Prophets Who Prophesy Lies In My Name (Jeremiah 23:25)

Christian Palestinianism and the Anti-Israel Crusade

Paul Wilkinson
The Rise of Christian Palestinianism
Brief Timeline

• 1948  World Council of Churches (Ecumenical, Inter-Faith, pro-Palestinian)
• 1956  Near East Christian Council (1962 – Near East Council of Churches)
• 1971  Gustavo Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation*
• 1974  Middle East Council of Churches
• 1979  U.S. “La Grange Declaration” against C.Z.
• 1982  World Vision reverses pro-Israel policy
• 1985  Donald Wagner and Ray Bakke “listening tour” of Middle East
1986 Evangelicals for Middle East Understanding
1987 First *Intifada* (formation of Hamas)
1989 Naim Ateek, *Justice and Only Justice: A Palestinian Theology of Liberation*
1990 First International Symposium on Palestinian Liberation Theology (Tantur)
1994 *Sabeel* - Palestinian Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center, Jerusalem
Naim Ateek
Chief Architect of Christian Palestinianism
“Palestinian liberation theology focuses on the humanity of Jesus of Nazareth, who was also a Palestinian living under an occupation.”

(Naim Ateek, A Palestinian Christian Cry for Reconciliation, p.11.)
“Here in Palestine Jesus is again walking the via dolorosa. Jesus is the powerless Palestinian humiliated at a checkpoint, the woman trying to get through to the hospital for treatment, the young man whose dignity is trampled, the young student who cannot get to the university to study, the unemployed father who needs to find bread to feed his family ...”
“In this season of Lent, it seems to many of us that Jesus is on the cross again with thousands of crucified Palestinians around him. It only takes people of insight to see the hundreds of thousands of crosses throughout the land, Palestinian men, women, and children being crucified. Palestine has become one huge Golgotha. The Israeli government crucifixion system is operating daily. Palestine has become the place of the skull.”
Purpose Statement

“Sabeel strives to develop a spirituality based on love, justice, peace, non-violence, liberation and reconciliation for the different national and faith communities”

- Cornerstone magazine (56 issues)
- International Conferences (7)
- International Friends of Sabeel (7)
  - USA, Canada, UK, Ireland, Netherlands, Oceana, Scandinavia
Christian Zionism is “the worst anti-Semitism one can imagine,” its goal being to “bring the Jewish people to Israel in order to be annihilated or converted to the Christian Faith.”

(Naim Ateek)
Inter-Faith
Stephen Sizer
Champion of Christian Palestinianism

“The British author said that the Zionists have distorted remarks by President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad about the Holocaust”
(IRNA web-site, 10/22/07).
Profile

• Vicar of Christ Church, Virginia Water, England (member church of the Willow Creek Association and the Evangelical Alliance)

• Founding member of the Institute for the Study of Christian Zionism (www.christianzionism.org)

• Co-author of the Jerusalem Declaration on Christian Zionism, 2006

• Patron of Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions

• Photographer for the Palestine News Network

• Contributor to the Friends of Al-Aqsa journal
“Sizer’s Christian Zionism dramatically demonstrates how a politicized religious movement with a dubious pedigree is a prescription for disaster. From caricaturing Arabs to catalyzing Armageddon, Christian Zionist beliefs and behaviors are the antithesis of biblical Christianity.”

(Hank Hanegraaff)
CHRISTIAN ZIONISM
Road-map to Armageddon?

- Ultra-Literal Biblical Hermeneutic
- The Jews remain God’s Chosen People
- The Jews are restored to Eretz Israel
- Jerusalem the eternal Jewish capital
- The Jewish Temple must be rebuilt
- Antipathy toward Arabs and Islam

Iran, 2007
Iran, 2007
Libya, 2008
Donald Wagner

- Director of the Center for Middle Eastern Studies, North Park University, Chicago
- Founding member of the Institute for the Study of Christian Zionism
- Former national director of the Palestinian Human Rights Campaign

Gary Burge

- Prof. of New Testament, Wheaton College
- Advisory Board of Holy Land Christian Ecumenical Foundation (HCEF)
- Board of Evangelicals for Middle East Understanding (EMEU)
“Herod and Pilate became friends with each other that very day, for before this they had been at enmity with each other” (Luke 23:12).
“To declare the ideology of Christian Zionism and the extreme form of dispensationalism that undergirds it to be a distortion of the biblical message noting the impediment it represents to achieving a just peace in Israel/Palestine.”

(Reformed Church of America General Synod, 2004)
Despising the Holocaust
Accusations

• “the Holocaust guilt-card”
  (Charles P. Lutz, Christians and a Land Called Holy, 2006).

• “the awful authority of the Holocaust”
  (Kenneth Cragg, This Year in Jerusalem, 1982).

• Palestinians are “the last victims of the Holocaust”
  (Marc H. Ellis, Holy Land Hollow Jubilee, 1999).

• “On the theoretical as well as on the practical level, the Nazis and the Zionists saw eye to eye”
  (Regina Sharif, Non-Jewish Zionism, 1983).
The Holocaust is “an indispensable ideological weapon ... for deflecting criticism of Israel” (pp.3, 30).
“Norman Finkelstein has my deepest admiration for the stand he is taking.”

(Stephen Sizer, www.stephensizer.com)
Palestinianist Hermeneutic

The Veneer of Biblical Respectability
We have been taught for centuries that the Jews are the Chosen People.
We do not believe anymore that they are the Chosen People of God, since now we have a new understanding of that Choseness.”
Blood Brothers “touched the hearts and opened the minds of thousands of evangelicals concerning Christians in the Holy Land” (Donald Wagner).
The New Testament writers “ceased to look forward to a literal fulfilment of Old Testament prophecies of a return to the land and a restored Jewish state. The one and only fulfilment of all the promises and prophecies was already there before their eyes in the person of Jesus.”
“When confronted with a difficult passage in the Bible ... one needs to ask such simple questions as: Is the way I am hearing this the way I have come to know God in Christ? Does this fit the picture I have of God that Jesus has revealed to me? ... If it does, then that passage is valid and authoritative. If not, then I cannot accept its validity or authority.”
“For me, the writer of Jonah appears to be the first Palestinian liberation theologian.”

“In my understanding, the inclusive text of Jonah is a standard against which Old Testament theology must be measured.”

(Naim Ateek)
“Strangers shall stand and tend your flocks ... you shall eat the wealth of the nations” (Isaiah 61:5,6).

“This exclusivist text is unacceptable today ... It must be de-Zionized”

Samson was “the first suicide bomber”
“Once in a while a book comes along that reshapes the theological landscape. This is such a book and it is destined to become a defining text on the biblical theology of the land.”

(Stephen Sizer)
Acts 1:6-8

“Jesus does not envision a restoration of Israel per se but instead sees himself as embracing the drama of Jerusalem within his own life ... In some manner, the initial restoration of Israel has already begun inasmuch as Christ, the new Temple, the New Israel, has been resurrected.”
Galatians 6:16

“This is perhaps the apostle’s most stark example of universalizing the new identity of the people of God. The apostle is **redrawing** the definitions for self-identity ... And with this **redefinition** comes a **realignment** of the privileges that come with all identities.”
Bishop N.T. Wright
“The American obsession with the second coming of Jesus — especially with distorted interpretations of it — continues unabated. Seen from my side of the Atlantic, the phenomenal success of the *Left Behind* books appears puzzling, even bizarre. Few in the U.K. hold the belief on which the popular series of novels is based: that there will be a literal ‘rapture’ in which believers will be snatched up to heaven”

(N.T. Wright, ‘Farewell to the Rapture,’ 2001).
• “Israel’s story has been embodied in one man” (p.402)

• “the whole story of Israel … reached its intended climax with his death [exile] and resurrection [restoration]” (p.366)

• “the church … seems to have taken the place occupied … by (Jewish) ethnic identity” (p.367)
The Lord Jesus was:

- “reconstituting Israel around himself” (p.131)
- “reinterpreting” Israel’s eschatological hope (p.241)
- “reusing Israel’s prophetic heritage, and retelling its story” (p.349)
- “redefining what the kingdom meant” (p.471)
Jesus and the Victory of God (2001)

“The promises to Jerusalem, to Zion, are now transferred to Jesus and his people.”
Propaganda Machine
“For a century and a half, Christian Zionism has insidiously twisted the American republic’s traditional values of faith, hope, and charity into delusion, fear, and war.”

Thanks to “the very old script worked out by John Nelson Darby and his delusional circle.”

Darby was “the person who brought the Armageddon theology to America.”
PEACE OR ARMAGEDDON?
The Unfolding Drama of the Middle East Peace Accord

Anxious for Armageddon

Foreword by Richard C. Halverson

Dan O'Neill & Don Wagner

A Call to Partnership for Middle Eastern and Western Christians

Donald E. Wagner
ON THE ROAD TO ARMAGEDDON
HOW EVANGELICALS BECAME ISRAEL'S BEST FRIEND

VICTORIA CLARK
ALLIES FOR ARMAGEDDON
THE RISE OF CHRISTIAN ZIONISM

TIMOTHY P. WEBER
“Zion’s Christian Perverts might have been a wiser title.”

(Kenneth Cragg, former assistant Anglican bishop of Jerusalem)
“My research has highlighted how the Palestinian Christian community has suffered isolation, discrimination, and persecution akin to ‘ethnic cleansing,’ and a form of apartheid.”

The “root cause of the conflict” is “Israel’s elemental conviction about being God’s chosen people” (Walter Brueggemann)

Israel’s goal is the “ethnic cleansing” of Palestinians

Visit to Sabeel in 2006 “helped open a pathway back to the prophets.”
“They speak visions of their own minds ... I did not send these prophets, yet they have run with their message” (Jeremiah 23:16-21)
Unholy Alliance
BOYCOTT ISRAELI GOODS

Don't Squeeze a Jaffa
Crush the Occupation
PALASTINE
PEACE NOT APARTHEID
JIMMY CARTER
At the Muqata’a’a with Arafat

5th International Sabeel Conference
(Jerusalem, 2004)
“Now, alas, we see *apartheid* in Israel ... The apartheid government was very powerful, but today it no longer exists. Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, Pinochet, Milosevic, and Idi Amin were all powerful, but, in the end, they bit the dust.”
Joshua = “the patron saint of ethnic cleaners”
(5\textsuperscript{th} International Sabeel Conference, 2004)

The God of the Christian Zionist = “the Great Ethnic-Cleanser, a militaristic and xenophobic genocidist, who is not sufficiently moral even to conform to the requirements of the Fourth Geneva Convention”

\textit{Cornerstone} (Winter, 2003).

Michael Prior (deceased)
Theological Roots
Plato
Higher meaning
Matter irrelevant
Salvation of soul

Augustine
Church = Kingdom
Jews = Witness People
Amillennialism

Calvin
Augustinian
Covenantal
Supercessionist
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Stephen Sizer, *Christian Zionism: Road-map to Armageddon?,* pp. 262-263
The Goliath Taunt
Sizer’s book has “thrown down the gauntlet in a way that demands a response from those who support the state of Israel for theological reasons.”
“The case against Christian Zionists has been supported by new scholarship, as, for example, in the writings of N.T. Wright ... Can work of this quality be matched by Christian Zionists, or are they simply, dare I say, repeating the same old arguments that have been put forward in the past? (Colin Chapman)
“I would like to express my deep appreciation for the insights I garnered through such intellectuals as N.T. Wright, Gary Burge, Stephen Sizer, Colin Chapman ...”
“Because of this book, not surprisingly, the ‘Pre-Tribs’ are not a happy bunch … A great book to detox your *Left Behind* friends. I love Hank’s style and we’ve made some great radio programmes together” 

(Stephen Sizer)
On the Campaign Trail
"We believe there is a better way, a way of justice, peace and love for Jews and Palestinians. One that is inclusive, not exclusive. That is the heart of God."
USA 2010

- Wheaton College, IL
- Harvard, MA
- Princeton, NJ
- Biola University, CA
- California Baptist University
- Pepperdine University, CA
- Point Loma Nazarene University, CA
- North Carolina State University
Porter Speakman and Stephen Sizer

Oct. 20th 2010
06:00pm - 11:00pm
“Finally! A look at what Christian Zionism teaches and more importantly, the real implications it has on the people of the Middle East.”

(Brian McLaren)
“I don’t know of anything quite like it – and I would have to say the church desperately needs it.”

(Tony Campolo)
UK 2010

- Nazarene Theological College, Manchester
- Holyrood – Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh
- Stormont – Northern Ireland Assembly, Belfast
- Trinity College, Dublin
- Cambridge University
Who Hosted This Private Screening?
Our Response?
“Robert Murray McCheyne’s Church hosts seminar on Christian Zionism”

(www.stephensizer.com)
McCheyne was “one of my spiritual heroes”  
(Stephen Sizer)
“We stood at the turning point of the road where Jesus came near and beheld the city and wept over it. And if we had had more of the mind that was in Jesus, I think we should have wept also.”
‘How Lovely Is Your Dwelling Place’

How lovely is Your dwelling place
O LORD of Hosts.
My soul longs and faints
For the courts of the LORD.
Where the sparrow finds a home
And the swallow her nest,
By Your altars, O LORD of Hosts,
I will lie down to rest.
Blessed is he who dwells
In the House of the LORD (Men)
In the House of the LORD (Women)
Forever singing praise
To the LORD God of Hosts.
Blessed is he who dwells
In Your shelter O LORD (Men)
In Your shelter O LORD (Women)
He whose trust and strength
Is in the LORD God of Hosts.
A day in Your courts, O LORD
Is better than a thousand elsewhere.
I would rather be a doorkeeper
In Your House of Prayer.
Nothing will the LORD withhold
From those whose pathways are straight.
He will honour and favour him
Who waits at His gate.
Chorus:

Blessed is he who dwells
In the House of the LORD (Men)
In the House of the LORD (Women)
Forever singing praise
To the LORD God of Hosts.
Blessed is he who dwells
In Your shelter O L ORD (Men)
In Your shelter O L ORD (Women)
He whose trust and strength
Is in the L ORD God of Hosts.
Who may ascend the Hill of the LORD?
Who shall stand in His Holy Place?
He who has clean hands and heart,
In whose soul there is no disgrace.
Those who seek the face of the LORD,
Serving Him by day and by night,
Shall receive a blessing from God;
A chosen people in the LORD’s sight.
Chorus:

Blessed is he who dwells
In the House of the LORD (Men)
In the House of the LORD (Women)
Forever singing praise
To the LORD God of Hosts.
Blessed is he who dwells
In Your shelter O LORD (Men)
In Your shelter O LORD (Women)
He whose trust and strength
Is in the LORD God of Hosts.

Based on Psalms 84 & 24
Words & Music by Andrew D. Robinson
© Andrew D. Robinson (July 2008)
Musical arrangement by Graham Moir
Copies of the CD and musical score, and the ‘Sabeel Report’ (2004), are available free of charge from:

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