ps. 137:1–6). Modern Zionism began as a movement to restore the Jewish people to their land and now involves supporting the development and protection of the State of Israel.

When God called Abraham from Ur of the Chaldeans, He promised him the land (Gen. 12:1–3; 15:18–21). Then passed the promise to Abraham’s physical seed through his son Isaac (not Ishmael, 26:1–4) and through Isaac’s son Jacob (not Esau, 28:10, 13–14). The Lord also delineated the land’s boundaries (15:18–21). This promise was unconditional. Neither Abraham nor his descendants had to do anything to inherit the land. God gave it as an outright gift and “everlasting possession” (17:8; 48:4).

Hundreds of years later, when the Israelites returned to the Promised Land from Egypt under Moses’ and Joshua’s leadership, God gave them the Mosaic Covenant that linked possession of the land (not ownership) to obedience (Dt. 28:15–19; Josh. 23:16). For Israel to fully enjoy its inheritance, God required compliance with His Law.

The theology here is simple. The covenant that gave the Jewish people the possession of the land is a totally different covenant from the one that gave them possession. The Abrahamic Covenant says the land is theirs forever, no matter what; the Mosaic Covenant (the Law) says they will only live in it and be blessed if they obey God.

An Impossible Stretch

Ironically, many of the people today who stress (almost to the exclusion of everything else) God’s mercy and His willingness to restore sinners also reject the literalness of the overwhelming number of biblical passages where God promises mercy and restoration to the Jewish people. The book of Ezekiel, for example, is filled with such verses:

For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land. Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God. Thus says the Lord God: “Behold, O My people, I will . . . bring you into the land of Israel. I will put My Spirit in you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken it and performed it.” says the Lord. “Then they shall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob My servant, where your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell there, they, their children, and their children’s children, forever. . . . Moreover, I will make a covenant of peace with them, and it shall be an everlasting covenant with them. The nations also will know that I, the Lord, sanctify Israel, when My sanctuary is in their midst forevermore” (Ezek. 36:24, 28; 37:12, 14, 25–26, 28).

Through Jeremiah God promised, For I will set My eyes on them for good, and I will bring them back to this land; I will build them and not pull them down, and I will plant them and not pluck them up. Then I will give them a heart to know Me, that I am the Lord; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God, for they shall return to Me with their whole heart (Jer. 24:6–7).

There is no way these promises could belong to anyone but the Jewish people. It is an impossible stretch to apply them to the church.

* The church has never had a land. So God cannot bring the church back into its own land.

* The church did not descend from Jacob. Christians descend from every nation and tribe (Rev. 7:9).
The church is *already* sanctified by Christ’s blood. It has no need to *become* sanctified (1 Cor. 6:11; Heb. 10:10).

These passages clearly show God has reserved national Israel to become a future trophy of His mercy, grace, and love. He promises to place His sanctuary in Israel’s midst forever as a testimony to the “nations” (Hebrew, goyim; meaning “Gentiles”). This promise comes from the same God who says, “I have loved you with an everlasting love” (Jer. 31:3), who “so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son” (Jn. 3:16), and who “is the same yesterday, today, and forever” (Heb. 13:8).

If you truly believe God’s Word, how can you be anything other than a Zionist?

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**Quoteworthy**

*We are living in the worst period of deception in history. Satan is the master deceiver, disguised as an angel of Light. He specializes in simulation. The sin against the Holy Spirit was attributing the work of God to the devil. We are seeing today the work of the devil attributed to God. (I am more afraid of false revival than of no revival—a false revival with a false gospel, false evangelists, false converts, false joy. It will seem so genuine that it would deceive, if possible, the very elect. Many church leaders will endorse it. Other good people will be afraid to oppose it for fear that they might be fighting against God.)*


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USE THE ENCLOSED ENVELOPE TO ORDER.
The emergent/emerging movement is barely over a decade old (depending on when one marks its birth), and already it has splintered and morphed in many directions. As a result, it is often difficult to determine exactly what is being talked about when discussing the subject.

Recently the Emergent Village, the most visible emergent organization, eliminated its national coordinator position, indicating either a “decentralizing or disintegrating” of the movement, according to Christianity Today. Yet, rather than disappearing, it seems to have branched out and, in many ways, has simply gone mainstream. Much as we seldom hear the term New Age Movement because it has become a settled ideology that has latched onto more mainstream forms of spirituality, so, too, the emergent/emerging movement has infiltrated evangelical circles and is hardly recognizable anymore.

To give you some idea of what has happened, we turn to Mark Driscoll, pastor of Mars Hill Church in Seattle, Washington, and self-described emerging church leader. Driscoll was one of the original shapers of what would become emergent/emerging, which makes him a reliable resource to explain what is taking place.

As he sees it, there are now four expressions of the emergent/emerging church within Christianity (more may be on the way). First are emerging evangelicals who believe in basic Christian doctrine, such as the Bible being God’s Word and Jesus dying for our sins. Pastors such as Dan Kimball would represent this first wing and would at least cling to certain doctrinal positions, such as the three ancient ecumenical creeds, but would not want to drift much beyond them.

Next in line would be those involved in house churches. These resist creating large churches and instead form little communities in smaller settings like coffee shops or on the Internet. Perhaps George Barna, with his promotion of the “Revolution,” would be a good representative of this branch. (See Barna’s book by this name.)

Mark Driscoll sees himself and his church as a third splinter of the movement. He calls his group emerging reformers who believe in all of the evangelical distinctives and embrace Reformed theological traditions. Emerging reformers also try to find ways to make the church relevant, accessible, and culturally connected. Many of these tend to embrace charismatic gifts and modern prophecies (that is, they believe prophecies are still being given today, as well as the sign gifts).

In the fourth lane is a group of emergent liberals whom Driscoll feels have “totally gotten off the highway and [are] lost out in the woods.” This branch is best represented by Brian McLaren, Rob Bell, Tony Jones, and Doug Pagitt. They reject or question even the most cardinal of doctrines, such as the atonement, deity of Christ, inspiration of Scripture, and the Second Coming of Christ.

It’s easy to see how fragmented and complicated the emergent/emerging conversation has become. As with most movements, it has changed as it has matured; and it is becoming increasingly difficult to define.

Many are distancing themselves from the emergent label itself since it has become somewhat pejorative. What all lanes of emergent/emerging have in common is the desire to be relevant to the postmodern culture. Some have sacrificed the faith in this effort; others are more biblically sound. And it’s up to Christians to be discerning so they can tell which is which.

**ENDNOTES**


*by Gary E. Gilley*
Getting the Gist of J Street
If you were to ask Jeremy Ben-Ami if he is a Zionist, he would say yes. He would also tell you his great-grandparents moved to Israel from Russia in the late 1800s; his grandparents helped settle the city of Tel Aviv; and his father fought in the Zionist Irgun organization before Israel became a state. “I’m deeply committed to the safety, the sanctity and the security of a Jewish home in the state of Israel,” he said in October 2009.1

But many would differ. Ben-Ami’s newly minted organization, J Street, refuses to defend Israel against malicious criticism, attracts funding from Muslims, and spurs accusations that it is really a pro-Arab lobby masquerading as pro-Israel. Liberals like it, and conservatives warn that Israel might be better off without it.

J Street (the J stands for Jewish) opened in April 2008 in Washington, DC, and from the beginning has raised the eyebrows of conservatives who view it as a wolf in sheep’s clothing. Its Web site, jstreet.org, calls itself “the new address for Middle East peace and security” and says it wants to “change the dynamics of American politics and policy on Israel and the Middle East.” It also wants a “two-state solution and regional, comprehensive peace” and promotes “meaningful American leadership . . . to broaden the debate on these issues nationally and in the Jewish community.”2

In other words, it supports strong U.S. intervention to establish an independent Palestinian state next door to Israel. Many say that translates into bullying Israel into accepting conditions that will compromise its security to appease the Palestinians.

In a February 16 article in The Jewish Daily Forward online, Josh Nathan-Kazis quoted Israel’s Deputy Foreign Minister Danny Ayalon on the subject of J Street: “The thing that troubles me is that they don’t present themselves as to what they really are. They should not call themselves pro-Israeli.”3

Other Jewish lobbying groups, such as AIPAC (American Israel Public Affairs Committee) and The Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, are also pro-Israel and pro-peace; but they differ from J Street in that they support Israel’s government on all such issues, while J Street does not.

Ben-Ami, J Street’s founder and director, supports President Barack Obama and his administration’s view of Israel. “Our No. 1 agenda item is to do whatever we can in Congress to act as the president’s blocking back,” said Ben-Ami.4 AIPAC, on the other hand, sees itself as Israel’s blocking back.

J Street Connections

Ben-Ami is no stranger to American politics. He served as former President Bill Clinton’s deputy domestic policy adviser and was policy director for Vermont Democrat Howard Dean’s presidential campaign. His strong liberal connections have led to unusual associations.

For example, in October 2009 J Street’s conference speaker was Salam al-Marayati, executive director of the Muslim Public Affairs Council. Hours after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on America, al-Marayati told a Los Angeles, California, radio audience, “We should put the State of Israel on the suspect list” of possible perpetrators.5 He defends suicide bombers and has likened Israel’s supporters to Adolf Hitler.

In an open letter, former Israeli diplomat Lenny Ben-David criticized Ben-Ami for being senior vice president of Fenton Communications, which signed contracts in early 2009 with a Qatari foundation that plans to lead an 18-month-long anti-Israel campaign in the United States, with a special focus on college campuses.

An October 2009 World Tribune article titled “AIPAC rival ‘J Street’ tied to Qatar, George Soros” reported, “Ben-David said J Street’s 160-member advisory board included those listed as foreign agents for Egypt and Saudi Arabia, Middle East Newsl ine reported. His letter also cited J Street’s ties with U.S. billionaire George Soros, said to have long sought to undermine the traditional pro-Israel lobby in Washington.”6

Ten percent ($300,000) of J Street’s funding was revealed to come from sources not friendly to Israel. And J Street has refused to reject the UN’s Goldstone Report that condemned Israel’s three-week military incursion into Gaza last winter to ferret out Hamas terrorists. “By attempting to criminalize Israel’s strategy of crippling Hamas, the [Goldstone] report in effect declared the entire antiterrorism campaign to be a war crime,” wrote John Bolton in The Wall Street Journal.7

Michael Goldfarb, writing for the Weekly Standard, expressed concern about J Street when he said, “The entire pro-Israel community, ranging from Republicans to Democrats, from Middle East hawks to peace-processing doves, has been (quite properly) united in condemning the Goldstone Report as fundamentally biased and extraordinarily reckless and irresponsible. Everyone except J Street.”8

Ben-Ami, however, says his organization is in step with American Jewry. American Jews are overwhelmingly liberal. Seventy-eight percent voted for Obama in November 2008.

Yet the majority also tends to support and defend decisions made by the Israeli government. In August 2005, American Jews supported Israel’s disengagement from Gaza as a goodwill gesture toward peace. They also strongly supported the Gaza incursion, Operation Cast Lead, in the winter of 2008–2009. J Street called Operation Cast Lead “counterproductive,” destined only to “deepen the cycle of violence in the region.” It also claimed, “The only way to truly halt rocket fire into southern Israel is a diplomatic solution.”9

Michael Oren, Israel’s ambassador to the United States, blasted J Street, charging it with “fooling around with the lives of 7 million people.” Oren said, “It not only opposes one policy of one Israeli government, it opposes all policies of all Israeli governments.”10

J Street also opposes one of Israel’s staunchest supporters, Bible-believing Christians, calling the working relationship between Christian Zionists and
Jews an “unholy alliance” that is “out of step with fundamental Jewish American values.” Though Christian Zionists strongly differ with their Jewish friends over the Person and work of Jesus as Messiah and Lord, no group has demonstrated more consistent, unconditional support for Israel and the Jewish people’s right to live there in perpetuity. They stand with one clear, loud voice in solidarity with the Jewish state. Unlike J Street, Christian Zionists do not align themselves with Israel’s enemies and claim to be pro-Israel.

ENDNOTES

2 “About Us” <jstreet.org>. This statement has now been revised.

Not all American Jews are happy with J Street. In fact, in July 2009 Lori Lowenthal Marcus cofounded a rebuttal: Z Street. “The Z stands for Zionism,” she said in a telephone interview. “And it is also as far away from J as it can possibly be.”

“Z street,” she said, “is a true Zionist voice for a true Jewish state that is safe and secure in reality, not in word.” Ms. Marcus, a former litigator with a major Philadelphia law firm and past president of the Philadelphia branch of the Zionist Organization of America, said Z Street believes “actions and facts are what count, not words.”

Calling J Street “pro-Palestinian,” Z Street’s Web site, zstreet.org, describes a world “increasingly hostile to Israel” and says it is unfortunate that “Jews hostile to Israel play an increasingly larger role in the public debate.” The site asks,

Who are those Jews? You know, the self-important intellectuals . . . currently whispering into the eager ears of the White House. They label themselves “pro-peace and pro-Israel.” But they don’t really care about protecting Israel from the threats of terrorism and extinction. . . . Ours is the proud, full-throated advocacy of Zionism.

Z Street is guided by three no’s: “no negotiations with, no appeasement of, and no concession to terrorists.” It gives no credence to words like West Bank, settlers, occupation, and other phrases that delegitimize the Zionist idea and make Israel seem like an interloper on foreign soil.

Ms. Marcus said Z Street considers Iran the number one problem facing Israel. Now gaining supporters from around the world, the organization hopes to become a real player in getting out a pro-Zionism message.
EDITOR’S NOTE: Our executive editor, Elwood McQuaid, spoke recently with Daniel Pipes, founder and director of the Middle East Forum and one of the world’s leading experts on Islam and related issues. We are privileged to print edited excerpts from that interview.

EMQ: Dr. Pipes, we see a great change in Europe. I’m referring to the invasion of Islam and the Muslim claim that it is creating an Islamic Europe. Is that concern justified?

DP: I think it is. There are three components to it. The first is demographic. Indigenous Europeans are not having enough children by about one-third. You need 2.1 children per woman [to sustain a population], and they are having about 1.4. So they need immigrants; and those immigrants are coming from Muslim countries like Algeria and Turkey. Also, the Muslim countries have very large, young populations.

The second component is religious. One sees a near collapse of Christianity in Europe and a lack of sense of purpose in terms of faith and spirituality—which the Muslims have, of course, in abundance. And third is a cultural dimension. Europeans have become politically correct, multicultural, call it what you will. Muslims come with a clear sense of cultural superiority. Put these three together and you see the possible transformation of a continent. It’s not happened yet. It could be averted. But if trends continue, it’s likely to happen.

EMQ: On the issue of Israeli and Palestinian peace, apparently nothing is happening. Why is this true, and has Palestinian determination to destroy Israel diminished?

DP: No, it hasn’t diminished. It’s there, virulent as ever. In about 90 years’ worth of Palestinian response to Palestine, which the British created right after World War I, roughly four-fifths of Palestinians have refused anything to do with the yishuv [Jewish community in Israel prior to statehood] or Israel, and one-fifth have said, “Okay, we can live with it.” That number has remained remarkably static over close to a century. Why is nothing happening? That’s a very interesting question. The Obama administration came in and had two factions within it. One said, “We can get concessions from the Israelis if we work with them.” The other said, “We can get what we want from Israel by picking a fight with it.” The latter faction is the one that prevailed initially. And they picked a fight by focusing on the so-called settlements. I don’t like this term, but I’ll use it for shorthand. [U.S. Secretary of State] Hillary Clinton said, “No growth whatsoever, at all, period.” [Not even in Jerusalem.] This had two inadvertent consequences that the geniuses in the White House did not think optimistic. But I also would not conclude at this date that the Iranians will get the bomb. There is still pressure that can be brought.

EMQ: Can sanctions really accomplish anything?

DP: I don’t think so. I don’t think sanctions have any value beyond window dressing. I don’t think agreements have any value. I don’t think threats have any value. It boils down to whether we accept the Iranian nuclear program or we destroy it.

EMQ: How should Israelis feel about this?

DP: I think it’s realistic for the Israelis to attack and do real damage. Now, what constitutes success, I’m not exactly sure. There are many, many questions. If I were [Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin] Netanyahu, I would say to [U.S. President Barack] Obama, “Why don’t you take out the Iranian nukes? Or else we will. And we will not do it by trying to fly planes across Turkey and Syria or Jordan or Saudi Arabia. We will do it from submarine-based, tactical nuclear weapons. You don’t want that; we don’t want that; but that’s the way we can do this job for sure. You do it your way so we don’t have to escalate to that.” That would be a way of applying pressure. There are so many details which I’m not privy to. But that would be my kind of approach if I were the Israelis.

EMQ: Do you believe leaders in the West are actually listening to [Iranian leader Mahmoud] Ahmadinejad and believing it?

DP: There seems to be a growing willingness to accept Iranian nuclear weapons and work the Iranian government into the international system. But whether or not there is also an effort to undermine and even to destroy this, I can’t tell you.
through. First, it got the Israelis to back Netanyahu because this policy was flatly unacceptable in Israeli politics. Netanyahu got stronger, not weaker.

Second, the Palestinians who had been negotiating with the Israelis said, “No more! If the Americans said you can’t grow the settlements, then we say you can’t grow them.” So the Obama administration hardened the position on both sides and finds itself with no negotiations taking place—which, for me, is just fine. But from their point of view, it’s a disaster.

**EMQ:** Islam is touted to be a religion of peace, love, and coexistence with other religions. If this is true, why are Muslims the primary persecutors of Christians worldwide?

**DP:** Islam is a religion that is 1,400 years old, and there have been many different forms of it. There have been times and places when Islam was tolerant, at least in comparison to other civilizations at that time.

Today, clearly, that’s not the case. Indeed, speaking as a historian of Islam, I would say there has never been a worse moment in Muslim history. There are many points of view, and one of them is that it’s intolerant—not just against Christians. Christians are a prominent example. Muslims who are liberal and open-minded are, themselves, persecuted. The first victims of radical Islam are Muslims. One example is the case of Darfur. This event is arguably the worst humanitarian situation in the world today. And that’s Islamists versus Muslims. The Christian plight is part of a larger picture of Muslim intolerance and radicalism that is prevailing today. When I entered this field 40 years ago, it was not like this. It is a terrible moment, and Christians in particular are paying a heavy price.

**EMQ:** What is the future of Islam in America? And should we be concerned when Muslims talk about a global Islamic caliphate?

**DP:** The global Islamic caliphate is indeed a powerful concept and something one should be concerned about. The future of Islam in America is difficult to predict. There are two great possibilities. One is that it continues down the path of being radical and adversarial with the existing order, or (I don’t see this possibility in Europe) that Islam will become part of the American religious scene and not try to dominate. There is that possibility.

**EMQ:** Do Western leaders, including Americans, really understand the root of Islamic militancy? They keep attempting to separate it from religion. Do they “get it”?

**DP:** Basically, no. I would say there are three interpretations of the current state of affairs. One is what is called the establishment view, which is what you just described. People say, “Islam has been hijacked; the problem is terrorism; Islam is a religion of peace.” A denial of the problem. The second is what I call the insurgent view: “Islam itself is the problem. Islam has always been a problem, with jihad, honor killings, and the like. Islam is itself evil and problematic. Muslims are inherently a problem.” I think that is too broad-based and wrong.

And then there is the middle position, which I subscribe to. It would be summed up by saying, “Radical Islam is the problem, and moderate Islam is the solution.” I believe there is a possibility for Islam to evolve in a way that is moderate, modern, and willing to live in harmony with others. I think it is possible for non-Muslims and moderate Muslims to work together to achieve that.

Even if you believe the insurgent approach, that Islam itself is evil, there’s no policy you can pursue. What can you do if you’re president [of the United States] and you believe that? Are you going to throw out freedom of religion? Are you going to exclude Muslims? Are you going to fight wars abroad to promote Christianity? It’s not who we are. It requires such fundamental changes that I’d say it’s just not possible. So I think it’s a dead-end approach.

Even if you believe that, and I’m sure some of your listeners do, I’d say you have to join me in seeing Islamism as a political ideology comparable to fascism and Communism because we have tools to defeat that. We have won wars against them: the Second World War and the Cold War. We can do it again. But if we see the problem as religion, we don’t have tools; we can’t win.

**EMQ:** Is there a fear that speaking against Islamic radicalism will provoke attacks on reporters, officials, or whoever speaks his mind? We know that converts to Christianity from Islam are under fatwas [death orders]. Is there a fear that people will be attacked if they express themselves?

**DP:** I would differentiate between physical attacks and social-political attacks, such as ostracism, condemnation, loss of job, and the like. And I would differentiate those two from prosecution by the government. There have been extraordinary cases of anonymous cartoonists in the UK and Netherlands being arrested, the police tracking them down and arresting them, putting them in jail overnight for cartoons. So there are actually three different dimensions: the violent, the social-political, and the governmental.

Yes, these are all significant problems. I, in fact, started something called the Legal Project at my organization, which is exclusively focused on protecting the right of scholars and activists to speak freely about this range of issues. We have developed an expertise. We have a network of pro bono and reduced-cost lawyers. We have a pot of money. And we’re not just defending but, in some cases, going on the offense to make sure there is freedom of speech about this all-important issue of Islam.
Friends of Israel ORIGINS team members leave for Israel July 20 for a once-in-a-lifetime experience touring the country and volunteering at the 625-bed Kaplan Medical Center in Rehovot. In past years, they cleaned air conditioning filters (pictured above), worked on the grounds, painted, swept floors, and did other tasks to help the Kaplan staff. They’re scheduled to return August 18. The tour is for people ages 17 through 26.

Extreme anti-Zionism, curiously enough, is often professed by those of left-wing views who in other contexts readily support national liberation movements. The cause of Jewish nationalism alone is never allowed to carry any weight.

The anti-Zionist becomes an overt anti-Semite as soon as he goes beyond criticism of the policies of the Jerusalem government (a favourite activity of the Israelis themselves) and challenges the very existence of the State of Israel. For to refuse the Jews their right to nationhood is to perpetuate their bondage. To “de-Zionize” Israel would be like trying to “de-Helvetize” Switzerland. The fact that Israel has an Arab minority is shocking only to those for whom the idea of a Jewish majority in any country is intolerable.

—Jacques Givet from his book The Anti-Zionist Complex

EMQ: And where do you fall in those three? I know you are vehemently criticized by some of the pro-Islamic organizations and some of the so-called progressives. Where do they put you?
DP: Well, I don’t have physical threats, and I don’t have governmental prosecution. So for me it’s just the social-political.
EMQ: If Muslims are concerned about their religion being hijacked by radicals, why the silence from Islam generally about this issue?
DP: It’s not a complete silence. There have been important exceptions. Perhaps the most dramatic was in mid-2007 when literally millions of people on the streets of Turkish cities said no to Islamic law. And there have been other major demonstrations in Pakistan and elsewhere. But I accept your basic point that, in general, Muslims who don’t want the Islamic law imposed on them and don’t want the caliphate have been all too quiet. I think that has to do in part with intimidation, in part with lack of organization, with ideology, and with funding.

I think there is also a respect that these people [radical Islamists] are really living and applying Islam in its fullness. Just because there isn’t enough of a moderate-Muslim push-back today doesn’t mean there won’t be in the future. I believe that is a goal we should work toward to help moderate Muslims. The U.S. government and other public institutions have been very deficient in this.

If you look at television or go to a university, you’ll find over and over again it is the Islamists who are in place. We should consciously exclude them and push them to the side, exclude them as we would the KKK or Nation of Islam. Exclude them from the public square and invite the moderates instead.
EMQ: In the case of some of these extremist organizations you mentioned, it was largely Christians who rebelled against them and pushed them to the side. I hope we can see that with moderate Muslims in the future.
DP: I am very much hoping so too.

To hear this interview in its entirety, log on to foi.org/imgextras.
To read more from Daniel Pipes, log on to his Web site, DanielPipes.org.
The West is a magnet for gifted people — professionals who, for one reason or another, choose to reside where the deer and the antelope play. Although I don’t have statistics, it seemed like our town in 1991 had more than its share of the best, especially classically trained musicians. And they generously shared their talent in a wide variety of venues, including a pipe organ workshop that gave young keyboard students the opportunity to play instruments in churches throughout the community.

When my wife and young son returned from a workshop, I was prepared for a lengthy recitation on the splendor of pipe organs. Instead I heard a description of a church poster that read, “Love Your Mother” and bore a picture of “goddess Gaia” holding the world.
I don’t know how many people understood the message embedded in that poster back then, but today Christians are waking up to find their church’s ministry has been hijacked by a vocal movement promoting paganism.

Courting ‘Mother Nature’

Defining modern paganism is like trying to nail Jell-O to the wall. Pagans describe their worldview as pragmatic, self-reliant, experiential, ever-evolving, tolerant, and open-minded. Yet they have certain core principles, which writer Carl McColman loosely defined with the acrostic Pagan.

The term pagan literally means “country dweller” and originated when Christianity became the official state religion after the conversion of Roman Emperor Constantine in the fourth century. Whereas the cultural centers of the day were fashionably “Christian,” rural areas retained their polytheistic and animistic religious practices; and they became synonymous with the word pagan.

The stereotypical image most Christians have of paganism isn’t always accurate. Paganism views reality as a unified, all-encompassing whole; and “goddess” is essential to its belief system. Pagans see nature as having polarity of energy: dark and light, active and passive, male and female. As one practitioner explained, “Because we see nature as the divine, we also see our divine force as having two aspects—masculine and feminine—God and Goddess.” Sometimes explained as the yin and yang, god and goddess represent the complementary polar opposites of the unified whole.

Monism describes this worldview, in which all matter ultimately emerges from or reduces to the same substance or principle of being. Dualism, on the other hand, describes the Judeo-Christian worldview that recognizes God as distinct from His creation. Merlin Stone, author of When God Was a Woman, explained, “The Goddess is located within each individual and all things in nature.”

Pagans view the earth as a living, breathing organism that is the source of all life. Goddess Gaia, sometimes referred to as Mother Earth or Mother Nature, is often portrayed with Earth’s circle as her womb because she is considered responsible for bringing all life into existence. Since pagans venerate the earth, they see time spent outdoors as communion with goddess.

If you don’t think this information has relevance, think again. A monistic view of the cosmos is impacting the professing church via environmental concerns. Well-known and influential New York City clergyman James Parks Morton, an avid environmentalist, declared, “We are increasingly being called to realize that the body of Christ is the earth—the biosphere—the skin that includes all of us.” And Richard Austin, a former Presbyterian Church USA (PCUSA) pastor who addressed the EarthCare ’96 conference, declared, “Christ is fully God and fully Earth. . . . He came to save the world. . . . I hear the Bible calling us to redeem from destruction the Creation.”

Anticipating ‘The Shift’

New Spirituality (formerly New Age) groups anticipate what they call “The Shift,” a quantum leap in planetary consciousness in 2012 that will result in a unified planet functioning in perfect harmony. Unfortunately, many popular Christian leaders visualize the same thing.

On the secular side, José Arguelles, instigator of the “Harmonic Convergence” peace initiative in 1987, wrote, “It is time for all who are willing to unconditionally embrace the new to become conscious players in the same myth . . . all we need is one unifying global event—an artistic whole—that unites and synchronizes us in affirmation of our highest dreams.” The Shift, he said, “will set the stage for a sequence in our evolution as distinct from the cycle of history as the rise of urban life was distinct from living in caves.”

Participation in this supposed quantum leap requires all humanity to be on the same page spiritually, and the key to that alignment is the concept of “myth.”

The diverse beliefs within paganism are transmitted through myth rather than doctrinal declaration. Pagans use a narrative approach that teaches through storytelling. It is not necessary to believe the stories as literal truth, but only as a metaphorical presentation of subjective truth. If the “myths” of the world’s religions can be synchronized, universal myth will bind all religions together.

Interestingly, popular Christian leaders also envision a radical shift in professing Christianity, claiming the faith requires a time of “transition, rethinking, re-imagining and re-envisioning.” An organization called Deep Shift claims to provide “support as leaders walk through their own personal transitions and guide their organizations through the transition and transformation necessary to engage their people in working for the good of the world in our culture today.”

Michael Dowd, ordained United Church of Christ minister and author of Thank God for Evolution, declared, “We are on the verge of the greatest spiritual awakening in history. . . . It is quite possible that our own paradigm shift—from seeing nature as an artifact, to seeing Nature [sic] as the primary revelation of divinity (and inseparable from that divinity)—will prevail over the course of decades rather than centuries.”

In fact, Dowd and others like him suggest putting an “evolutionary gloss” on aspects of the book of Genesis to “universalize that story, making it meaningful and instructive not just for Peoples of the Book, but also for peoples of other traditions and of no religious tradition.”

Coining a new term to replace myth, well-known emergent church leader Brian McLaren, in his book Everything Must Change, claims Christianity’s “framing story” desperately needs a radical overhaul. Falling for the postmodern tale that truth is dynamic and ever-changing in order to stay relevant, these leaders view doctrine as unnecessary. Another Christian leader stated, “We
Desire growth and learning, not dogma and doctrine.”12 McLaren declared, “With no apologies to Martin Luther, John Calvin, or modern evangelicalism, Jesus (in Luke 16:19) does not prescribe hell to those who refuse to accept the message of justification by grace through faith. . . . Rather, hell—literal or figurative—is for the rich and comfortable who proceed on their way without concern for their poor neighbor day after day.”13

Deconstructing the biblical doctrine of salvation using an isolated portion of text is not unusual for these people. According to McLaren, “The core message of Jesus focused on personal, social, and global transformation in this life” and apparently has little to do with salvation through faith in the personal offering of Christ as the only sacrifice God will accept for sin.14 Shockingly, another Christian writer declared, “The Church’s fixation on the death of Jesus as the universal saving act must end, and the place of the cross must be reimagined in Christian faith. Why? Because of the cult of suffering and the vindictive God behind it.”15

Using double entendre and deliberately vague language, many advocate a hidden form of pluralism that is typical of paganism. Reflecting this attitude are people who refer to Christianity as “following God in the way of Jesus.”16 The subtle message is that all religions point people to God; Christianity just happens to be the “Jesus way.” They explain:

Evangelism or mission for me is no longer about persuading people to believe what I believe, no matter how edgy or creative I get. It is more about shared experiences and encounters. It is about walking the journey of life and faith together, each distinct to his or her own tradition and culture but with the possibility of encountering God and truth from one another.17

Another confesses, “For me the beginning of sharing my faith with people began with throwing out Christianity and embracing Christian spirituality, a nonpolitical mysterious system that can be experienced but not explained.”18 Sharing a faith you can’t explain seems oxymoronic; but the idea certainly fits within a philosophy where individualism, experience, and pluralism define the tenets of one’s beliefs.

The carefully worded, subtle message is that people can come to God any way they choose. To quote Michael Dowd, “If you are wholeheartedly committed to growing in deep integrity and have no resentments, no guilt, no shame, no regrets, and no unfinished business, you are saved no matter what your religion or philosophy.”19

Although the current move toward paganism within professing Christianity emerged through mainline denominations, there are voices within these groups who recognize the implications. Sylvia Dooling of the PCUSA warned that these beliefs are growing within the mainstream of mainline denominations.20 Diane L. Knippers, late president of the Institute on Religion and Democracy, lamented, “The movement remains influential in the mainline denominations as the vanguard of feminist theology, the most prominent trend on seminary campuses today.”21

**‘Re-Imagining’ God**

Although some attribute the emerging pagan worldview to the Cultural Revolution of the 1960s and early ’70s, the professing church actually shifted toward paganism in 1993 with the first and now-infamous feminist Re-Imagining Conference* in Minnesota. Promoted by mainline denominations under the auspices of the World Council of Churches’ “Decade of Solidarity with Women,” the conference pushed an agenda well beyond the limits of contemporary women’s issues.1

As each of the 34 speakers took the podium, more than 2,000 women chanted, “Bless Sophia, dream the vision, share the wisdom dwelling deep within.”2 Throughout the conference they sang, “O great spirit, earth and wind and sea, you are inside and all around me.”3 (A declaration in the 1998 conference program read, “I FOUND GOD IN MYSELF, AND I LOVED HER. I LOVED HER FIERCELY.”)

Among the speakers was Chung Hyun Kyung, associate professor of ecumenical studies at Union Theological Seminary in New York City. She presented God as an all-encompassing energy force uniting and permeating all that exists. She encouraged “pranic healing,” or tapping into cosmic energy. “This life-giving energy came from god [sic] and it is everywhere,” she said. “It is in the sun and in the ocean; it is from the ground and it is from the trees.”4

Consistent with a blatant pagan agenda, everyone in the assembly was encouraged to affirm her “godhood” by placing a red dot on her forehead to signify the divine presence—effectively alienating all who would not comply.5 The highlight of the conference featured a pseudo Eucharist of bread and milk mixed with honey offered to the goddess Sophia.6

This mockery of orthodox Christianity was topped 10 years later at the conference reunion in 2003. That event climax ed with a celebration of the “Lady’s Supper” in which the women “bit into the sacramental apple,”7 mimicking Eve’s sampling of the forbidden fruit and calling it an act that brought enlightenment rather than man’s Fall. This view is reminiscent of Gnosticism and has staggering implications.

Interestingly, the popular novel The Shack by William Paul Young records a fictitious conversation in which “Jesus” tells the main character, “Sophia is a personification of Papa’s [God’s] wisdom.”8 Referring to Sophia as the wisdom represented in Proverbs 3 is a clever twist that makes it sound as though Sophia were a hidden biblical character,
They and others like them understand that if the professing church allows a pagan worldview to “re-imagine” the core elements of Christianity, it will certainly mean a deep shift not only for the church, but for the world.

ENDNOTES
3 “Monism” <thefreedictionary.com/monism>.
8 “We Are in Deep Shift” <deepshift.org/site>.
10 Ibid., 166.
12 John O’Keeffe, “Church 3.0, the Upgrade” <nextwave.org/nov01/church30.htm>.
13 McLaren, 208.
14 Ibid., 22.

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**Endnotes**
1 Conference sponsors included the Presbyterian Church USA; United Methodist, Lutheran, Baptist, Episcopal, and Mennonite churches; the United Church of Canada; the Church of the Brethren; and Church Women United.
3 Ibid.
5 “Paganism at the Re-imagining Conference in Minneapolis (1993),” Ibid.
9 “Chokmah” <blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongs=H2451&t=KJV>.
Then it was Elijah’s turn. Stepping onto a large boulder, he slowly pivoted to gaze upon the prophets of Baal. Before him were 450 sweating, bleeding, exhausted leaders of the most prominent religion of that region and time.

Surprisingly, rather than calling down fire from heaven, rallying the Israelites around the true God, and eliminating the false teachers, Elijah said, “Gentlemen, I have come to realize that while we may have our differences, we have much to offer one another in our understanding of life. As a matter of fact, God has infused a great deal of truth into your religion, and it would be rather arrogant and unloving for me to claim otherwise. Let us unite around our common goals and demonstrate to the world that while we may have different traditions, we are all, every one of us, children of God.”

Few of us could imagine such an ending to the great encounter on Mount Carmel in 1 Kings 18. But listening to some of the rhetoric swirling around Christian circles today, one gets the impression that perhaps Elijah got a little carried away. Couldn’t Elijah have made more progress with dialogue than the sword? Shouldn’t he have looked for common ground rather than differences and used loving affirmation rather than confrontation? Not if he wanted to be consistent with the will of God.

No one today would advocate putting to death false teachers, an event unique even in the biblical record. However, the New Testament is abundantly clear that God’s people have nothing in common with the followers of false religions. The apostle Paul wrote, “Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. . . . What part has a believer with an unbeliever? . . . Therefore ‘Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord’” (2 Cor. 6:14–15, 17).

Today almost any form of biblical separation has fallen on hard times, partially due to abuse but increasingly
Former Youth Specialties president, Mark Oestreicher, defines being a Christian more in terms of doing than believing:

I still believe salvation comes only through Jesus Christ. But does a little dose of Buddhism thrown into a belief system somehow kill off the Christian part, the Jesus-basics? My Buddhist cousin, except for her unfortunate inability to embrace Jesus, is a better “Christian” (based on Jesus’ descriptions of what a Christian does) than almost every Christian I know. If we were using Matthew 26 (sic) as a guide, she’d be a sheep; and almost every Christian I know personally would be a goat.

Leaders from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (LDS), such as Brigham Young University Professor Robert Millet, have been meeting with some key evangelicals, including Richard Mouw, president of Fuller Seminary, for the last 10 years. At least 17 closed-door sessions have occurred since 2000 for the purpose of reconciling evangelicals and Mormons. In addition,

Hush-hush chats occurred between ranking LDS authorities and nationally prominent evangelicals in 2004, 2007, and earlier in 2009, though those familiar with the meetings won’t name names. Participants hope for a publicly known conference between leaders, perhaps as early as 2010. Another prospect is a series of formal statements on agreements and differences along the lines of Evangelicals and Catholics Together, though that will require LDS officialdom’s sanction.

Monism, paganism, pantheism, and other Eastern religious influences, formally embodied in the New Age Movement, have infiltrated evangelical circles without even being identified. So much so that Newsweek ran a celebrated article recently titled “We Are All Hindus Now.” The author stated that while 76 percent of
It would seem that conservative Christians are rapidly losing the ideology wars. I believe this is because we often do not have a biblical worldview ourselves. Having raised the last two generations of believers on the back of entertainment, instead of solid teaching of the Word, we have not equipped them to grapple with the Scriptures and the opposing philosophies and religions that surround us. In order to begin to correct these deficits, we must return to a serious commitment in our churches of proclaiming the whole counsel of God.

ENDNOTES

2 Ibid., 45.
5 Mark Oestreicher, cited in Dan Kimball, The Emergent Church (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003), 53.
8 Ibid.
Excerpts From Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s Jerusalem Day Speech

For Zion’s sake, I will not be silent, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not be still, until her righteousness emanates like bright light, and her salvation blazes like a torch” (Isa. 62:1). I chose to begin my remarks honoring Jerusalem with this verse because the struggle for Jerusalem is a struggle for truth—nothing more and nothing less.

There can be no justice without truth. The truth is Jerusalem is the very air our people breathe. We have an unbreakable bond with Jerusalem—this verse because the struggle for Jerusalem is a struggle for truth—nothing more and nothing less.

There can be no justice without truth. The truth is Jerusalem is the very air our people breathe. We have an unbreakable bond with Jerusalem—one that has lasted over 3,000 years. We have never relinquished that bond. We did not relinquish it when the Temple was destroyed the first time; we did not relinquish it when the Temple was destroyed the second time; we did not relinquish that bond.

We remained devoted to Jerusalem, and we preserved Zion. The entire land and people make up this word, this concept called Zion. We did not give up! For 2,000 years we have been saying, “We are in exile.” We have not been in exile for 2,000 years; even this is not true. We continued to live here. Where did the Rabban Gamliel work? In Sweden? Where were his wonderful writings composed? In Israel. In the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries, the people of Israel were a majority in the land of Israel. The Jews were a majority through the ninth century, and this majority was only lost after 200 years of Arab conquest—and even then we did not relinquish our bond.

Every year we said, “Next year in Jerusalem.” This aspiration—to return to Jerusalem and live and build there—has been an integral part of the people of Israel for thousands of years. And we again became a majority in this city, our city, in the mid-19th century.

We are not banishing anyone; we are not removing anyone; because the second half of the truth is that no other people has the connection the people of Israel have with Jerusalem and Zion. No other people allowed other religions freedom of worship and access to the holy places other than the people of Israel. When we renewed our hold over all parts of the city, we renewed freedom of worship and allowed members of all religions to pray and follow their faith under Israeli sovereignty.

Now there is an attempt to paint us as foreign invaders, as conquerors, as a people with no connection to this place. Our response is, No other people has such a bond with its capital as the Jewish people do with Jerusalem.

I asked Rabbi Lau how many times Jerusalem or Zion is mentioned in the Book of Books. The answer is over 700 times. Over 700!

Compare this with the holy books of other religions. Nothing comes close. There is no such bond between a people and its capital. We will continue to absorb immigrants there, and we will continue transforming it into a vibrant city.

Our future is based on our past, and our past creates our future. Only in Jerusalem is this demonstrated in a tangible and important way. “Merciful Father, do good in Your favor unto Zion; build the walls of Jerusalem” (Ps. 51:18).

We are blessed to be the generation that witnessed the redemption of Israel and its revival, and there is nothing and no one that will stand in the way of this resurrection. We will continue to develop our city, which has been united; and we will continue to tell the truth.

If there is one thing I believe in, it is that God would never lie. Thank you.
Eleven years ago, Israeli-born Meyrav Wurmser, then-executive director of the distinguished Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI), wrote an article titled “Can Israel Survive Post-Zionism?”

Israel, she said, was “in the midst of a cultural civil war in which one side would like to see their country continue to exist as a Jewish state and the other believes that Zionism, the founding idea of the state, has reached its end.” The latter group’s “stated goal,” she said, is nothing less than “the destruction of the Zionist idea on which the State of Israel is founded. Their intention is wholly negative; not to improve Zionism but to destroy it.”

Today Dr. Wurmser’s observations seem prophetic. Post-Zionism is attracting a growing number of Jewish people both inside and outside Israel who see themselves as “enlightened,” believe Israel has no right to exist as a Jewish state, and want its distinctive symbols expunged from Israeli life. They want Israel to convert from a Jewish state to a so-called state of all citizens.

Birthed in the halls of left-wing academia, post-Zionism first reared its head in university classrooms, research journals, and coffee shops. Later Haaretz, a liberal, Israeli English-language newspaper became a conduit for the message. So far post-Zionists are a minority; but like a dripping faucet that can eventually overfill a sink, the message of post-Zionism can one day spill into mainstream Israeli thought and obscure the truth.

Unlike the pioneers who gave their lives building Israel, post-Zionists perceive no longing in the Jewish heart for Zion and no need for a Jewish homeland to which their persecuted brethren can flee. In fact, wrote Dr. Wurmser, many have embraced “post-Judaism”: the rejection of one’s Jewish identity:

Post-Judaism characterizes an Israeli elite that, out of its own sense of discomfort with itself, tries to replace the national-Zionist Jew with a universal man. It wishes to replace Jewish particularism which it views as unfashionable, dark, and narrow-minded, with a universal Western man who is similar to the “enlightened” European intellectual. This “enlightened” Jew views the Jewish state as a destructive, objectionable, and very outdated phenomenon.

Like some of the Jews of pre-World War II Europe who thought assimilation would protect them from Adolf Hitler, these people believe removing Israel’s Jewishness will
protect them from terrorism and bring peace to the region. They would like to abolish:

- **The Law of Return.** Passed in 1950, the Law of Return provides dual citizenship for every Jewish person. For Jews fleeing anti-Semitism in other places, it cuts through what used to be decades of red tape and provides immediate refuge in Israel. Recently thousands of persecuted French and Argentine Jews have made aliyah and become Israeli citizens under the Law of Return. For others, it enables them to realize their dream of living in a Jewish state in the land of their forefathers.

- **The Distinctly Jewish Flag.** The Israeli flag is a white rectangle with two horizontal, parallel blue stripes that serve as a reminder of the Jewish **tallit** (prayer shawl). Between those stripes, as an identification of Jewish pride, is the Star of David—the very symbol anti-Semites have used for centuries to disgrace and humiliate the Jewish people.

- **The Menorah.** The menorah became the face of the Jewish state when adopted as Israel’s national emblem on February 10, 1949. Its design was lifted straight from the Torah and is believed to look exactly like the seven-branched candelabra of the Jewish Tabernacle in the wilderness and the Jewish Temples, the first of which stood in Jerusalem for 373 years (959 B.C.–586 B.C.) and the second of which stood there for 585 years (515 B.C.–A.D. 70).

- **The Hebrew Language.** Essential to Israel’s identity as a Jewish state, Hebrew is the language of the Jewish Scriptures and of its ancient prayer and worship, as well as the language of the Jewish forefathers. A Zionist who took the name Ben Yehuda was instrumental in creating modern Hebrew.

- **The Sabbath and Dietary Laws.** Orthodox Jewish laws govern the State of Israel. All government offices, shops, and businesses are closed Friday evening and Saturday because of the Sabbath, and most restaurants are required to keep kosher.

Post-Zionists argue that all these Jewish symbols block the hope of peace in the region. Remove Israel’s Jewish distinctive, they claim, and violence will cease.

**Deconstructing History**

To persuade the populace to their way of thinking, post-Zionists deconstruct the historiography of the Jewish people and their link to the land of Israel, replacing it with a concept more in line with global thinking. Simply put, they want to turn Israel into just another country, “devoid,” as Yoav Gelber put it, “of any Jewish identity, secular or religious.”5

Gelber, a professor at the University of Haifa in Israel, said post-Zionists want to “dismantle Israeli collective memory, and present it as a Zionist meta-narrative that usurped Jewish history and Israeli identity.”6 They want Israel to abolish its Law of Return, neuter its national symbols, and “sterilize” its language “by removing words, terms, images and stereotypes that carry a Zionist charge.”7 The term aliyah, for example, would become immigration; the Israeli War of Independence would become the War of 1948.

Post-Zionism is much like postmodernism, accepting the approach that all historiography is politics. And most post-Zionists accept the Palestinian version of history rather than the Jewish one. A complicit Web site is the World Antizionist Congress (WAC), which is heavily involved on the Facebook social-networking site. Its symbol is a Star of David with a swastika in the center; and it states as its purpose, “to develop an effective strategy to combat Zionist-Imperialist aggression.”8 However, it is impossible to tell if most supporters are Jewish or Muslim.

Like the Palestinians, post-Zionists claim Judaism is a religion, and religion does not need a national home. They see Zionism as colonialism, taking away land from the indigenous population. Evidently they do not consider the Jewish people indigenous, even though Jews have had a continual presence in the land for more than 3,000 years, since the days of Joshua.

In fact, much of the land incorporated into Israel in 1948 was purchased by Jewish people at exorbitant prices from absentee Arab landlords who sold it willingly because they considered it worthless. And many today who claim to be Palestinians actually descended from Balkans, Greeks, Syrians, Latins, Egyptians, Turks, Armenians, Persians, Kurds, Germans, Afghans, and a host of others whom the British illegally allowed to immigrate to Palestine when they controlled the area from 1921 to 1948.9

**What If?**

There is a staggering difference of worldviews between Zionists and post-Zionists. They agree on virtually nothing except, perhaps, that Israel should be a democracy. What would be the consequences of a non-Jewish Israel?

By removing the Law of Return, Israel would no longer attract highly educated, highly skilled, and highly trained Jews from around the world. The incentive for Jewish people to go to a Jewish country would not exist. Jewish people facing persecution would have no country of refuge. In fact, a reverse exodus would likely take place; many Jewish people living in Israel would no longer feel safe and would emigrate.

Israel’s enemies hate Israel simply because it is Jewish. With a huge Islamic population encircling the nation, and without a Jewish government looking out for their interests, Jews would be driven out of the country—which is the Islamist goal. A Jewish, democratic Israel would be gone; and a Muslim, Sharia Israel would take its place.

Thank God for His promises: “Then they [the Jewish people] shall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob… and they shall dwell there, they, their children, and their children’s children, forever. I will be their God, and they shall be My people” (Ezek. 37:25, 27).

**Endnotes**


2 Ibid.


4 Ibid., 721.


6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.


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Until the fourth century, Christianity was illegal in the Roman Empire. Although Replacement Theology had overtaken the church and metastasized into anti-Semitism, the church had no authority to do anything other than speak against the Jewish people. All that changed in A.D. 313, and the catalyst was a ruler named Constantine.

Young Constantine, a member of Emperor Diocletian’s court, was preparing to lead his troops at the Battle of Milvian Bridge in A.D. 312 when he claimed to have a vision of a cross in the sun. So he prayed to the Christian God, put Christian symbols on his banners, and won an astounding victory over an older, more experienced general.

Soon Constantine became emperor of the Roman Empire and issued the Edict of Milan (A.D. 313) that legalized Christianity and brought the church under the authority of Rome. This was a dramatic turning point in church history. Clergymen were put on the empire’s payroll, and the church went from being ruthlessly persecuted to being part of the state.

Eight years later, Christianity became the official religion. And a mere 60 years later it became the exclusive religion of the Roman Empire.

The Rise of Roman Catholicism

Because Rome was the seat of power, the church in Rome rose to prominence; and the bishop of Rome became the most powerful leader of the western half of the empire. Later he became known as the pope, with more power than the emperor. As the Roman Catholic Church spread in influence, it grew more powerful even than the governments of Europe. Believing the Jews to be cursed and the Christians to be God’s new chosen people (the teaching of Replacement Theology), it instigated the persecution of the Jewish people.

First, legislation arose outlawing synagogues and giving permission to burn Jews who broke the law. Jewish people were excluded from high office, restricted in other positions, and forced to shut their businesses on Sunday. Since religious Jews also closed on Saturday, the law helped Gentile merchants.

Furthermore, Jewish people were forbidden to live in Jerusalem, and Sunday was declared the Sabbath even though God’s Word makes the seventh day (Saturday) the day of rest (Ex. 20:9–11). The church also forbade Easter to be observed during Passover, when Christ actually died and arose. Jewish people were forbidden to sue Gentiles, and Christians were forbidden to give their children in marriage to Jewish people. Yet all these restrictions were not enough.

In 415 another turning point came, and anti-Semitism went from being merely verbal to being physical.

Violence and Death

In 415 Cyril, head of the church in Alexandria, led a brutal anti-Jewish riot in the city’s Jewish quarter. Christians beat Jews, raped women, murdered men, stole Jewish property, and drove the Jewish people from the city. From that point on, anti-Semitism mushroomed. It is literally impossible to count the number of cruel, violent, and merciless things done to God’s Chosen People.

During the Crusades in the 11th through 13th centuries, Christian armies marched across Europe murdering Jewish people, raping women, and burning Jewish villages. The church fabricated vicious lies about the Jews, persuading people they were the cause of every evil. When a plague broke out, the
Jews were blamed. It was common to hear that Jewish people had poisoned the water or were somehow responsible for all Gentile illnesses and deaths.

It didn’t matter that the same proportion of Jews were dying. The Jewish people were still blamed. Logic and reason meant nothing. Outrageous lies flourished continually, such as the well-known libel that Jewish people stole Christian children, drained their blood, and used it to bake matzos for their holidays. Never was one instance of such a thing ever proven.

But these lies flooded Europe. Jewish people became the scapegoat for every economic and political woe. And they were beaten, robbed, murdered, and mutilated. A particularly terrible time for them was Easter, when passion plays vilified the Jewish people as “Christ killers” and incited Jew-killing frenzies across the continent.

Jesus Himself, however, never blamed the Jewish people for His death. He declared, “I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again” (Jn. 10:17–18). In fact, it was a Gentile hand that nailed Him to the cross, not a Jewish hand. Scripture calls Jesus the perfect, sinless Lamb of God who died as a sacrifice for us all. We are all guilty of putting Christ on the cross.

But Replacement Theology had fomented such vicious anti-Semitism that more horrific, ungodly things were done to the Jewish people in the name of Christ than have been done to any other people in the history of the world.

### Convert, Expel, Kill

We are all greatly indebted to Martin Luther. Luther and the other reformers stood against what was then the tyranny of the Roman Catholic Church. When Luther left Roman Catholicism he founded what later became the Lutheran Church. At first it was friendly to the Jewish community because Luther believed Jewish people had rejected Christianity due to corruption within the Roman church. If they saw true Christianity based on faith alone, he thought, they would embrace it.

But they did not. And as Luther grew older, he became a hard-core anti-Semite. His books On the Jews and Their Lies and On the Ineffable Name condemned the Jews and encouraged people to burn their synagogues, destroy their homes, take their wealth, and put them to hard labor. Several hundred years later Adolf Hitler used the writings of Martin Luther, Germany’s favorite son, to justify his spiritual case against the Jewish people in his book, Mein Kampf. Hitler followed Luther’s suggestions to a tee. But he added one more: murder.

Jewish life in Europe was always precarious. The term wandering Jew evolved as a result of organized Christendom. Historically, the church had three ways of dealing with the Jewish people: convert them, expel them, or kill them.

When Jewish people first settled in an area, they would be accepted and shown kindness. But as time passed, things changed. Christians felt obligated to convert the Jews. Eventually, their offer went like this: “Would you like to become a Christian today, or would you like to die?” Many chose death.

Converting to Christianity did not mean acknowledging that you were a sinner, believing in your heart that Jesus willingly took your punishment on the cross, and putting your faith in Him for the forgiveness of sin—as we believe. It meant being baptized and taken into church membership. When Jewish people refused, they were expelled from the country. Often they wandered from place to place, homeless and persecuted, unable to put down roots.

Wrote Jewish historian Solomon Grayzel:

> In theory, Christianity and Judaism should have lived together in friendly spirit. But ... the Jews were subjected to attack and degradation. Large numbers were killed. Then, when deprived of opportunity and of no further economic use, they were expelled and made to wander in search of new homelands. All the lands bordering on the Atlantic Ocean expelled the Jews. In Germany and Italy they were compelled to live apart in ghettos. When expulsion failed to satisfy Christendom, elimination began. Thousands of Jewish people were murdered. Then came Hitler, whose “final solution” to the “Jewish problem” was to kill them all.

To this day, Jewish people believe the Holocaust of World War II was perpetrated by Christians. Even though Hitler himself was not a true Christian, many who worked for him were. They were guards at concentration camps. They were soldiers. They were members of the Hitler Youth. And most good Christians in Germany did not stand up against what was going on.

While not evil in itself, Replacement Theology has been a dangerous tool in the hand of the Devil. It changed Christendom’s attitude toward Jewish people, fomented contempt for ethnic Israel, and recast the Scriptures from Christendom’s attitude toward Jewish people, fomented contempt for ethnic Israel, and recast the Scriptures from

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**Anti-Jewish Church Edicts**

The following is a sampling of the edicts and canon laws the organized church issued against the Jewish people.

- This order is intended to keep Jews and Christians apart. It forbade Christians to eat with or marry Jewish people, and it forbade Jewish people to observe the Sabbath. (Council of Elvira, circa A.D. 306)
- Synagogues are outlawed. (Edict of Milan, A.D. 313)
- Permission is granted to burn Jews who are guilty of breaking the law. (Roman edict, A.D. 315)
- Jews are excluded from holding high office or having military careers. (Various laws)
- It is decreed that all businesses be closed on Sunday. (Constantine, A.D. 321)
- Jews are forbidden to live in Jerusalem. (Constantine, A.D. 325)
- Sunday is declared to be the Sabbath day of rest. (Council of Nicea, A.D. 325)
- It was forbidden to associate the celebration of Easter with the Jewish Passover. Easter was ordered to be celebrated on the first Sunday after the full moon following the spring equinox. (Canon I of the Synod of Antioch, A.D. 341)
- It becomes illegal to feast with Jewish people. (Synod of Laodicea, circa A.D. 345)
- The legal rights of Jewish people become greatly restricted. (Code of Canons of the African Church, A.D. 419)
- Jewish people are forbidden the right to bring legal accusations, apart from suits against other Jews. (Canon CXXIX, A.D. 419)
- Christians are forbidden to give their children in marriage to Jewish people. (Council of Chalcedon, A.D. 451)

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Visit foi.org/imgextras to download a PDF of these edicts.
Christ’s Heavenly Ministry

Under the Levitical system, animal blood could only cover sin, never remove it. However, Christ’s blood was sufficient and efficacious to redeem mankind and remove sin. The remaining verses of Hebrews 9 show the vast superiority of Christ’s New Covenant ministry in heaven over the Levitical priest’s ministry on Earth.

Christ Purified Heaven

Christ’s ministry reached its culmination in heaven itself: “Therefore it was necessary that the copies of the things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these” (v. 23).

The cleansing of the earthly sanctuary is contrasted to cleansing heaven. It was not arbitrary but “necessary” that heavenly things be cleansed by “better sacrifices than these,” meaning better than the animals used in the earthly Tabernacle.

The word copies refers to the earthly Tabernacle with all its furnishings and ministry. The earthly Tabernacle was only a “copy and shadow” (8:5) of spiritually divine realities in heaven.

The only sacrifice that could cleanse heaven was the one-time sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the perfect Son of God, on the cross. Although the Greek word sacrifice is plural, Jesus did not offer many “sacrifices,” as mentioned in the text, but only one. Yet His was efficacious enough to fulfill and do away with all the animal sacrifices in the Levitical system.

At this point an issue needs to be addressed. God’s sanctuary in heaven is not defiled. He is holy, as is everything that dwells in His presence. So why did the heavenly Tabernacle need to be purified, since all things in heaven are holy?

Scripture gives a number of reasons. First, Satan had access to heaven before and after his rebellion against God (Job 1:6; Isa. 14:12–14; Ezek. 28:11–19; Rev. 12:9–10). Once Satan sinned, he defiled his own sanctuary in heaven (Ezek. 28:18). Thus heaven had to be purified because of his presence. Second, Jesus’ shed blood brought reconciliation to all things, even things in heaven (Col. 1:20). Third, the works of the unsaved are recorded in books kept in heaven (Rev. 20:12). Thus it is necessary for heaven to be cleansed of all things that speak of sin.

Christ’s Presence in Heaven

Hebrews 9:24 describes Jesus’ presence in heaven: “Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.”

The Tabernacle on Earth was merely a copy of the true Tabernacle in heaven. The Levitical high priest entered the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle once a year only, on the Day of Atonement, to offer animal blood to atone for Israel’s sins. When he did so, he also carried with him hot coals from the altar of incense. The coals produced smoke that filled the room, protecting him from viewing the Shekinah presence of God’s glory.

In contrast, Christ entered the heavenly sanctuary to appear before the very presence of God the Father (face to face) on our behalf. The word appear (Greek, emphanis-themai; v. 24) means “to be manifested.” It connotes something manifested or brought about as a result of something new and better. Thus Christ now appears in God’s presence with a new and better ministry as our Advocate in heaven.

Scripture further says, “Not that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood of another—He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself” (vv. 25–26).

The Aaronic high priest entered, not with his own blood, but with the blood of a sacrificed animal. (He could not offer his own blood because it was tainted by sin. And if he had, it would never have been sufficient to cover or take away sin.) The high priest then sprinkled the animal’s blood in the Holy of Holies to atone for (cover) his own sins and those of Israel. He repeated this ritual annually because animal blood only covered sins for one year; it was unable to remove either his or Israel’s sins.

In contrast, Christ did not enter the Holy of Holies of an earthly
Tabernacle or Temple but that of heaven itself. There He did not need to offer sacrifices continually, as did the Levitical high priest; He offered Himself only once. For Christ to offer Himself repeatedly as a sacrifice every year (from the foundation of the world) would have been impossible.

The text clearly states, “But now, once [once for all] at the end [consummation] of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself” (v. 26). Christ came to Earth as a sacrifice for sin when the past ages of Old Testament history had reached their fulfillment in God’s program. Calvary was the one event in history where all the features of God’s salvation plan were fulfilled: “But when the fullness of the time had come [the exact historical moment appointed by the Father], God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons” (Gal. 4:4–5).

The phrase to put away sin means to “abolish,” or “remove” it. That is, Christ’s sacrifice was eternally sufficient and efficacious to remove sin forever. However, though Christ’s blood sacrifice has abolished sin forever, it is only applicable for those who repent and trust in Him for salvation.

**Christ’s Promise From Heaven**

On the Day of Atonement, the high priest entered the Holy of Holies to sprinkle blood on the mercy seat for the sins of Israel. During the ceremony, the Israelites waited outside the Tabernacle for the high priest to return from the Holy of Holies. His departure from the Holy of Holies signified to all Israel that his work was finished, his mission was successful, the blood satisfied God, and Israel’s sins were covered for another year.

In like manner, after offering Himself as a sacrifice for sin and being resurrected from the dead, Jesus ascended into heaven (Acts 1:11) and remains there as our Advocate before God’s throne. At the appointed time, determined by God the Father, He will return to Earth as He promised (Jn. 14:3). His return will signify to all believers the success of His atoning ministry on their behalf in heaven.

Hebrews 9:27–28 then states a well-known principle: after death follows judgment. “And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many.”

After a person dies, neither he nor anyone else can present an offering for that individual’s sin that could alter his destiny. Death ends a person’s opportunity to change his or her position in life; there are no second chances. Nor does anyone die over and over, as taught in reincarnation. A person’s earthly life is closed at death, and everyone’s eternal destiny is determined and fixed during his or her life here on Earth. From this thought springs a sobering reminder: death irreversibly places people in either heaven or hell based on their acceptance or rejection of Jesus Christ.

Death is an appointment. Everyone dies. Scripture records only a few exceptions. First are Enoch and Elijah. They did not die but were taken directly to heaven (11:5; 2 Ki. 2:11). Second, there will be a generation of believers who will not experience death but will be taken directly to heaven at the Rapture of the church (1 Cor. 15:51–52; 1 Th. 4:17). Scripture also mentions people who died twice: Lazarus, who was resurrected and died a second time (Jn. 11:43–44), and the people who were resurrected at the time of Jesus’ crucifixion (Mt. 27:52–53).

Hebrews 9:27–28 teaches that Christ was sacrificed one time and died once for the sins of mankind (7:27; 9:12; 10:10). His was a final act that cannot be repeated or reversed. This was a major consideration for the Jewish believers being addressed in Hebrews, as they compared Christ’s sacrificial death with the teachings of the Levitical system.

The argument concludes with, “To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation” (9:28). The word appear (Greek, οπαυ) means to “behold” and has the idea of Christ revealing Himself to the world at His Second Coming, at which time His promise to return will be fulfilled. At His First Coming, He settled the sin issue once and for all by sacrificing Himself. When He returns He will consummate the believer’s redemption and provide all believers with their eternal inheritance as He inaugurates His Kingdom on Earth (v. 15).

Christ’s appearance for believers is mentioned three times in 9:24–28. His first appearance was on Earth to become a once-for-all sacrifice by bearing mankind’s sin on the cross (v. 26). His second appearance was to minister as our Advocate in heaven (v. 24). His third appearance will be at His Second Coming (v. 28).

As believers, we have much for which to be thankful. Jesus Christ purchased our redemption, removed our sin forever, restored us to fellowship with God the Father, advocates for us in heaven, and has promised us an eternal inheritance at His Second Coming. Hallelujah, what a Savior!

David M. Levy is the director of International Ministries for The Friends of Israel.
Specific Reasons for God’s Anger and Wrath (Part 3)

The two previous articles presented specific reasons for God’s wrath against Israel. Now we will focus on specific reasons for God’s wrath against other nations.

A Significant Statement Regarding All Nations

Because all nations fail to acknowledge God perfectly and submit to the rule of the personal, sovereign Creator of the universe revealed in the Bible, God tells them, “Come near, you nations, to hear; and heed, you people! Let the earth hear, and all that is in it, the world and all things that come forth from it. For the indignation of the Lord is against all nations, and His fury against all their armies; He has utterly destroyed them, He has given them over to the slaughter” (Isa. 34:1–2). All nations are subject to God’s wrath.

An Israelite Prayer

History has demonstrated that nations that abuse God’s uniquely chosen nation of Israel, which He has appointed to play a key role in fulfilling His purpose for history, are uniquely subject to His divine wrath. Consequently, the following Israelite prayer is significant: “Pour out Your wrath on the nations that do not know You, and on the kingdoms that do not call on Your name. For they have devoured Jacob, and laid waste his dwelling place” (Ps. 79:6–7).

God’s Wrath Against Specific Nations

EGYPT. God devastated Egypt for worshipping false gods and enslaving His people Israel:

He worked His signs in Egypt, and His wonders in the field of Zoan; turned their rivers into blood, and their streams, that they could not drink. He sent swarms of flies among them, which devoured them, and frogs, which destroyed them. He also gave their crops to the caterpillar, and their labor to the locust. He destroyed their vines with hail, and their sycamore trees with frost. He also gave up their cattle to the hail, and their flocks to fiery lightning. He cast on them the fierceness of His anger, wrath, indignation, and trouble, by sending angels of destruction among them. He made a path for His anger; He did not spare their soul from death, but gave their life over to the plague, and destroyed all the firstborn in Egypt, the first of their strength in the tents of Ham (Ps. 78:43–51).

ASSYRIA. Assyria devastated the northern kingdom of Israel, greatly damaged the southern kingdom of Judah, and threatened Jerusalem (2 Ki. 18:11–35). Because of the king of Assyria’s attitude, God declared,

Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Lord has performed all His work on Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, that He will say, “I will punish the fruit of the arrogant heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his haughty looks.” For he says: “By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom, for I am prudent; also I have removed the boundaries of the people, and have robbed their treasuries; so I have put down the inhabitants like a valiant man” (Isa. 10:12–13).

God said He would “stretch out His hand against the north, destroy Assyria, and make Nineveh a desolation, as dry as the wilderness” (Zeph. 2:13).

Through the prophet Nahum, he pronounced judgment on Assyria, vowing to destroy its capital city, Nineveh:

The burden against Nineveh. . . . God is jealous, and the Lord avenges; the Lord avenges and is furious. The Lord will take vengeance on His adversaries, and He reserves wrath for His enemies. Who can stand before His indignation? And who can endure the fierceness of His anger? His fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by Him. The Lord has given a command concerning you: Your name shall be perpetuated no longer. Out of the house of your gods I will cut off the carved image and the molded image. I will dig your grave, for you are vile.” Behold, I am against you,” says the Lord of hosts, “I will burn your chariots in smoke, and the sword shall devour your young lions; I will cut off your prey from the earth, and the voice of your messengers shall be heard no more. It shall come to pass

 sending angels of destruction among them. He made a path for His anger; He did not spare their soul from death, but gave their life over to the plague, and destroyed all the firstborn in Egypt, the first of their strength in the tents of Ham (Ps. 78:43–51).
that all who look upon you will flee
away from you, and say, 'Nineveh is laid
waste! Who will bemoan her?' Where
shall I seek comforters for you?' (Nah.
1:1–2, 6, 14; 2:13; 3:7).
The Medes and Babylonians crushed
Assyria as a power by destroying Nineveh
in 609 B.C.

Babylon. Babylon was idolatrous,
proud, violent, and covetous of what other
nations possessed (Hab. 1:11; 2:5, 8–9; Jer.
50:2). It devastated Judah, destroyed
Jerusalem and Israel’s first Temple, killed
many Jewish people, and deported most of
the surviving ones to Babylon in 586 B.C.

So the prophet Jeremiah delivered
the following message from God: “Therefore
thou shalt say to the king of Babylon and
his land, as I have punished the king of
Assyria.” (Jer. 50:18). That divine
punishment would involve “the fierce anger
of the Lord” (51:45).

The Medes and Persians jointly con-
quered Babylon in 539 B.C.

Moab. The Moabites were descendants
of Lot. Thus they were related to the
Israelites. But God promised them His
“awesome” judgment because, in their
pride, He said, “They have reproached My
people, and made arrogant threats against
their borders” (Zeph. 2:8). As “the Lord
of hosts, the God of Israel,” He declared,
“Surely Moab shall be like Sodom, . . . over-
run with weeds and saltpits, and a perpetu-
al desolation. The residue of My people
shall plunder them, and the remnant of My
people shall possess them” (v. 9).

Ammon. The Ammonites also were
descendants of Lot. Although they, too,
were related to Israel by ancestry, they
were hostile and sometimes brutal to
Israel, ripping open pregnant Jewish
women (Amos 1:13).

Consequently, God gave the following
commandment to the prophet Ezekiel:

And you, son of man, prophesy and say,
“Thus says the Lord God concerning the
Ammonites and concerning their pro-
rouch, . . . I will judge you in the place
where you were created, in the land of your
nativity. I will pour out My indignation on
you; I will blow against you with the fire of
My wrath, and deliver you into the hands of
brutal men who are skillful to destroy. You

shall be fuel for the fire; your blood shall be
in the midst of the land. You shall not be
remembered, for I the Lord have spoken!”
(Ezek. 21:28, 30–32).

Elam. Elam, east of Babylon, became
part of Persia (Dan. 8:2). Scripture does not
reveal the specific reason for the follow-
ing expression of God’s wrath against that
country:
The word of the Lord that came to
Jeremiah the prophet against Elam, in the
beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of
Judah, saying, “Thus says the Lord of
hosts: ‘Behold, I will bring the bow of
Elam, the foremost of their might. Against
Elam I will bring the four winds from the
four quarters of heaven, and scatter them
toward all those winds; there shall be no
nations where the outcasts of Elam will not
go. For I will cause Elam to be dismayed
before their enemies and before those who
seek their life. I will bring disaster upon
them, My fierce anger’ says the Lord; ‘and
I will send the sword after them until I
have consumed them. I will set My throne
in Elam, and will destroy from there the
king and the princes’” (Jer. 49:34–38).

Philistia: In a context that emphasizes
fierce anger and wrath, God declared, “Woe
to the inhabitants of the seacoast, the nation of
the Cherethites! The word of the Lord is
against you, O Canaan, land of the Philistines:
‘I will destroy you; so there shall be no inhab-
itant.’ The seacoast shall be pastures, with
shelters for shepherds and folds for flocks.
The coast shall be for the remnant of the
house of Judah’” (Zeph. 2:5–7).

iran, Sudan, Libya, Turkey, and Russia.
Ezekiel 38 reveals a massive, future military
invasion of Israel by a multinational force.
Five of those nations are identified in Ezekiel
38:5–6. The first nation, Persia, is today Iran.
The second nation listed is Ethiopia. But,
according to the Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia,
“The designation Ethiopia is misleading, for it
did not refer to the modern state of Ethiopia or
Abyssinia.”1 The word translated “Ethiopia”
is Cush. Biblical Cush bordered Egypt on the
south and today is known as Sudan.2

The third nation, Libya, continues today as
the western neighbor of Egypt.

In Ezekiel’s time the fourth and fifth
nations, Gomer and Togarmah, existed in the
central and eastern parts of modern
Turkey.3, 4

God’s Wrath Against All Nations

God declared, “My determination is to
gather the nations to My assembly of king-
doms, to pour on them My indignation, all
my fierce anger” (Zeph. 3:8; cf. Joel 3:9–16).
Again He stated, “I will gather all the
nations to battle against Jerusalem. . . . Then
the Lord will go forth and fight against
those nations, as He fights in the day of bat-
tle” (Zech. 14:2–3). This destruction of lead-
ers and armies of all nations will take place
at the Second Coming of Christ, when His
feet touch down on the Mount of Olives
after the seven-year Tribulation (v. 4; cf.
Rev. 19:11–21).

Endnotes
1 Philip C. Johnson, “Cush,” Wycliffe Bible
Encyclopedia, ed. Charles F. Pfeiffer, Howard F. Vos, John Rea (Chicago:
2 Ibid.
3 J. J. Reeve and Roland K. Harrison, “Gomer,” International
Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Fully Revised, ed. Geoffrey
Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1982), 2:524.
4 C. J. Hemer, “Togarmah,” International Standard Bible
6 John E. Hartley, “yarka,” Encyclopedia of the Old

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Obama’s threat

U.S. President Barack Obama has threatened to impose his own solution to the Middle East problem, which “the Israelis won’t appreciate,” if Israel and the Palestinians fail to settle the situation themselves.

Reported WorldNetDaily.com (WND): “If Israel and the Palestinians fail to reach an agreement to create a Palestinian state, the Obama administration will look into imposing a solution on the parties, a senior Palestinian Authority [PA] negotiator told WND.”

The article also said, “A PA negotiator said recent meetings between the Obama administration and the Palestinians revealed the White House is on board a Palestinian threat to unilaterally ask the United Nations to recognize a Palestinian state outside of negotiations with Israel.”

Fighting U.S. guns

ARUTZ-7—The American-trained, Fatah-led Palestinian Authority (PA) security forces could turn their guns on Israel, an Israeli general warned Israeli soldiers recently.

Maj.-Gen. Avi Mizrahi said, “This is a trained, equipped, American-educated force. This means that at the beginning of a battle, we will pay a higher price. A force like that can shut down an urban area with four snipers. . . . It is a proper infantry force facing us, and we need to take that into account. They have attack capabilities, and we do not expect them to give up easily.”

Their trainer, U.S. Lt. Gen. Keith Dayton, said his PA army would likely attack the Jewish state if Israel does not give in to the demands of the Middle East quartet, comprising America, Russia, the United Nations, and European Union.

Jihad tourism

ARUTZ-7—Hezbollah guerrillas are promoting themselves to the folks at home and winning credibility and legitimacy with weekly tours of southern Lebanon in what the group is calling “Jihad tourism.” The tours were created to mark the 10th anniversary of Israel’s pullout from the area.

After maintaining a security buffer zone for 22 years, Israel’s then-Prime Minister Ehud Barak withdrew all Israeli troops in May 2000. Hezbollah terrorists quickly honeycombed the area with tunnels and concrete bunkers. Their kidnapping of Israeli soldiers caused the 2006 Lebanon War.

A “tourist jihad center,” new war museum, and a parade of orchestra accompanied by strutting terrorists are part of what one commentator called the “Disneyland of Islamic Terror.” Hundreds of university students already have taken the tour. Wide-eyed, they hear the Hezbollah version of the guerrillas’ battlefield experiences against the Israeli army.

A special spot on the tour is where Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah’s son Hadi “was martyred” while leading a raid against Israel in 1997, explains a tour guide, indicating a blue prayer mat laid out among the trees. As students snap shots, the terrorists make themselves available for photos but ask that their faces not be seen.

“This is an excellent, very well-organized trip,” a 19-year-old university student commented on the tour. “I think it’s very important to get a firsthand look at Hezbollah because there are a lot of prejudices out there.”

At its opening in May, Lebanon’s president and prime minister both sent representatives. Also there was Noam Chomsky, an American Jew who is pro-Hezbollah and pro-Iran.

Warm words for Hezbollah

ARUTZ-7—John Brennan, deputy national security adviser for U.S. Homeland Security, called Jerusalem by its Arabic name, praised Saudi Arabian religious “tolerance,” and encouraged Hezbollah. The Zionist Organization of America (ZOA) has called these remarks “outrageous” and “disgraceful.”

Speaking to an apparently Muslim audience at New York University in February, Brennan first told a story in Arabic, evoking laughter and concluding with, “Don’t tell the folks who don’t speak Arabic what I said.” He then said his favorite city in the Middle East is “Al Quds, Jerusalem.”

In another speech before Lebanese leaders who visited Washington recently, Brennan told them, “Hezbollah is a very interesting organization,” and said it had evolved from “purely a terrorist organization” to a militia and now to an organization that has members within the parliament and cabinet.

The ZOA noted Hezbollah is actually a Lebanese-Iranian proxy terrorist group that continually calls for Israel’s elimination. Said ZOA President Morton Klein: “John Brennan is yet another hand-picked Obama adviser who shows a distinct animus against Israel and partiality for its enemies. It is unsurprising that, when Barack Obama is advised by people like these, quite apart from the president’s own troubling history of friendships with vicious critics of Israel and having belonged for two decades to an anti-Israel, anti-American, black-supremacist church, the Obama administration has ignited major tensions in its relations with Israel while not holding accountable and penalizing the Palestinian Authority for continuing terrorism and incitement to hatred and murder.”

Egypt in training

ARUTZ-7—The Egyptian military has completed large-scale training maneuvers in the Sinai Peninsula. The official Middle East News Agency (MENA) said the weeklong maneuvers included an exercise to cross the Suez Canal, as well as a simulation of an offensive thrust deep into what is termed “enemy” (meaning Israeli) territory.

MENA further reported that helicopters, fighter jets, armored units, paratroopers, and special shock troops participated in the military exercises.
Each day, we as Christians are given the opportunity to glorify God. Using our time well, exercising the gifts the Holy Spirit has given us, and making wise use of the finances God has entrusted to us are only a few of the many ways in which we can honor Him. One way we can glorify God beyond our time here on Earth is through a will. A will allows us to make sure that what the Lord has entrusted to us remains His when we no longer need it.

Sadly, it is reported that more than 50 percent of Americans (Christians included) have no legal will in force. This requires the laws of your state to intercede and make a will for you. Does your state know how you want your estate handled? Distributions are often made in ways that may be contrary to your wishes. In addition, your desire to see the Lord’s work benefited is likely to go unfulfilled.

If you would like to have a will written but don’t know where to start, let us help. We would like to send you our informative brochure Making a Will That Works at no cost and without obligation. It is our way of helping you become a wise steward over all the Lord has entrusted to you. To receive Making a Will, simply check the appropriate box on the envelope in this magazine; or write to Tom Geoghan at The Friends of Israel, P.O. Box 908, Bellmawr, NJ 08099.

Eight members of the Gideons International in the Trenton, New Jersey, area were forced off a public sidewalk while handing out free Bibles in front of a high school, despite the fact they showed police a letter from the Gideons’ legal department explaining their First Amendment right to freedom of speech and assembly.

A Hamilton Township police officer looked at the letter, said it meant nothing, and ordered the men to leave. They had handed out approximately 300 Bibles over 40 minutes to students at Nottingham High School.

“We have very strict rules,” explained Don Ober, a member of the worldwide organization famous for placing Bibles in hotels and hospitals. “We stay on the public sidewalk. We don’t step a toe on the grass. If someone says, ‘No thank you,’ we don’t give him a Bible. If someone asks a question, we’ll answer it. We never once vary from that.” Ober said the Gideons, as a courtesy, even spoke to the principal so he would know what they were doing. Police told the Gideons the school called the authorities.

John Whitehead, founder and president of the Rutherford Institute in Charlottesville, Virginia, a conservative, nonprofit legal organization that specializes in defending civil liberties, told Israel My Glory magazine the Gideons should have stayed put. “They have a right to be on the sidewalk as long as they’re not blocking ingress or egress,” he said. “We relent too easily. Why relent? Stand up and fight!” Whitehead said the only way Americans will keep their freedoms is if they stand their ground. “You hurt your fellow believers when you don’t stand up and fight these things.”

He called the late civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. “my hero. He would not have gone down this easily. He would’ve said, ‘No. I’m going to stay here.’ Dispersing too easily gives the police the feeling they can do this to anyone,” he said.

Whitehead said most police officers “know virtually nothing” about the First Amendment or Bill of Rights because they’re not trained in them.

Although several students refused the Gideon Bibles, most accepted them. And some ran over to get them. One boy asked for several so he could give them to his cousins and brothers. “They need God in their lives,” he told Ober.
For many days I had been asking myself, How do I find people like me, who survived the Holocaust, so that I may bring them the gospel of Christ? Speaking to them about the faith is not easy. They do not want to hear about what is written in the Bible. But as we say in Israel, “If God wills it, even a broom can shoot.”

Recently a friend came to my home to ask for my help. “Zvi,” he said, “I know a man who is 90 years old and passed through the same furnace of affliction as you did. He is a Holocaust survivor and does not want to hear about the Lord. I am here to ask if you would please come and speak to him. He only wants to speak with people who suffered as he did because they understand what he is going through.”

“I am ready,” I said. So I went to his home with my friend. We talked for quite a while and began to develop a friendship. I asked him how he dealt with all he endured during World War II, and I listened to his reply. Then he asked me the same question.

“In the beginning,” I said, “it was very hard for me. But over time, I started to read the Holy Bible and grow closer to the Lord; and He gave me hope and the courage to go on living. During the Holocaust I was jealous of those who died. I was 10 when the Nazis came through Poland, where I lived. I was separated from my parents and brothers and have never seen any of them again. I saw things no one should see, and I wanted to die.

“When the war was over I came to Israel, and someone gave me a Bible. I read Psalm 27:10, where it is written, ‘When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take care of me.’ This verse helped me come to know the Lord. He gave me more and more courage to live. He even enabled me to go to others who also walked the same long road of suffering and to give them a desire to continue living.

“And here I am today, no longer suffering, because I put my trust in the Lord. My help came from Him alone.”

When I received the Lord, Psalm 27 gave me a great desire to go to others who felt forsaken, as I had, and show them the right path to God. Only in God is there hope. This 90-year-old man was far from the Lord, even though it was God who had helped him survive.

He had many questions, and I told him how I came to know the Lord personally. At the beginning of my visit, he was extremely distraught. But he paid great attention to everything I said, and in time I saw a great joy
appear on his face. Then I opened my Bible and began to read to him.

He listened, and I could see the Lord was with us. He was not the first Jewish man who passed through, as I had, the seven halls of hell, as we say here. I have spoken to others who survived the Holocaust. And they all ask the same questions: “How can you speak about faith in God? You know what I have lived through! Where was God then?”

“How old are you?” I asked.

“I am 90 years old,” he replied.

“And who gave you this long life if not God Himself? You could have died in Europe many years ago, but He brought you here and has taken care of you. So if you want to know where God was, look at yourself. He was with you the entire time so that you should come to know Him and tell others about Him, others who went through what we went through and who ask ‘Where was God?’”

I showed him how God has blessed His Chosen People by giving us back the land He promised to give to us and to our descendants forever. When he asked me where such promises are written, I showed him Genesis 12:7; 13:14–17; 15:18; 17:8; and Exodus 23:31.

Then he asked, “Can you give me a Bible? I would like to read it.” I was waiting for him to ask. It was important the idea to read God’s Word come from him and not me.

“It is good for you to read,” I said. “You must read and also open your heart before the Lord. He will encourage you, as He did me. He gave me the courage to go on living. And here I am today, doing His will with much joy. Despite all we have gone through, God has not forsaken us. As it is written, ‘You are My servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified’” (Isa. 49:3).

EDITOR’S NOTE: Zvi’s fascinating story is available from The Friends of Israel in book form and on DVD. For purchasing information, call 800–345–8461. Or log on to foi.org/store.

Our 2-minute Eye on the Middle East news program with David Dolan can be heard on the radio Monday through Friday. Or tune in on our Web site, foi.org/radio, where you can also search our radio log, view transcripts, or listen at your convenience to Dr. Elwood McQuaid from the FOI radio archives.

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