

The Latest Threat to Evangelical Support for Israel

Conservative Christians have generally been known for their enthusiastic support for the Jewish state. But a new movement of young activists is seeking to change that.

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By Luke Moon

A note from Pastor Kevin Lea follows this article.

In 2010, a film was released that perfectly encapsulated the erosion of Evangelical Christian support for Israel. The film, *With God on Our Side*, featured a young man learning about the Palestinian struggle and coming to see Israel not as evidence of God's faithfulness, but as a mean and heartless nation enabled by American Evangelicals who have embraced Zionist ideology.

The film's narrative of peace-loving Palestinians mistreated by heartless Israelis and their Christian Zionist supporters has been repackaged and promoted again and again by anti-Israel activists in some of the most influential Evangelical institutions in the United States. These activists, often in high positions, have found eager disciples in places like the megachurch campus of Willow Creek and the academic halls of Wheaton College, one of America's preeminent Evangelical institutions. And they have been able to exploit the resources of popular Evangelical development organizations like World Vision.

Exposing these activists and their strategy is key to thwarting their efforts to undermine Evangelical support for Israel.

For many anti-Israel activists, Christian Zionism is an easy and strategically important target. Many of them believe that U.S. political and military support for Israel is not the result of activism by the Jewish lobby, which represents at best 2 percent of the U.S. population, but the much larger segment of support that comes from politically active Christians, and in particular Evangelical Americans. In order to end U.S. support for Israel, which is held to be the only reason the occupation still exists, pro-Palestinian anti-Israel activists need to confront Christian Zionism. The added benefit, of course, is that it is much easier to avoid being labeled "anti-Semitic" if they go after a Christian movement instead of a Jewish one.

Just as Evangelical support for the religious Right is maligned by those who create a caricature out of Jerry Falwell, Evangelical support for Israel is maligned by those who create a caricature out of Christian Zionism and supporters like John Hagee. To many anti-Israel activists, all Christians who support the Jews' right to live and flourish in their historic homeland are Christian Zionists.

In fact, such derision is highly inaccurate. The reasons Evangelicals support Israel are diverse and multifaceted. Some of them do believe in an apocalyptic eschatology that sees the modern state of Israel as a sign of the second coming of the messiah. Others, however, are more reluctant to embrace a particular eschatology, and find the return of the Jewish people to their homeland and the creation of the State of Israel as providential and evidence of God's faithfulness to his chosen people. Still others are fairly uninterested in theological justifications, and support Israel because it is a fellow democracy in a region filled with antagonistic autocrats, most of whom persecute Christians and subvert freedom of religion, a value Israel strenuously upholds. And many support Israel for the same reason many secular people do: Compassion for the historical suffering of the Jews, who have suffered under the heavy boot of pogroms and countless other atrocities, and a belief in the rightness of Zionism.

While Evangelical support for Israel is broad and multifaceted, the challenge to this support has been driven by a fairly small number of people who wield vastly outsized influence inside the Evangelical community. One of those individuals is...

To read this article in its entirety, go to:

<http://www.thetower.org/article/the-latest-threat-to-evangelical-support-for-israel/>

Note from Pastor Kevin Lea: In recent years, increasing numbers of individuals and organizations deny that the Jewish presence in Israel is a modern-day, miraculous fulfillment of ancient Bible prophecy. They include the Pope/Vatican, Replacement Theologians, Fulfillment Theologians, those following Christian-Palestinianism, and pastors, such as Steve Anderson, who say that the Jews living in Israel today were put there by Satan, not God (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0zKURx7Xf4&feature=player_detailpage - at the five minute mark).

If the Jews are not in Israel by the hand of God, then how can we explain the many miracles that have protected and preserved them, often against overwhelming odds, in every war since 1948? (For recent examples, see <http://www.wnd.com/2014/08/hand-of-god-sent-missile-into-sea/>.) If Satan (Islam) is fighting against Satan (Jews in the land of Israel), then why do miracles give multiple victories to one side (the Jews) over the other? Didn't Jesus teach that a house divided cannot stand (Matthew 12:25-26)?

I believe those who take a stand against Israel are themselves being deceived by Satan, fulfilling other biblical prophecies concerning the great apostasy of the Last Days. Someday, all the nations will gather against Israel / Jerusalem, and Jesus Himself will descend to defend His people. I pray that the reader gets on the right side of this debate. If not, you are joining Satan in fighting God, and you will lose.

The burden of the word of the Lord against Israel. Thus says the Lord, who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him: "Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness to all the surrounding peoples, when they lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall happen in that day that I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples; all who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces, **though all nations of the earth are gathered against it.** Zechariah 12:1-3 NKJV

The Lord will save the tents of Judah first, so that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem shall not become greater than that of Judah. In that day **the Lord will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem**; the one who is feeble among them in that day shall be like David, and the house of David shall be like God, like the Angel of the Lord before them. It shall be in that day **that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.** Zechariah 12:7-9 NKJV

Behold, the day of the Lord is coming, and your spoil will be divided in your midst. For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; the city shall be taken, the houses rifled, and the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, but the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city. **Then the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations, As He fights in the day of battle.** And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, from east to west, making a very large valley; half of the mountain shall move toward the north and half of it toward the south. [KL: This is the second coming of Jesus] Zechariah 14:1-4 NKJV