

Chapter 13

Christian Zionism is Heresy

We will establish that Christian Zionism represents a heretical view from a Christian, theological perspective in two parts. First, we will examine the history of Christian Zionism, including the chronology, the most influential of the Christian scholars and theologians in regards to the movement, and the external forces influencing the origin and evolution of the movement. With a firm understanding of where, when, why, how, and through whom the Christian Zionism movement has developed, we will use Biblical scripture and Christian theological scholarship to show that this is not a simple matter of Christian Zionism not being supported by scripture or by legitimate Christian theology, but that Christian Zionism is in explicit opposition to scripture and Christian theology, and one who holds a belief in Zionism in fact believes in something other than and in opposition to the teachings of Christianity.

A Brief History of Christian Zionism

Many are surprised to learn that Christian Zionism predates Jewish Zionism, and although there has been extensive Jewish influence over modern Christian Zionism, Jewish Zionism is largely inspired and informed by Christian Zionism. The earliest records of Zionism entering into “Christian” thought are found in the 1500’s under the ideas identified as Restorationism, that is the restoration of Jewish rule over Palestine and the “re-establishment” of the Kingdom of Israel (Jacob). The first Christian theologian to put forth this idea was _____, and this remained a fringe movement of ideas with explicit rejection by the mainstream of Christian theology until the publishing of the Scofield Annotated Bible in 1909.

The Heresy of Christian Zionism

As we present the scriptural and theological evidence to establish that there is nothing Christian about Zionism and that “Christian Zionism” is in fact an oxymoron, we will leverage both Catholic and Protestant theology, including that of Anglican and other protestant-derivative denominations. Ultimately, we can establish the heretical nature of Christian Zionism from the perspective of virtually any Christian denomination or school of thought. The truth of our claim will be based upon Biblical scripture, and the interpretations of scripture through the lenses of the various schools of thought are included only to illustrate that all of these interpretations support our claims. This is true precisely because our proof is based on scripture and does not rely upon any specialized interpretations of scripture.

Further, we establish this proof upon the assumption that the Bible is accepted as the basis for proof of what is and what is not legitimately “Christian”. We will not offer support or refutation for the idea that the Bible is a reliable source for historic record and/or metaphysical knowledge and wisdom. The purpose of this exercise is to establish that Zionism violates the precepts of Christianity and that the Bible explicitly refutes the modern conception of religious Zionism. Whether or not the Bible is a reliable account of the teachings of Jesus, or whether or not one should believe in Christianity, is not the point here. In Chapter 14, *Jewish Zionism is Heresy*, we will examine religious Zionism based upon scripture and scholarship accepted by adherents to the religion of Judaism. In Chapter 15, *Jihad in Palestine*, we will examine these questions through the lens of Islamic scripture and scholarship. Each of these chapters will begin with the

assumptions purported by each of these religions, to examine the question of Zionism, as well as the potential religious bases of the territorial claims over the lands of Palestine/Israel. The title of this collection of chapters is Taking Religion Off of the Table, and to accomplish this, we will remove each religion from the ultimate discussion of problems and solutions one at a time, using criteria established by each religion in question. We are not promoting the legitimacy, nor are we refuting any of these religions, we are simply demonstrating by each of their own standards, the question of Israel/Palestine and how the people and land should be governed is not dictated by religious concepts. Certainly, any solution to the Israel/Palestine question must account for and respect all of these religions and their practitioners, but none of these religions present specific answers to this question. Once more, each of these religions explicitly demand that theological arguments are not a legitimate basis for any specific territorial claims in this case.

As stated, we will leverage scholarly work from many Christian denominations, ultimately relying upon Biblical scripture to support the ultimate theological argument that Christian Zionism is heretical. We will borrow a framework from Stephen Sizer to structure this examination. Sizer presents eight (8) ideas upon which Christian Zionism is based, and we will examine each point individually from a Biblical perspective.

1. God blesses those who bless Israel and curses those who curse Israel.
2. The Jewish people are God's chosen people.
3. The "Promised Land" was given by God to the Jewish people as an everlasting inheritance.
4. Jerusalem is the exclusive and undivided, eternal capital of the Jewish people.
5. The Jewish Temple must be rebuilt before Jesus returns.
6. Believers will soon be 'raptured' to heaven before the 'end-time' battle of Armageddon.
7. God has a separate plan for the Jewish people apart from the Church.

1. God blesses those who bless Israel and curses those who curse Israel.
2. The Jewish people are God's chosen people.
3. The "Promised Land" was given by God to the Jewish people as an everlasting inheritance.

4. Jerusalem is the exclusive and undivided, eternal capital of the Jewish people.
5. The Jewish Temple must be rebuilt before Jesus returns.
6. Believers will soon be 'raptured' to heaven before the 'end-time' battle of Armageddon.
7. God has a separate plan for the Jewish people apart from the Church.