

Christians Turning Away from Supporting Israel

As a trend in the past decade, Christians have been turning away from supporting Israel. In past centuries the Roman Catholic Church has shown a lot of anti-Semitism. Also early Protestants such as Martin Luther's treatise "Of the Jews and their Lies" in 1543 are very anti-Semitic and this general attitude has arguably led to acceptance of Jewish persecution in Germany prior to WWII. After WWII, there has been a large Christian support for the Jews and the state of Israel, but things seem to be changing.

It's easy to point out actions of prominent Christian leaders regarding Israel. Some examples include:

1. Evangelicals that support the pro-Palestinian narrative at the Christ at the Checkpoint conference ¹.
2. The Presbyterian churches rejection of Christian Zionism in 2011. ²
3. The upcoming resolution of the Assemblies of God denomination regarding Israel. ³

Evangelical leaders' actions and quotes regarding Israel may not always reflect their membership, so we need to look at the largest growing trend in Western Christianity which is the "dones", those abandoning the denominational church for meeting in home groups and studies. The reasons why this is a growing trend is a subject for another time, but it's safe to say that church attendance is in decline. ⁴ This can be observed on a personal level with a general backlash and distrust towards organized churches, simply ask friends and family how they feel about the organized church. Once one leaves the organized church, doesn't necessarily mean they've left their faith as there is a growing industry of internet Bible scholars.

Dr. Michael Heiser, the Scholar in Residence for Logos Bible Software observes that not only are Christians leaving denominational churches, but also intellectually checking out if they remain in attendance. He refers to this as Christian Middle Earth (CME).

"It's a useful metaphor for describing the wacky world of the internet, the "middle realm" that exists between the scholarly realm of the ivory tower and the normal realm of the local church. CME is home to the popular prophecy "experts," "charismania" (signs and wonders movement; New Apostolic Reformation, Word of Faith / prosperity gospel peddlers), pseudo-archaeology, and all manner of speculative conspiratorial researchers. "⁵

A way to observe how Christians view Israel is on social media. I find Facebook fascinating and at the same time infuriating. It can take a fair amount of self-control to not argue with strangers all evening long. Facebook is also a good map to CME as there are pages and groups for Christian Middle Earther's to find community.

Since there are a great many internet scholars, podcasters and personalities that have a negative view of Israel, I'll only post a couple.

Rob Skiba (27,000 followers on Facebook), an author, blogger and youtuber has promoted a negative view of Israel and Zionism over the past few years for "New World Order" reasoning among other things. While he's not associated with any of the Bible prophecy conferences any longer, he does have a voice to those that want to take the Torah more seriously.

Skiba states:

"... in my opinion. The fact that the current "Israel" fits none of the above, and that it exists under the "star of Remphan" spoken of (with contempt) by Stephen in Acts 7:43 tells me this is a **counterfeit** - and therefore no prophetic, eschatological "time-piece" is accurate if they are basing anything on 1948 (or even 1967)." ⁶

True Biblical Christians, a page with a following of over 87,000 that posts a lot of Bible verses and quotes also states of Israel:

"Now, we at True Biblical Christians, do not support either side of this conflict. As the Israeli government demand you to renounce Jesus Christ in order to gain an Israeli citizenship, and as mentioned above is our reasoning to have no allegiance to the Palestinians either...

Ironically, our inability to take a side in this issue, makes us resented by both Zionists and Palestinian supporters."⁷

These are only 2 examples of a larger trend on social media among Christians that has a general negative view of Israel and the Jews and this is concerning as social media has more influence among the younger Christians than those rooted in their faith.

As believers, we need to listen to what Paul states of the Jews in Romans 11:18

" then don't boast as if you were better than the branches! However, if you do boast, remember that you are not supporting the root, the root is supporting you."

For those that are so inclined, we can promote the truth on social media in a thoughtful, articulate way as being argumentative is not productive.

1. "May 28th - June 1st 2018." *Christ at the Checkpoint 2018 | JESUS CHRIST AT THE CENTER*. N.p., n.d. Web. 06 Aug. 2017. <<http://christatthecheckpoint.bethbc.edu/>>.
2. "The PCC and Israel-Palestine." *The Presbyterian Church in Canada*. N.p., n.d. Web. 06 Aug. 2017. <<http://presbyterian.ca/justice/middle-east/>>.
3. "Commentary: Assembly of God (AOG) General Council to Vote on Resolution Against Israel -." RSS. N.p., 01 Aug. 2017. Web. 06 Aug. 2017. <<http://www.lighthousestrailsresearch.com/blog/?p=23332>>.

4. Shattuck, Kelly. "7 Startling Facts: An Up Close Look at Church Attendance in America • ChurchLeaders.com." *ChurchLeaders.com*. N.p., 30 Dec. 2015. Web. 06 Aug. 2017. <<http://churchleaders.com/pastors/pastor-articles/139575-7-startling-facts-an-up-close-look-at-church-attendance-in-america.html>>.
5. "About." *Dr. Michael Heiser*. N.p., n.d. Web. 07 Aug. 2017. <<http://drmsH.com/about/>>.
6. Skiba, Rob. "Did Israel Really Become a Nation in 1948?" *Facebook*. N.p., n.d. Web. 07 Aug. 2017. <<https://www.facebook.com/notes/rob-skiba/did-israel-really-become-a-nation-in-1948/10151898791892506/>>.
7. True Biblical Christians. "True Biblical Christians." *DO YOU BUY THE PROPAGANDA*. N.p., n.d. Web. 07 Aug. 2017. <https://www.facebook.com/pg/TrueBiblicalChristians2/posts/?ref=page_internal>.