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The End of Evangelical Support for Israel?, on: 2015/11/4 14:10

<http://www.meforum.org/3769/israel-evangelical-support>

A mere decade ago, Christian Zionism was seen as an emerging force in American politics. As if out of nowhere, a block of fifty to one hundred million friends of Israel were poised to enter the national debate and safeguard the U.S.-Israel relationship for generations to come. Evangelical love for Israel appeared so solid that the only debate within the Jewish community was whether or not to "accept" it.

Just a few years ago, almost every significant evangelical leader, such as pro-Israel stalwart Pastor John Hagee here with Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, came out squarely behind the Jewish state. But now, questioning Christian support for the Jewish state is fast becoming a key way for millennials to demonstrate Christian compassion and bona fides.

How quickly things change. The days of taking evangelical support for Israel for granted are over. As they are increasingly confronted with an evangelical-friendly, anti-Israel narrative, more and more of these Christians are turning against the Jewish state.

There is troubling precedent for such an about-face. At one time—prior to the 1967 war—the mainline Protestant denominations were among Israel's most reliable American supporters. Israel's opponents, therefore, targeted these denominations with mainline-friendly, anti-Israel messages. There are still many mainline Protestants who support Israel today. But to the extent the mainline denominations act corporately in connection with the Jewish state, it is to divest from it. And it is from Israel—not Iran—that they seek to divest.

In a similar fashion, Palestinian Christians and their American sympathizers are successfully promoting a narrative aimed at reaching the rising generation of evangelicals and turning them against Israel. As a result, more leaders of this generation are moving toward neutrality in the conflict while others are becoming outspoken critics of Israel. Questioning Christian support for the Jewish state is fast becoming a key way for the millennials to demonstrate their Christian compassion and political independence. In short, this population is in play.

The Shift

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

Until the past couple of years, however, there was little reason to believe that these individuals were influencing Christians beyond their own narrow circles. Almost every significant evangelical leader who took a position on the issue came out squarely behind the Jewish state. A center-right evangelical world simply was not taking its political cues from these stalwarts of the left.

This situation is changing dramatically. With every passing month, more evidence is emerging that these anti-Israel Christians are succeeding in reaching beyond the evangelical left and are influencing the mainstream. In particular, they are penetrating the evangelical world at its soft underbelly: the millennial generation. These young believers (roughly ages 18 to 30) are rebelling against what they perceive as the excessive biblical literalism and political conservatism of their parents. As they strive with a renewed vigor to imitate Jesus' stand with the oppressed and downtrodden, they want to decide for themselves which party is being oppressed in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

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

Of Polling and Documentaries

In October 2010, the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life conducted a major survey of evangelical leaders attending the Third Lausanne Congress of World Evangelization in Cape Town, South Africa. When asked with which side of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict they sympathized, these leaders answered as follows:

All Evangelicals (Global)

Sympathize With Israelâ€™34%
Sympathize with the Palestiniansâ€™11%
Sympathize with Both Equallyâ€™39%

American Evangelicals

Sympathize with Israelâ€™30%
Sympathize with the Palestiniansâ€™13%
Sympathize with Both Sides Equallyâ€™49%

The survey contained two bombshells. It showed that only a minority of those evangelicals polled sympathized primarily with Israel. And it demonstrated that American evangelical leaders were actually less inclined to support Israel than evangelical leaders in general.

These figures may mean that evangelical support for Israel was never as universal as was commonly believed. But they may also demonstrate that years of grassroots efforts by Israel's critics were beginning to bear fruit even before their recent intensification.

The year 2010 was one of dramatic escalation in the efforts to drive a wedge between American evangelicals and Israel using the medium of film. In the span of that one year, no less than three major documentaries were released attacking Christian support for Israel. These were hardly the first anti-Israel movies to be produced. What made these films special was that they were focused on discrediting Christian support for Israel. While First Run Features' *Waiting for Armageddon* was produced and directed by a team of secular documentarians, two other filmsâ€™*With God on Our Side* (Rooftop Productions, 2010) and *Little Town of Bethlehem* (EthnoGraphic Media, 2010)â€™were made by Christians specifically for Christians. *With God on Our Side* was produced by Porter Speakman, a former Youth with a Mission (YWAM) activist while *Little Town of Bethlehem* was funded and produced by Mart Green, chairman of the board of trustees of Oral Roberts University and heir to the Hobby Lobby arts and crafts stores fortune.

These two Christian-made films are masterpieces of deception. They feature compelling protagonists wandering earnestly through a Middle Eastern landscape in which all Arab violence, aggression, and rejectionism have been magically erased. Thus the Israeli security measures they encounter along the wayâ€™from the security fence to Israel's ongoing presence in the West Bankâ€™are experienced as baffling persecutions, which any decent person would condemn.

More recently, in November 2013, another anti-Israel documentaryâ€™*The Stones Cry Out*â€™was released. Like its 2010 predecessors, this documentary specifically tailors its anti-Israel message to a Christian audience. The film's website lauds: "All too often, media coverage of the conflict in Palestine has framed it as a fight between Muslims and Jews." The not-too-subtle goal of *The Stones Cry Out* is to reframe the conflict as a fight between Christians and Jews.

The Stones Cry Out begins with the story of Kfar Biram, a Christian Arab village on Israel's border with Lebanon. Israel expelled the village's residents in 1948 in order to, in the words of the film's website, "make way for settlers in the newly created state of Israel." The film then moves on to "the expropriation of the West Bank in 1967" and the plight of modern Bethlehem, which is "hemmed in by the wall." As such language repeatedly makes clear, the filmmakers did not craft a nuanced critique of Israeli policies. They produced instead a modern passion play.

In an interview about the film, Bethlehem pastor Mitri Raheb summarizes the changes taking place in the American evangelical world:

It's not a hopeless case. The first time I went to the States in 1991, most of the people I met knew nothing about Palestine. That has changed a lot. I see among the evangelical Christian community more openness towards the Palestinians.

Raheb is right about the openness. And this could be a good thing if it leads to an honest examination of the issue. Unfortunately, Raheb and his colleagues are exploiting this openness by telling a one-sided narrative of Jewish persecution o

f Christians that may sow the seeds of future hate.

Of Campuses and Conferences

The effort to delegitimize Israel on America's college campuses has quickly progressed from news item to cliché. The annual Israel apartheid weeks and the repeated divestment campaigns targeting everything from university pension funds to cafeteria humus have become all too familiar. But what many observers do not realize is that the effort to demonize Israel is also being waged on America's Christian campuses.

Bethlehem Bible College in the West Bank has been a leading source of anti-Israel Christian narrative. Its "Christ at the Checkpoint" conference uses a photo of the Israeli security fence, which invokes the increasingly popular idea that Jesus was a Palestinian who would be suffering under Israeli occupation today much as he suffered under Roman occupation millennia ago.

Perhaps the most troubling example comes from Wheaton College in Illinois, commonly referred to as the "evangelical Harvard." Some of the most prominent church leaders in America have graduated from Wheaton, including the Rev. Billy Graham, Sen. Dan Coats (Republican, Indiana), and George W. Bush's former speechwriter Michael Gerson.

Wheaton is also the home of Gary Burge, one of America's most prominent anti-Israel evangelicals. Burge travels the country and the world accusing the Jewish state of the worst of crimes and engaging in a mockery of Judaism that borders on anti-Semitism. When Christians United for Israel (CUFI) announced plans to hold an event at Wheaton in January 2009, Burge went on the offensive. CUFI's student members came under such intense pressure that they moved their event off-campus: There would be no pro-Israel event at the evangelical Harvard.

Another of America's leading Christian schools, Oral Roberts University (ORU), has deep conservative Christian roots. Oral Roberts himself was a Pentecostal televangelist and a strong friend of Israel. Some of the leading preachers in America graduated from ORU, and its board of trustees has included pro-Israel Christians such as pastors John Hagee and Kenneth Copeland and Bishop Keith Butler.

But things may be changing at ORU. The current chair of ORU's board of trustees is the aforementioned Mart Green. He is reported to have "saved" ORU with a \$70 million cash infusion. In January 2013, ORU's board of trustees elected Billy Wilson as the university's new president; a few months later, Wilson was named as a speaker for 2014 at the leading anti-Israel Christian conference, "Christ at the Checkpoint."

Bethel University in Minnesota provides a further example. While this school lacks the national reputation of Wheaton or ORU, it is likely more representative of the direction that America's Christian colleges are taking. Bethel's leaders are neither leading nor funding the effort to delegitimize Israel but are merely the products thereof. Like many Christian schools, Bethel emphasizes racial reconciliation and cultural openness and has accordingly developed numerous opportunities for its students to study abroad. In 2010, Bethel's president Jay Barnes and his wife Barb visited Israel and the Palestinian Authority to explore the prospect of building a study abroad program there. During the trip, they visited Bethlehem and were exposed to the standard Christian anti-Israel narrative. Like so many of her fellow travelers, Barb Barnes apparently bought into this one-sided presentation. Shortly after her return, Barnes posted a poem on the university's website that summarized the leading anti-Israel themes of these tours:

Incredible conflict exists in the land of Jesus' birth/ I believe God mourns.

The wall is a constant reminder of many lost freedoms/ I believe God mourns.

For more than 60 years, people have lived in poverty in refugee camps/ I believe God mourns.

Apartheid has become a way of life/ I believe God mourns.

Extreme disproportional distribution of resources, such as water, exists/ I believe God mourns.

Hundreds of villages have been demolished to make room for settlements/ I believe God mourns.

Human rights violations occur daily/ I believe God mourns.

The Christian population is declining as many are leaving to avoid persecution/ I believe God mourns.

The Barnes visit did not motivate further study ultimately yielding a more nuanced understanding. In October 2012, President Barnes hosted a "Hope for the Holy Land" evening at Bethel, a one-sided, blame-Israel speaking tour featuring Sami Awad, Lynn Hybels, and other long-standing Christian critics of Israel.

One need not be a student to be exposed to this anti-Israel narrative. In recent years, the number of Christian conferences focusing entirely or partially on criticizing Israel has grown along with the attendance at these conferences.

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

In 2010, the conference brought 250 Christian leaders and activists to Bethlehem; in 2012, that number was more than 600 including such mainstream evangelical leaders as mega-church pastor Joel Hunter and Lynne Hybels, wife of mega-church pastor Bill Hybels, who has since become a key evangelical critic of Israel.

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

Empowered21, the preeminent gathering of Pentecostal/Charismatic Christians, provides a troubling example of this trend. Its leadership is a who's who of Pentecostal and Charismatic luminaries from around the world, including many longstanding friends of Israel. However, the leading critic of Israel among these leaders, Mart Green, appears to be playing an outsized role in setting the conference's agenda: Its 2012 conference in Virginia included a talk by Sami Awad and a screening of Green's film, *Little Town of Bethlehem*.

Empowered21 has announced that it will hold its 2015 global congress in Jerusalem. Given the conference's connections to Sami Awad and Mart Green, there is some skepticism whether the choice of location was intended as a sign of solidarity with the Jewish state. Only time will tell if the organization's leadership will permit the conference to become a one-sided Israel bashing fest.

Troubling developments are also taking place at the annual Catalyst conference. First launched in 1999, Catalyst has quickly grown into the largest gathering of young evangelical leaders in America with more than 100,000 leaders having made the annual trek to Atlanta to participate in this conference since its inception. Additional Catalyst events are now being held in Florida, Texas, and California.

In the past, Catalyst studiously avoided discussions of the Arab-Israeli conflict. In 2012, however, Lynne Hybels was invited to address "Peacemaking in Israel/Palestine." No one was asked to provide a pro-Israel perspective. As journalist Jim Fletcher observed after attending Catalyst 2012:

In dozens of random conversations, I noted that Millennials expressed solidarity with the Palestinians and annoyance with Israel. This is a seismic shift in the American church and a serious threat to Israel's one traditional area of support.

In addition to speaking at major conferences, anti-Israel speakers such as Burge, Awad, Hybels, and Steven Sizer tour churches across the country. The flyer for a September 2013 evening with Burge provides a sense of the climate at these events. Entitled "Christian Zionism: A Problem with a Solution," the flyer includes a string of three lies that form the core of the new Christian anti-Zionism:

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

Trips to "Israel/Palestine"

A growing number of organizations are bringing an increasing number of Christian leaders, influencers, and students to visit "Israel/Palestine." These trips are well marketed and seek out mainstream evangelicals by claiming to be both pro-

sraeli and pro-Palestinian—or simply "pro-people"—but never anti-Israel. Yet these trips tend to focus on Palestinian suffering and to blame Israel alone for this suffering.

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

Yet these tours are carefully calibrated to teach their participants that Israeli policy is the source of Israeli and Arab suffering and the only real barrier to peace. The Palestinian speakers include extreme critics of Israel such as Mitri Raheb and Archbishop Elias Chacour (both featured prominently in *The Stones Cry Out*). The Israeli speakers, while not as extreme, are stalwarts of the far Left who likewise blame Israel for the region's problems. A brief visit with an Israeli right-winger—usually a settler—does more to confirm this one-sided narrative than challenge it. Telos organizes approximately fifteen of these trips every year.

Another recent arrival on the scene is the Global Immersion Project. Founded in 2011, the project seeks to "cultivate everyday peacemakers through immersion in global conflict." But thus far, the only conflict they study is that between Israel and the Palestinians, and the only trips they make are to "Israel/Palestine." In 2014, they have two "learning labs" scheduled in the Holy Land.

These newcomers have joined an old stalwart of the movement, the Holy Land Trust. Founded in 1998 by Palestinian Christian activist Sami Awad, the organization claims to promote nonviolent solutions to the conflict with Israel. However, Awad has stated quite clearly on his blog that nonviolence is "not a substitute for the armed struggle. This is not a method for normalization with the occupation. Our goal is to revive the popular resistance until every person is involved in dismantling the occupation." The Holy Land Trust promotes a strongly biased version of history in which Israel alone is to blame for the absence of peace. It shares this message to those who visit on their various service projects, olive harvesting initiative, and "Palestine Summer Encounter."

The Generational Divide

Despite these troubling inroads, it is unlikely that an older generation of evangelicals raised to support Israel will abandon it en masse. The greater threat comes from the younger generation that never developed such bonds and seems quite eager to question them. There is a real danger that these films, conferences, and campus attacks will combine to create a generational shift in attitudes toward Israel.

Many rising young evangelical stars are bonding with Palestinians on their trips to the Holy Land. Questioning support for Israel and expressing sympathy with the Palestinians is fast becoming a hallmark of this group. They are dedicated to selling Christianity to a skeptical, younger generation by marketing it as cool, compassionate, and less overtly political. Most of the evangelicals who dominated Christian political activism for the past few decades—men such as Jerry Falwell II, Pat Robertson, and Francis Schaeffer—were vocal supporters of Israel. While their children may share this perspective, they tend to talk about it less. In fact, Schaeffer's son Frank has become a vocal critic of "the largely unchallenged influence of Christian Zionism."

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

This generational divide is best highlighted by the example of Christian publisher Steven Strang and his son Cameron. Steven Strang publishes *Charisma*, a leading evangelical monthly with a consistently pro-Israel perspective. He has also published works by many prominent Christian authors, including pro-Israel stalwart John Hagee. Strang was, until recently, regional director for Christians United for Israel. His son Cameron publishes *Relevant*, a highly popular magazine among millennial evangelicals, claiming to "reach about 2,300,000 twenty- and thirty something Christians a month" through its print and online publications.

Less than a decade ago, *Relevant* was as pro-Israel as *Charisma*. In December 2005, for example, it published a powerful, pro-Israel piece called "Israel: Why You Should Care." In 2006, *Relevant* interviewed the author of this article for its w

weekly podcast, and the interview could not have been friendlier.

Then Lynne Hybels took Cameron Strang to visit Israel and the Palestinian territories, and everything changed. During Israel's 2008-09 Operation Cast Lead in Gaza, Relevant published an article titled, "Is Israel Always Right?" in which the author dispensed with any balanced analysis of urban counterterror operations to conclude: "When I examine Israel's choices like I would that of any other nation, I find myself appalled that they're not doing more to protect the innocents."

When Israel confronted Hamas again in November 2012, Relevant published an article titled, "How Should Christians Respond to the Middle East Crisis" by Jon Huckins, a co-founder of the Global Immersion Project. The article was an extended exercise in moral relativism, noting the suffering on each side without attributing blame. Huckins never once criticized Hamas, but he did take a thinly veiled swipe at Christian Zionists by blasting the "hateful stereotyping, racism, and violent response being disseminated by Christians."

Relevant's May/June 2012 cover featured Donald Miller, author of the New York Times bestseller *Blue Like Jazz* (2003), which was made into a 2012 movie. In August 2008, Miller delivered the first night's closing prayer at the Democratic National Convention. He is considered a rising star among America's 20-something evangelicals who comprise many of his 189,000 Twitter followers. Miller visited Israel and the Palestinian territories with Strang and has since embraced the anti-Israel narrative. On November 12, 2012, Miller blogged "The Painful Truth about the Situation in Israel." Here he repeated a number of outrageous lies about Israel he likely heard during his visit:

In September a group of journalists and I visited Israel and stood on a hill overlooking the wall separating Israel from Gaza. From our viewpoint, we could see the controversial territory where 1.6 million Palestinians have been walled in and secluded from the outside world. They are, essentially, imprisoned.

The walls erected around the West Bank and Gaza separate families from families. Many mothers will not see their children again. Millions will never return to the homes their families had occupied for hundreds of years. Thousands of Palestinian students at American universities will never see their families again.

Israel gives most Palestinians fresh water once each week. In Gaza, Israel also rations their food, allowing only so many calories per human being.

The Response

Freeze the frame today, and the pro-Israel side is still far ahead in the battle for the hearts and minds of America's evangelicals. Just one pro-Israel organization, Christians United for Israel, has over 1.6 million members, chapters on more than 120 college and university campuses, and sponsors thirty-five pro-Israel events across the country every month. Anti-Israel Christians do not come close to matching CUI's size, activity, or influence.

But the long-term trends are now coming into sufficient focus to discern a challenge. Anti-Israel Christians are on a roll. While small in number, these activists seem to have extensive funds. They are taking far more Christian leaders and influencers to Israel and the Palestinian Authority than the pro-Israel side. Through these newly-minted allies, they are reaching an ever expanding network of evangelicals in the United States.

The threat is not that these activists will turn the majority of American evangelicals into Israel haters. They do not have to. The real danger is that they will teach their fellow evangelicals a moral relativism that will neutralize them. The day that Israel is seen as the moral equivalent of Hamas is the day that the evangelical community—and by extension the political leaders it helps elect—will cease providing the Jewish state any meaningful support.

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

David Brog, executive director of Christians United for Israel, is the author of *In Defense of Faith: The Judeo-Christian Idea and the Struggle for Humanity* (Encounter, 2010).

Re: The End of Evangelical Support for Israel? - posted by TMK (), on: 2015/11/4 15:50

Carmine-

In your view, what does "supporting Israel" entail, as a practical matter?

Re: , on: 2015/11/4 16:54

Todd

On a personal level the best support is to pray for the Jewish nation/people to receive their Messiah, Jesus Christ.

There is much more but it all begins with prayer.

I have witnessed to Jewish people and one time a Doctor from Sick Kids Hospital in Toronto prayed with me to receive Jesus as her Lord and Saviour.

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2015/11/4 20:15

I work and have worked with Jewish people that I have considered friends. All wonderful people. But sadly there is what I call a low level of viciousness toward Christianity- even though none of them are really "religious" Jews (I don't think they regularly go to synagogue). Art Katz talks about this and I have seen it first hand so I certainly don't push. I agree that prayer is where it all begins.

"but.....", on: 2015/11/5 2:34

"sadly there is what I call a low level of viciousness toward Christianity."

Todd, I don't ask this question with any rancor, but what has "Christianity" done as a whole to make the Jewish people, "envious of so great a salvation"?

then survey BACK thru 1700 years of "church" history, and you might arrive at the sad answer.

I would pin up the link to the Wikipedia entry "Christianity and anti-Semitism", but since Greg Gordon cast an EDICT that no one pin up links to anything, in deference to the fact that this is his cyber property, I will obey.

Carmine, I have always, quietly, been highly suspect of north American "evangelical support" of Israel, as I have been equally suspect of US governmental/military "support" of Israel, as the first real military support of Israel was in October 1972, after, against all "odds", and vastly outnumbered and outgunned, the IDF turned back the arab assault that started on Yom Kippur.

In fact, IDF intelligence KNEW the arabs intent for blood, a week before, but Golda had to make a wrenching decision, in that, to pre-empt this vile horde, that the world body would not countenance another pre-emptive IDF strike 6 years after the IDF smashed a gathering, blood thirsty arab assault, like they had, in the miraculous "6 Day War", wherein the IAF, utterly destroyed the ENTIRE arab air forces (Eygpt/Syrian) in 6-8 hours, so she instructed the IDF leadership, that they had to absorb the body blow, hold and then rally forth, which they did, absorbing terrible casualties.

but in fighting so furiously, stocks of ammunition depleted, armor and aircraft lost, she made THE CALL to the notoriously anti-Semitic Dick Nixon (oh and he was, I could link testimony from his intimates, but..), and told him, that unless America resupplied Israel immediately, she had waiting, on the tarmac, pilots in the cockpits of thirteen F-4 Phantoms, with "special" weapons with targeting packages to totally destroy the arab forces and their capitols, and conveyed this was no empty threat.

they said the ensuing American airlift from NATO stocks was so immense, you could walk from wing to wing on the transports streaming into Israel.

After the war, in 1972, NO arab front line state has conducted a nation state to nation state war against Israel, excepting in 1982, when Syria attempted an air assault against the IAF, and much to old man Assad's dismay, 82 of his fighter jets were downed in air to air combat, against zero losses for the Israeli Air Force.....and of course, God was not with Israel that day...huh?

and on this day, 2015, the world should be very careful in threatening the world's smallest superpower with destruction, for as Jesus foretold, "Everyone shall be salted with fire".....especially the hell bound Iranian imams in Qom, who are building nuclear weaponry, which they have made abundantly clear, what they intend to do with.

Yahweh's Arm has not grown short. the world shall see, the storm is upon us all.

Jeremiah 31 23-40 , on: 2015/11/5 9:27

Neil , this is Israel's God's ordained future and what can prevent the Lord from his purposes?

Will replacement theology Stop God's plan?

Will the scripture twisters stop the almighty?

Will the religious and secular who hate God stop his plan for Israel(and us)?

23 Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: "They shall again use this speech in the land of Judah and in its cities, when I bring back their captivity: "The Lord bless you, O home of justice, and mountain of holiness!"

24 And there shall dwell in Judah itself, and in all its cities together, farmers and those going out with flocks.

25 For I have satiated the weary soul, and I have replenished every sorrowful soul."

26 After this I awoke and looked around, and my sleep was sweet to me.

27 "Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, that I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man and the seed of beast.

28 And it shall come to pass, that as I have watched over them to pluck up, to break down, to throw down, to destroy, and to afflict, so I will watch over them to build and to plant, says the Lord.

29 In those days they shall say no more:

"The fathers have eaten sour grapes,

And the children's teeth are set on edge."

30 But every one shall die for his own iniquity; every man who eats the sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge.

A New Covenant

31 "Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah"

32 not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the Lord.

33 But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

34 No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, "Know the Lord," for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

35 Thus says the Lord,

Who gives the sun for a light by day,

The ordinances of the moon and the stars for a light by night,

Who disturbs the sea,

And its waves roar

(The Lord of hosts is His name):

36 "If those ordinances depart

From before Me, says the Lord,

Then the seed of Israel shall also cease

From being a nation before Me forever."

37 Thus says the Lord:

"If heaven above can be measured,

And the foundations of the earth searched out beneath,

I will also cast off all the seed of Israel

For all that they have done, says the Lord.

38 "Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, that the city shall be built for the Lord from the Tower of Hananel to the Corner Gate. 39 The surveyor's line shall again extend straight forward over the hill Gareb; then it shall turn toward Goath. 40 And the whole valley of the dead bodies and of the ashes, and all the fields as far as the Brook Kidron, to the corner of the Horse Gate toward the east, shall be holy to the Lord. It shall not be plucked up or thrown down anymore forever."