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THE STATE OF ISRAEL
POLITICAL REALITY AND THEOLOGICAL TRUTH

Asking the questions that are not permitted to be asked

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**THE STATE OF ISRAEL –
POLITICAL REALITY AND
THEOLOGICAL TRUTH**

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FOREWORD TO THE ENGLISH-LANGUAGE EDITION

A few introductory words are necessary for readers of this English edition. *Свобода за всеки*, or *Freedom for All*, is a publishing and human rights collective composed of writers, editors, academics, and contributors interested in the intersection of human civic freedoms and Christian theological concepts concerning the dignity of man and freedom within the eternal truth of God's love and salvation. Since its founding in 2002, our work has been published through our website and a periodic scholarly-popular journal. We also maintain a limited number of English publications on a separate website. Today, English has established itself as the dominant global language of communication and trade, much as Greek was in the first century.

The theme of this issue explores perspectives from several Bulgarian Christian writers on the relationship between the state of Israel and the Christian faith. Our aim is to shed light on this important topic for both the Church and non-Christians alike. The subject is not only political, social, and moral but also carries eternal significance. While primarily intended for a Bulgarian audience, the English translation has been undertaken because of the universal relevance of the topic.

It is important to note that all authors were given the theme of the issue, but each wrote independently. This has always been the policy of our journal: to provide a topic while allowing contributors to develop their content according to their own views, understanding, and conscience. Readers may notice that the authors do not always share the same perspective on matters of eschatology, yet a unifying tone is evident throughout all the articles.

Some technical and formatting clarifications may also be helpful. When referring to our Lord Jesus Christ with singular, third-person personal pronouns, we have used both "he" and "He," choosing whichever is appropriate for the context.

Readers may notice variations in footnote reference formats. Because quotations are drawn from both Bulgarian and English sources, formatting differs, and it was not deemed appropriate to standardize all references into a single style. Our primary goal has been to provide clear and easily understandable documentation of sources, which has resulted in the use of multiple referencing styles.

Certain notes have been added to the English edition that do not appear in the original. For example, an editorial remark on page 36 clarifies, that Sofia is the capital of Bulgaria; or an editorial note adding a date regarding tensions around the Gaza Strip. These are just two examples of minor corrections or additions. In general, such notes are not emphasized in the English language edition. Some necessary editorial explanations can be found in the endnote section. This maintains a somewhat independent character of the text without being a rewritten version of the original.

It should also be noted that some authors quote Wikipedia. While we do not discourage this, it is appropriate to mention the unreliability and bias present in many Wikipedia articles.

All book titles and sources have been translated into English; their Bulgarian or other original-language titles are not included. Readers who wish to consult the original titles may refer directly to the sources. In this English edition, endnotes are used solely for editorial comments and clarifications pertinent to the text.

We are a scholarly-popular journal dedicated to presenting complex subjects in an accessible manner. Clear communication is especially important for understanding the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ and advancing the Gospel. We hope we have succeeded in this endeavor, at least in part.

by the general editor

October 8, 2025 – October 15, 2026

ISRAEL, THE STATE OF ISRAEL, THEOLOGY AND POLITICS

Issue (volume) 65 of “Freedom for All”

Editor's Foreword

The New Testament era is remarkable in that the last two thousand years have been a period that previous generations could only long for and dream of a time when humanity has sought a return to truth and to God. The history of humanity is linear, moving forward in time and irreversible. The same applies to individual human life and the moral, spiritual, and value-based choices we make. There is no going back; there is no rebirth. Therefore, a clear understanding of the historical significance of events that shape the destiny of nations also has personal significance for our own moral responsibility and for our eternal salvation. For this reason, by examining the events of recent years, any attentive observer can recognize that we are living in biblical times. Even the most ardent atheists cannot deny God, no matter how hard they try. The logic of such denial escapes everyone because of the dramatic times in which we live.

In this context, and with careful observation of world events, we concluded that the topic of the essence of Israel naturally serves as a benchmark for understanding historical time. What are the theological and biblical realities surrounding the persona and essence of Israel? How does the modern state of Israel, established less than eighty years ago, differ from the ancient biblical people? Is there another identity of Israel that shares the same name as the newly formed political entity? What is Israel's role in God's revelation

in the Bible? How does the interpretation—or misinterpretation—of this revelation influence people's opinions about contemporary political events? Finally, what is the relationship between one's attitude towards the state of Israel and the saving New Testament faith? These are just some of the questions we seek to address in this volume, part of the series "Freedom for All."

In my article, I explore the relationship between the modern state of Israel and the "true Israel" as revealed in Holy Scripture. I examine various theological systems, including dispensationalism and covenant theology, which offer very different interpretations of Israel in both the biblical and New Testament context. Of particular interest to the reader is a comparison of how these theological systems understand the role of natural Israel in Christian faith and eschatology, contrasting the typical Protestant perspectives of dispensationalism and covenant theology with the Eastern Orthodox theological viewpoint.

In his article, Valentin Kozhuharov provides a political analysis of the conflict in the Middle East, addressing the barbaric attacks against the civilian population—actions that many international observers and organizations have assessed as genocide—carried out by the armed forces of the state of Israel. At the same time, the text makes clear that this conflict has a long prehistory and that hatred exists on both sides of the front line.

Atanas Dimitrov's work examines the ethnic roots of the Semitic peoples. He seeks to show how blanket accusations of antisemitism are often used to control public opinion and information, particularly against those who engage in debate from a perspective different from the official narrative. According to the Dimitrov, this narrative is shaped by political Zionists, for whom accusations of antisemitism- and even the sacrifice of fellow Jews-serve as tools to justify their objectives.

Ivaylo Tinchev provides a comprehensive overview of the history of the Jewish people and concludes unequivocally that the covenant leading to salvation and the Savior is faith in Jesus Christ. He maintains that the Church has not replaced Christ but, in fact, Israel. At the same time, it is notable that the authors differ on certain aspects of the Holocaust. Tinchev cites the figure of six million as the basis for the persecution of Jews by the Nazi regime, whereas Y. Kostov argues that this number should be viewed through the

prism of skeptical historians and scholars— voices that, according to him, are often deliberately silenced.

Yavor Kostov raises the critically important question of freedom of speech and the widespread campaign to ban any opinion that allows for a critical and careful examination of World War II events related to the Holocaust. This topic often seems to escape the attention of human rights activists. In 2017, the popular online retailer *Amazon* submitted to the demands of the pro-Jewish organization Anti-Defamation League and removed all titles questioning the Holocaust or any aspect of it. Similar forms of censorship regarding the Holocaust or the role of Jews in history can also be observed in Bulgaria, which had appeared largely spared from the criminalization of unpopular opinions during the democratic era. The book “On the Jews and Their Lies” by the reformer Martin Luther –controversial though it may be –was historically a source of information on the theological views of the popular theologian. Nevertheless, it was quietly removed from e-book platforms, apparently on the pretext that it portrayed Jews in an unfavorable light.

In a world of free people, lies and propaganda are countered with truth and facts, not with threats, manipulation, and counter-propaganda. Clearly, there is something being concealed regarding Holocaust – related issues, given that controversial authors like Richard Harwood (real name Richard Verrall) and even recognized historians like David Irving have faced trials and imprisonment for their factual research and opinions. For this reason, Y. Kostov’s article—though brief and listed last—is, in fact, of central importance for the study of this topic.

by the editor-in-chief
20.07.2025

THE STATE OF ISRAEL—A STOLEN IDENTITY

Viktor Kostov

Identify theft is a popular crime among cybercriminals today, enabling them to commit offenses by impersonating someone with a better reputation. In this presentation, we draw a similar analogy.

Modern Israel and its Theological Context Perception

The modern state of Israel emerged in 1948 as a result of the efforts of the political Zionist movement, the consequences of the persecution of Jews during World War II, and the intervention of the United States- particularly Great Britain and its politicians-in bringing this project to fruition.

Historically, this event is deeply rooted in the rise of political Zionism in the 19th century. From a theological point of view, the creation of Israel coincides with the rise of a new theological system that became especially influential in the USA, Great Britain and Western Europe, influencing thought in Christian circles— particularly among evangelical communities. This system is known as *dispensationalism* – a term still not widely familiar within the Bulgarian theological discourse.

In earlier times, teachings that led believers away from Christ as the only way to God were categorically rejected as false. Today, however, within a climate of apparent pluralism and the pursuit of multicultural agreement, truth often gives way to consensus and a superficial sense of tolerance.

Slogans such as “love conquers” and “love is love,” though lacking in theological depth, have come to shape much of contemporary religious consciousness—often at odds with biblical principles of truth and obedience.

It is necessary to keep this context in mind in order to understand why certain forgotten truths may now sound like heresy, while teachings shaped by popular culture and religious inertia are accepted uncritically.

This presentation examines the question of who constitutes the true *Israel*. At first glance, such a question may seem superfluous, since in modern public and theological consciousness—especially after 1948—the state of Israel is often perceived as the sole bearer of that name. Attention is also given to the role of *dispensationalism* as a theological trend that diverges from the established church tradition on issues of eschatology, ecclesiology, and New Testament teaching. Specific political consequences of these theological distortions, as well as the manifestations of dispensationalist influences within certain Bulgarian Christian communities, are not addressed here.

The Establishment of the State of Israel (1948) – a Brief Historical Overview

The State of Israel was officially proclaimed on May 14, 1948, at the end of the British Mandate of Palestine. Its creation was the result of a long historical, political, and social process that included the following key factors:

1. The Zionist Movement: Led by Theodor Herzl, the Zionist Movement emerged in the late 19th century with the goal of establishing a Jewish state in the historic land of Israel (Palestine). It arose partly as a response to antisemitism in Europe and as a drive for Jewish national revival, which was also the objective of the political Zionist movement.¹

2. The British Mandate and the Balfour Declaration (1917): During World War I, Britain issued the Balfour Declaration, which declared support for “the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people.”

¹ Political Zionism differs fundamentally from biblical “Zionism.” In Scripture, *Zion* is a symbol that ultimately refers to Jesus Christ. The distinction between true, biblical Zionism and modern, political Zionism is closely related to the present topic but does not fall within the scope of this discussion. (Author’s note.)

After the war, Britain received a mandate from the League of Nations to govern Palestine (1920–1948), part of which included facilitating Jewish - immigration.

3. Jewish Immigration and Conflicts: The establishment of the political entity known as the State of Israel did not happen overnight. During the 1920s and 1930s, waves of Jewish immigration to Palestine- referred to as “aliyah”-began, especially following the rise of Nazism in Germany. This flux led to tensions with the local Arab population, who also claimed the land, having lived there for generations. These tensions occasionally escalated into serious conflicts and uprisings, such as the Arab Revolt of 1936–1939.

4. The Holocaust and International Support: The term “Holocaust” originally referred to a burnt offering made to a deity during religious worship. The horrors of the Holocaust during World War II profoundly affected global public opinion. After the war, international pressure for the creation of a Jewish state intensified, and worldwide sympathy for the Jewish people increased significantly .

5. UN Resolution 181 (1947): In 1947, the UN passed Resolution 181, proposing the partition of Palestine into two states-one Jewish and one Arab-with Jerusalem under international control. The Jewish leadership accepted the plan, the Arab and Palestinian side rejected it.

6. Declaration of Independence and the Arab-Israeli War: On May 14, 1948, David Ben-Gurion proclaimed the independence of the State of Israel. The following day, neighboring Arab states-Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon-launched a military intervention. Israel managed to defend itself and even expanded its territory beyond the borders proposed by the UN.

Thus, the creation of the State of Israel resulted from a combination of ideological, political, demographic, and tragic historical circumstances. Despite international recognition, its establishment also marked the beginning of an ongoing Israeli-Arab conflict, rooted in competing national and religious claims to the land.

The Name of the State of Israel

The question of why the newly created state in 1948 adopted the name “Israel” is an interesting one. For many dispensationalists, this name represents the fulfillment of God’s promises to the Jewish people to gather them back to their historic land. Passages from the Old Testament are cited in support of this view,² given an independent meaning apart from the New Testament, which is the logical and perfectly prophesied continuation of the Old Testament in the development of God’s redemptive plan.

At the same time, the name “Israel” also reflects specific actions and decisions of political Zionists during the state’s establishment. Among these was a debate over which name would be most appropriate for the newly - formed political-national entity (state).³

It is also important to note some facts about the political Zionist movement. One of its prominent representatives, Vladimir Ze’ev Jabotinsky, was an influential ideologist from the 1930s. Over time, he evolved from advocating a peaceful approach towards the Arab population in the land designated for the Jewish state to justifying violent and terrorist actions aimed at establishing Jewish dominance.⁴ Jabotinsky’s ideas were influential not only in the founding of Israel but also in shaping its future political orientation: the modern ultra-nationalist Likud party in the Israeli parliament traces its ideological roots directly to Jabotinsky’s violent ideology.

Who is Biblical Israel?

In view of the above, the question arises whether the State of Israel and the biblical Israel are the same entity, or two distinct concepts. In the Bible, the name Israel is first given to Jacob, one of Isaac’s sons and the grandson of the patriarch Abraham.⁵ In Hebrew, “Israel” means “a man who wrestles with God.” This name was later attributed to the twelve tribes descended

²One for Israel. 1948 Was Key. <https://www.oneforisrael.org/bible-based-teaching-from-israel/1948-was-key/>.

³ 1948: Why the name Israel? – Martin Kramer on the Middle East. Accessed: 14.07.2025.

⁴ See. Richman, S. TGIF: Israel and Jabotinsky's Iron Wall. July 11, 2025. <https://libertarianinstitute.org/articles/tgif-iron-wall/>.

⁵See Genesis 32:22-32.

from Jacob's twelve sons, so that the tribes of Israel bear the names of their forefathers.

Historically, after internal conflicts, two territories were formed in the land of Canaan,⁶ corresponding to what is today the state of Israel or Palestine. The southern kingdom, composed of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, was called Judea, including during the first century at the time of Jesus Christ. The northern kingdom, formed by the other tribes, was called collectively Israel. These northern tribes later abandoned the Law of Moses and became known as the territory of Samaria. Due to religious and cultural differences, hostility-and even hatred-persisted between Jews and Samaritans, a situation that is reflected in the teachings of Jesus Christ.⁷

Before addressing the question further, it is useful to consider two theological perspectives: one that treats the Old and New Testaments as independent, as if they were two separate religions, and another that views the New Testament as a continuation and fulfillment of the Old, reflecting a progression in God's redemptive plan.

Dispensationalism and Covenant Theology: A Comparative Review

Dispensationalism is a theological system that divides biblical history into distinct periods, or "dispensations," in which God interacts with humanity in different ways. It emphasizes a literal interpretation of Scripture, particularly prophecy, draws a clear distinction between Israel and the Church, and usually affirms a future earthly kingdom of Christ following a preceding rapture of the Church (pretribulation rapture).⁸

⁶Canaan is the ancient name for the land promised to Abraham and his descendants, which is present-day Palestine and where, respectively, the state of Israel is located.

⁷See John 4:3-42; Luke 9:51-56; 10:25-37.

⁸The "pre-tribulation rapture" refers to the belief that the Church will be taken up to meet Christ *before* the period known as the Great Tribulation—a time generally understood to occur at the end of days, characterized by wars, natural disasters, rampant wickedness, and severe persecution of Christ's followers. Jesus spoke of these events in the eschatological chapters of the Gospels: Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 17 and 22. (Author's note.)

Covenant Theology, by contrast, is a hermeneutical framework that views the Bible as a unified narrative of redemption, organized not by dispensations but by covenants.⁹ It emphasizes continuity between the Old and New Testaments, especially regarding the people of God, and sees the Church as the fulfillment of the covenant promises to Israel, united under the Covenant of Grace through Christ.

One of the most striking differences between these systems is their approach to interpreting Scripture. Dispensationalism relies on a literal, grammatical-historical method, especially in prophetic and apocalyptic texts, often anticipating direct and future fulfillment of biblical prophecy. Covenant Theology emphasizes a Christocentric, redemptive-historical approach, interpreting the Old Testament through the lens of the New and understanding its fulfillment in Christ.¹⁰

Human history is also structured differently in the two systems. Dispensationalism divides history into seven major periods (e.g., Innocence, Law, Grace, Millennium), during which God assigns specific responsibilities and tests humanity.¹¹ Covenant Theology, by contrast, unifies biblical history around three major covenants: the Covenant of Redemption (within the Trinity), the Covenant of Works (with Adam before the Fall), and the Covenant of Grace (with believers through Christ after the Fall).¹² This framework emphasizes the unity and continuity of God's plan of salvation.

The distinction regarding Israel and the Church is particularly significant.¹³ Dispensationalists draw a sharp line between the two, viewing Israel

⁹Hermeneutics is a discipline that studies the interpretation of the Bible. (Author's note.)

¹⁰ Cf. Vern S. Poythress, *Understanding Dispensationalists*, 2nd ed. (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 1994).

¹¹ See Charles C. Ryrie, *Dispensationalism*, rev. and exp. ed. (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2007).

¹² See O. Palmer Robertson, *The Christ of the Covenants* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 1980).

¹³ In Bulgarian evangelical Christian circles, there are two common ways to spell "Israel," a difference that usually stems from the Bible translation being used.

as God's earthly people and the Church as His heavenly people,¹⁴ and they anticipate a future role for national Israel in God's plan, including in the end times. In comparison, Covenant theologians view the Church as the true Israel—the continuation and fulfillment of God's promises to His people in the Old Testament.¹⁵

These differences also lead to opposing views of the end times (eschatology). Dispensationalism is usually premillennial and pretribulational, anticipating a secret rapture of the Church, a seven-year tribulation, and a literal thousand-year reign of Christ on earth.¹⁶ Covenant Theology is often amillennial or postmillennial, interpreting much prophecy as already fulfilled in Christ and spiritually applied to the Church.¹⁷ In this view, Christ reigns through the Church today, and the kingdom of God is a present spiritual reality rather than a future political event.

Both systems affirm that salvation is always by grace through faith, but their frameworks differ. Dispensationalism emphasizes the differences in God's government throughout the ages, while Covenant Theology emphasizes the unity of salvation history through the Covenant of Grace.¹⁸ These differences are also seen in the sacraments (or ordinances): Dispensational churches—especially Baptists—practice only water baptism of believers and the Lord's Supper as symbolic acts. Covenant theologians, especially within Reformed and Presbyterian circles, view baptism and the Lord's Supper as covenantal signs and often practice infant baptism as an extension of Old Testament circumcision.¹⁹

Thus, these two systems provide different but highly influential models for interpreting the Bible, God's covenants, His people, and His promises in the history of the Church. It should be noted, however, that this comparison

¹⁴ See. Craig A. Blaising and Darrell L. Bock, eds., *Progressive Dispensationalism* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1993).

¹⁵ See. Michael Horton, *God of Promise: Introducing Covenant Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2006).

¹⁶ See. John F. Walvoord, *The Millennial Kingdom* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1959).

¹⁷ See. Edmund P. Clowney, *The Church* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1995).

¹⁸ See. Anthony A. Hoekema, *Saved by Grace* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989).

¹⁹ See. Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1939).

is schematic; both systems contain varieties, nuances, and even areas of overlap, depending on different Christian and church traditions. In the Bulgarian context, there are representatives of both currents in terms of doctrine, though these systems were imported rather than developed locally. This, of course, is not at all problematic, as theology—and its source, the Bible—is a universal discipline, shaped by the universal Church, which seeks to fulfill its mission of proclaiming the gospel to all peoples.²⁰

Dispensationalists and the “Double Covenant”

To frame the discussion in the context of the main question—who really is Israel?—it is important to consider the perspectives of dispensationalists and covenant theologians. At the heart of dispensational teaching is the strict separation of ethnic Israel from the New Testament people of believers in the Savior, often called “the Church of Christ.” The term “church” comes from the Greek word *ekklesia*, meaning “the called-out ones.”

The Greek *ekklesia* – or *ecclesia* in Latin – is composed of two words: *ek*, meaning “outside,” and *kaleo*, meaning “to call.” Together they literally mean “to call out” and refer to the “called out ones” or “the chosen ones.”²¹

In this sense, “church” denotes a community rather than an institution or building for meetings and worship; the latter meanings are derived from the term but often mistakenly perceived as its primary meaning. The Church, as described by Jesus and the apostles in the New Testament is a new people, a new race of royal priests, called to be “light and salt” for the salvation of individuals and nations through Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The Church is also a “temple of living stones,” with believers as the stones and Jesus Christ

²⁰ See Matthew 28:16–20.

²¹ What Does Ekklesia (Ecclesia) Mean? <https://abetterfuturenow.com/what-does-ekklesia-ecclesia-mean/>. Accessed 14.07.2025.

as the cornerstone. Those thus called or chosen includes both Jews and Gentiles, unified as followers of the Savior.²² The Apostle Paul calls this “the mystery of the gospel:” through Christ’s sacrifice, the two divisions-Jew and Gentile-become one people, the chosen people of God.²³

Dispensationalists, however, maintain that whenever the Scripture mentions Israel, it refers exclusively to ethnic Israel, never to the New Testament spiritual people of believers. This thesis is defended by Derek Prince, a widely known Zionist Bible teacher whose influence has been particularly significant among Bulgarian evangelical churches since the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1990.²⁴

By contrast, covenant theologians-represented by scholars like David Holwerda- uphold the traditional Christian and biblical understanding of God’s covenants with Abraham and the development of God’s redemptive plan for humanity and its culmination in the Person and work of Jesus Christ. In his book *Jesus and Israel: One Covenant or Two?* Holwerda presents arguments supporting the view that the promises of the Old Testament, including those made to Abraham, are fulfilled in Jesus Christ. These arguments cover the true nature of the covenant regarding the land of Israel, the identity of God’s people, and the meaning of God’s temple. Holwerda defends all the foundational biblical truths regarding the nature of the New Covenant, emphasizing that there is no separate covenant through which the special promises to ethnic Israel are realized independently.

²² In the Bulgarian language, the term “gentiles,” used in Scripture for non-Jews, is often incorrectly employed as a common noun meaning “unbelievers” or as a synonym for “pagans.” In fact, “gentiles”—or “Greeks,” as often used in the New Testament—designates peoples who are not Jews (Israelites). The use of “gentiles” to mean “unbelievers” reflects an Old Testament understanding in which only the Jews (Israelites) were regarded as the chosen people of God.

²³ See Ephesians 2:14; cf. Galatians 3:28, Romans 10:12, Colossians 3:11. All these passages point to the unification of Jews and Greeks into a new, spiritual Israel—a new race, born of the Spirit of God and made a new creation through faith in Jesus Christ.

²⁴ Prince advocates this view in his short work *The Fate of Israel and the Church*, also published in Bulgarian.

Unfortunately, on the question of whether God has a special plan for natural Israel, Holwerda contradicts himself. Although he insists on the exclusivity of the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, he fails to break away from traditional Calvinist theology, in which the election and predestination of the saved—and their number—hold a central place. For example, when addressing Romans, chapter 11, verses 25-27, Holwerda interprets the passage as predicting a future corporate, albeit symbolic, total conversion of unbelieving Jews in the end times. Although this view differs from the dispensational perspective, Holwerda nevertheless remains indebted to the doctrine that there is only one covenant, fulfilled in Christ.²⁵ The idea of a future special redemptive purpose for unbelieving ethnic Jews is generally at odds with covenant theology.²⁶ At its core, this position presents a partial departure from covenant theology in favor of dispensationalist thinking. In practice, David Holwerda—a representative of Reformed covenant theology—adopts certain elements of dispensationalist eschatology.

Most dispensationalists hold that God has a special purpose for unbelieving ethnic Israel, including their eventual corporate acceptance of Christ at some future time. The rationale for this delay—given that salvation has already been accomplished perfectly through Christ—is often left unexplained and proponents rarely address the question of what these “special purposes” might be. Nor do they explore why such purposes would justify the current and ongoing unbelief and rejection of the Son of God as the perfect and saving sacrifice.

²⁵ “Messiah” is the Hebrew word for “Christ,” which in Greek means “savior.”

²⁶ In this text—and in principle in the Bulgarian language—the terms “Jew” and “Israelite (Hebrew)” are understood as synonyms. They both refer to the ethnic descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and by extension, to those who adhere to Judaism. To this group—inasmuch as the lineage can be established today—is added the citizenship of the modern State of Israel, created as the homeland of the “Jewish people,” as recorded in one of the official documents on the subject from the mid-twentieth century.

In the New Testament, “Jews” designates the descendants of the patriarchs who observe the law and follow Judaism as it existed in the time of Jesus Christ, residing primarily in the region of Judea. The term “Jew” derives from the Hebrew root associated with Judah and Hebron, the ancestral region of Abraham and by extension, denotes a descendant of Abraham.

Particularly significant for the Bulgarian context in this regard are the now late Bible teacher Derek Prince, the former main pastor of the Swedish prosperity church Livets Ord, Ulf Ekman, and a number of Bulgarian evangelical pastors who have adopted elements of the Judaizing doctrines taught by these and other Western teachers.²⁷ By “Judaizing doctrines,” we mean the belief system within Judaism that the messiah is still expected. Judaism, which developed from the positions of the Pharisees at the time of Jesus, denies that the Lord Jesus is the Christ—that is, the Savior and Messiah.²⁸ According to traditional Jewish beliefs, the coming messiah will transform ethnic Israel into a leading and dominate nation over the entire world, while all Gentile peoples, called “goys” in the language of the Talmud, will serve the superior Jewish race and perform this service with joy.²⁹ This preserved modern understanding does not differ significantly from the expectations held by many of Christ’s disciples and especially from the prevailing teaching of the Pharisees. Thus, we can trace a connection between dispensationalism and the Judaizing heresy among the early church.³⁰

However, Holwerda undoubtedly presents profound and well-reasoned arguments as to why covenant theology should be regarded as the true and authentic interpretation of the Old Testament and its fulfillment in the New. He addresses the question of who Israel is by examining key issues related to Israel’s identity, the temple, the land, and the law—central themes of the

²⁷ Cf. Ekman, U. *The Jews, the People of the Future*. Sofia, Word of Life International, 1993.

²⁸ In recent years, it has become known that the Talmud, one of the foundational texts of modern Judaism comprising the recorded traditions of the Jewish rabbis, contains extremely blasphemous and offensive statements regarding the origin and Person of Jesus Christ. See Schäfer, P. *Jesus in the Talmud*. Princeton University Press, 2009. (<https://press.princeton.edu/books/paperback/9780691143187/jesus-in-the-talmud>).

²⁹ A similar reference appears in evidentiary material presented by the state prosecution in criminal case 18-92. *US v. Robert Bowers* of the State of Pennsylvania (See <https://www.justice.gov/usao-wdpa/vw/us-v-bowers>). In this case, the defendant, accused of shooting at people gathered for worship in a Jewish synagogue, cited quotes from the Talmud in an email. These quotations were presented by the prosecution to illustrate Bowers’ reference to the secret and ultimate views of the rabbinic authors concerning the future subjugation of Gentiles to Jews.

³⁰ See Acts 15:1ff.

biblical covenants. Regarding the future of natural Israel, Holwerda surprisingly adheres to a view resembling both dispensationalism and certain Judaic expectations—namely, that God has an additional eschatological plan for unbelieving Jews. This view, however, is tempered by his insistence that there are not two covenants and not two distinct peoples of God.

Holwerda compares the genealogy and geography of Jesus Christ's origin with the ethnic origins of modern Jews and citizens of the state of Israel. The covenant of promise given to Abraham in Genesis 12 marks one of the most significant events in the unfolding of God's redemptive plan.³¹ Moreover, Christ is also the heir of David, according to God's promise in 2 Samuel 7:11-17. Thus, in his genealogy—not through His mother, but through His father, Joseph (who was not His biological father)—Jesus is shown to come from the tribe of Judah. Judah, in turn, was one of the sons of Jacob, who was first called Israel.

At the end of his life, Jacob blessed his son Judah, declaring that his inheritance would not perish.³² Jacob was the chosen son of Isaac, who himself was the son of promise to Abraham. According to biblical teaching, the genealogy of Jesus does not follow the modern, state-based Jewish definition of identity (determined by maternal descent), but rather the biblical pattern of paternal lineage.³³ On this principle, Jesus—according to God's divine plan in the incarnation—descends from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and King David. This distinction reveals the difference between a Jew “by the flesh” and a Jew “by the promise,” that is, by faith. The unbelieving Jews belong to the former category, while Jesus Christ and his followers belong to the latter.

Analyzing the laws of the modern state of Israel, Holwerda observes that a Jew is generally defined as someone who adheres to Judaism. The Supreme Court of the State of Israel considers an ethnic Jew to be a person born of a Jewish mother. Statistics show that only about 15% of the population of Israel adheres to the religious norms of Judaism.³⁴ The modern State of Israel is secular in nature, encompassing both religious and non-religious

³¹ Ibid.

³² See Genesis 49:8-12.

³³ Matthew 1:1-16.

³⁴ Cf. Holwerda, *D. Jesus and Israel ...*, p. 32.

Jews, and from this point of view, it is difficult to say who is a Jew.³⁵ Holwerda concludes:

Although ethnicity has always played a role in defining who is a Jew, the traditional understanding emphasizes the veneration of the Torah. From the destruction of the Temple in 70 CE to the present day, being a Jew has meant, in adherence to Rabbinic Judaism, a dedication to the study of the law and observance of the 613 commandments.³⁶

It should be noted that a number of Judaizing Bible teachers, and this one of talking points of the Judaizing movement in the church, emphatically insist that Jesus was a Jew. In doing so, they attempt to justify their mistaken understanding that God has a special and distinct plan for the Jewish people in their unbelieving state. This purported special plan is based on the promises made to the patriarchs—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—regarding the future of their descendants and the blessing upon them. These claims are often grounded in Genesis 12:3, where God promises to bless those who bless Abraham and to curse those who curse him.

Dispensationalists and Christian Zionists believe that God’s promises apply to the natural descendants of Abraham—the Jews—including the modern State of Israel as the contemporary corporate expression of Judaism. They assert that God is faithful and keeps His promises. Framed this way, their beliefs effectively constitute a “double covenant”—one for believers in Christ and one for unbelieving Jews—which, in practice, undermines Jesus Christ by diminishing the claims of Scriptures, Christ Himself, and the apostles regarding who He truly is.³⁷

God is faithful, but their argument rests on a separation of the Old Testament from the New, treating them as two separate texts with independent significance. Their reasoning collapses when we recognize the undeniable

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Holwerda, D. *Jesus and Israel: One Covenant or Two?* Eerdmans, 1992, p. 28.

³⁷ See 1 John 2:22.

fact that the promises of God are fulfilled in Jesus Christ,³⁸ and that we now live not in an age of expectation of the Messiah, but in an age of fulfillment of that promise. The hope that is not yet fulfilled is the expectation of the full consummation of the kingdom of God, which will be realized at the Second Coming of the Lord.

The error of the two-covenant idea is made clear by Apostle Paul in his letter to the Galatians. In chapter three, Paul emphasizes, in harmony with the teaching of Jesus and the entire New Testament, that the “seed” referred to in Genesis 12 in God’s promise to Abraham is singular—not “seeds”—and that this seed is Jesus Christ. Regarding the blessing given to Abraham, the apostle writes:

Know therefore that it is those of faith, the same are children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, ‘In you all the nations will be blessed.’³⁹

The nations are blessed because of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ—the seed of Abraham, born according to the flesh. The expectation of the good news of eternal life has been manifested since the time of Abraham and became a reality with the coming of Jesus. Those who have faith in Christ are blessed. The true descendants of Abraham are those who have faith in Christ: “Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, ‘and to seeds,’ as of many, but as of one, ‘and to your seed,’ who is Christ.”⁴⁰ The notion that the Jews are the “light of the nations,” as asserted by Judaism and by Judaizing Christians, is a false teaching.⁴¹ Christ Himself clearly states that He is the light of the world.⁴² The same is true of claims that Jesus was a Jew. For example, Prince argues that even in heaven Jesus is called the “Lion of Judah,” as stated in the book of Revelation, suggesting

³⁸ See 2 Corinthians 1:20.

³⁹ Galatians 3:7-8.

⁴⁰ Galatians 3:16.

⁴¹ See Ekman, U. *The Jews, the People of the Future...*

⁴² See John 8:12.

that even in eternity His ethnic origin is of the utmost importance to His Person and how He should be perceived.⁴³

To claim that Jesus was a “Jew” in order to support the dispensationalist and Zionist doctrine that God had a “special plan” for the Jews—apart from the unconditional acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ—

is both dangerous and wrong. Jesus clearly, repeatedly, and categorically distinguishes Himself from the Jews, including calling them “children of the devil”⁴⁴ and denying that Abraham is their true father; His Father and the father of the Jews have nothing in common.⁴⁵ He also declares that they are “from below” while he is “from above,” that they are “of the world” while he is “not of the world.”⁴⁶ One cannot be called a “Jew” who so categorically distinguishes himself from the Jews.

The reason for this is that Jesus is not only a man born in the flesh but also God, the only begotten Son of God. The Jews, on the other hand, have transformed faith in God—from revelation and participation in the plan of salvation—into an ethnocentric and distorted semi-caste religious-secular system, headed by the Pharisees, the scribes, the priests, and the entire religious-secular elite of the day. They became so engrossed in their role as a superior race, chosen by God because of their ethnic origin, that they failed to recognize the One they were waiting for.⁴⁷ Evidence of this is found in the ministry of John the Baptist, who exhorts the Pharisees to repent and bear true fruits of repentance, warning them not to rely on “being children of Abraham,” because God is able “to raise up children of Abraham from these stones.”⁴⁸

Therefore, overemphasizing the Jewish origin of Jesus effectively undermines His God-man nature. This heresy was known in the early centuries

⁴³ See Prince, D. The Lion of the Tribe of Judah. <https://www.derekprince.com/radio/720>.

⁴⁴ John 8:44.

⁴⁵ See John 8:38-39.

⁴⁶ John 8:23.

⁴⁷ See John 1:11.

⁴⁸ Matthew 3:9; John 8:39; Romans 9:7-8.

as Arianism, which denied the Trinity and the divine nature of Jesus Christ.⁴⁹ In addition to all the other arguments already discussed, we may also consider the opening of the letter of the Apostle Paul to the Romans, where Christ is in no way described primarily by His Jewish origin; on the contrary:

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart *for the* gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, concerning his Son our Lord Jesus Christ, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, and was declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead; through whom we have received grace and apostleship, to *bring about* the obedience of faith *among* all nations for his name's sake; among whom you also are called by Jesus Christ: To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.⁵⁰

The apostle Paul's ability to convey the full depth of God's revelation in Jesus Christ in a single sentence is remarkable. Let us, therefore, turn our attention to his presentation of our Lord Jesus Christ. Paul establishes the continuity between the Old and New Testaments—the gospel, promised beforehand by God through the prophets in the Old Testament Scriptures—and identifies its fulfillment in Jesus, as well as in the continuation of Jesus' work through the apostles. In articulating this progressive revelation of God's redemptive plan in Christ and continued through the apostles, Paul clearly delineates the dual divine and human nature of the Person of Jesus Christ.

The gospel originates from and centers upon Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Jesus was born “according to the flesh,” in fulfillment of the promises of God, as a descendant of David, yet was raised in power “according to the

⁴⁹ The heresy that denies that Jesus is God is called “Arianism.” It emerged in the beginning of the IV century with the teachings on Arius, who claimed that Jesus Christ was a created being, and not fully divine. In doing so, Arius rejected the doctrine of the Trinity and the full divinity on Christ.

⁵⁰ Romans 1:1-7.

Spirit of holiness.” As Paul affirms, He “was declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead.” Thus, Jesus is not only of the lineage of Judah, in accordance with the promises made to David, but is also the Son of God, begotten by the Holy Spirit through divine conception. No man can claim to be born of such an immaculate conception and to possess an origin directly from God, even if of Jewish descent. Furthermore, God’s willingness to redeem humanity to the extent of sacrificing His own Son as a perfect atonement—not for his own sins, but for the sins of others, for human sins, for our sins—must not lead us to anthropomorphize God or to assume that He thinks as a sinner does.⁵¹

However, the fact that Jesus is Emmanuel—God with us—does not imply that He is “God, just like us.” Though He became truly human and even humbled Himself by taking upon Himself our sins, this very act demonstrates why Jesus is, and will always remain, greater than any of us. Only He was able to conquer sin and death through what His redemptive work. He became one of us, not to remain subject to the degradation of fallen human nature, but to regenerate, sanctify, and redeem it. The revelation of the identity of Jesus Christ, thus described, was given first to the Jews, for the gospel is “the power of salvation for all, first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.”⁵² Yet, because of the profound brutality of the pride and sin inherent in human nature, the Jews despised their own Messiah.

Familiarity often breeds apathy,⁵³ and even contempt. When Jesus ministered among the people—performing miracles, signs, and healings—they were eager to proclaim Him king.⁵⁴ Yet, when He confronted and exposed their selfish and sinful nature, they despised Him, expressing disdain that could be paraphrased in contemporary terms: “Isn’t this Joseph and Mary’s boy from our neighborhood? Why is he acting as if he is so important?”⁵⁵ Nevertheless, neither familiarity nor contempt can change the truth about the Person of Jesus Christ. We can only marvel at the love and patience of God

⁵¹ See Isaiah 55:9.

⁵² See Romans 1:16.

⁵³ Cf. Stark, S. *Writing to Win: The Legal Writer*. Three Rivers, New York, 2012.

⁵⁴ See John 6:14-15.

⁵⁵ Compare to Matthew 13:55.

and, in contrast, recognize the profound hardness and pride of sinful man. The book of Hebrews presents Jesus as the “(first) priest according to the order of Melchizedek.” Melchizedek, the king of Salem, is an enigmatic figure introduced in the Old Testament.⁵⁶ He meets Abraham, who offers him a tithe—a portion of his possessions. This high priest, “without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, abideth a priest forever,” is widely regarded as a Theophany—specifically, a manifestation of Christ Himself.⁵⁷

The author of Hebrews develops this theme by contrasting the Levitical priesthood, derived from the tribe of Levi and associated with the Old Testament temple in Jerusalem, with the priesthood of Jesus Christ. The comparison underscores the superiority of Christ’s priesthood over the temple and its rituals made with human hands and conducted by men.⁵⁸ Jesus is the eternal High Priest who has, once and for all, offered the perfect sacrifice necessary for the salvation of fallen humanity. Jesus is not simply a “Jew.”

In his book, Holwerda rightly notes that the historical development of Zionism illustrates how Christian theology shifted significantly after World War II toward envisioning a future for ethnic Israel in the fulfillment of God’s promises and in regarding even unbelieving Jews as “God’s people.” With the help of dispensationalism, the concept emerged that there are, in fact, two peoples of God: natural Israel, comprising unbelieving Jews, and the Church, comprising believing Gentiles—and, albeit in smaller numbers, believing Jews.⁵⁹

By contrast, covenant theology interprets the people of God differently. According to this perspective, the Church – those chosen by God and who have placed their faith in the Person and redemptive work of Jesus Christ – is the true people of God. This new people arises with the coming of Christ in the flesh and through his death and resurrection, marking the onset of a new era in salvation history.

⁵⁶ See Genesis 14:18.

⁵⁷ See Hebrews 7:3.

⁵⁸ See Hebrews 7:11-15.

⁵⁹ See Prince, D. *The Destiny of Israel and the Church*. Derek Prince International, 1994.

The Eastern Orthodox View of the State of Israel

1. *Fulfillment in Christ and the People of God.* The Eastern Orthodox Church understands the covenant promises made to Israel as fulfilled—not abrogated—in the person of Jesus Christ. In Eastern Orthodox theology, Israel is seen typologically as a prefiguration of the Church, the “new Israel,” composed of all who are united to Christ through baptism. This perspective is deeply rooted in the patristic tradition, particularly in the writings of the Cappadocian Fathers, St. John Chrysostom, and St. Irenaeus of Lyons. Consequently, the Orthodox view closely parallels covenant theology.

Father George Florovsky, a key Orthodox figure of the twentieth century, described the Church as “the true continuation of Israel,” emphasizing that the fulfillment of God’s plan in Christ both includes and transforms Israel’s history and identity. He stressed that the Church is not a political or ethnic body, but a Christocentric eschatological community: “The Church is the new Israel, not in the flesh, but in promise and in the Spirit.”⁶⁰

This model of fulfillment is distinct from both supersessionism—which implies a rejection of the Jewish people—and dispensationalism which separates Israel and the Church as parallel salvific entities. Eastern Orthodox theology upholds a non-dualistic Christocentric interpretation of the covenants, emphasizing continuity through transformation.

2. *The Land and Political Zionism: A Theological Reservation.* The Eastern Orthodox tradition is wary of attributing theological significance to modern nation-states, including the contemporary state of Israel. This caution stems from the Church’s anti-nationalist ecclesiology and its concern over conflating divine providence with political sovereignty.

Metropolitan John Zizioulas, one of the most influential Eastern Orthodox theologians of the late twentieth century, emphasizes that the Church is not bound by geography or ethnicity. The ontology of communion in Christ—rather than ethnic origin or territorial possession—defines the people of God. The Church transcends all national or racial boundaries. There is no “Holy

⁶⁰ Florovsky, G. *Bible, Church, Tradition (Collected Works Vol. 1)*, Nordland Publishing, Belmont, MA, 1972.

Land” in the nationalist sense; instead, the world itself is called to holiness through Christ.⁶¹

Orthodox theology honors the Holy Land liturgically—as the site of Christ’s incarnation, death, and resurrection—but does not attribute eschatological significance to the political entity of modern Israel, nor does it see it as the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. Indeed, most Eastern Orthodox theologians reject any form of Christian Zionism, viewing it as a distortion of patriarchal eschatology and a misinterpretation of the New Testament.

3. *Palestinian Christian Witness and Pastoral Realities.* The Orthodox Churches in the Middle East—especially the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem and the Orthodox Church of Antioch—have spoken out against the occupation of Palestinian territories and in defense of Christian and Muslim Palestinians. While these statements often arise from lived experience rather than abstract theology, they are underpinned by an Orthodox understanding of justice, human dignity, and the unity of all people in Christ.

Archbishop Theodosius (Atalah Hanna) of Sebastia (Patriarchate of Jerusalem), a Palestinian Orthodox bishop, has openly called for justice and international recognition of Palestinian rights. His voice embodies a theology of resistance grounded in the Eastern Orthodox tradition of martyrdom and witness (*martyria*): “We cannot separate our theology from our lived reality as Christians under occupation. Justice and peace are not optional; they are an integral part of our Christian witness.”⁶²

Eastern Orthodox theology in this context emphasizes solidarity over abstract doctrinal positions, often drawing on the kenotic⁶³ example of Christ – the call to self-denying love and rejection of domination.

⁶¹ Zizioulas, D. “Communion and otherness.” (John Zizioulas, *Communion and Otherness*. T&T Clark, 2006. Paperback edition released January 2007).

⁶² The quoted statement by Bishop Theodosius summarizes his position on the topic of the need for justice for the Palestinians regarding the conflict in Gaza, see International Middle East Media Center, Archbishop Hanna: Will the Arab Nation Awaken Before It’s Too Late? 24 July 2025, at <https://imemc.org/article/archbishop-hanna-will-the-arab-nation-awaken-before-its-too-late/>.

⁶³ From *kenosis* (Greek), emptying oneself, typically with the aim of identifying with the suffering and existence of another. (Author’s note.)

This is also the position of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church (Bulgarian Patriarchate, BOC – BP) in defense of the Palestinian population and in advocacy for an immediate peaceful resolution:

We are witnesses of how civilians, unarmed, helpless people – hundreds of men, women, children and the elderly – are being tortured, humiliated, raped and killed in the most cruel and inhumane way (...). We cannot stand idly by and remain silent in the face of the suffering, pain and agony that thousands of our brothers and sisters are experiencing! (...) We insist that the responsible international and national factors and organizations do everything within their human power and capabilities to immediately stop the violence and to protect the rights and lives of Christian minorities in Syria and throughout the Middle East.⁶⁴

In July 2025, the Bulgarian Orthodox Church – BP also stated its position, in line with other Orthodox churches:

For months, the world community has been witnessing the cruel siege of the Gaza Strip, which has led to an unprecedented humanitarian catastrophe. Thousands of our brothers and sisters have already lost their lives; dozens have been injured; two million people are doomed to a shortage of food, drinking water, medicine, electricity and fuel, while bombs continue to fall over their heads. Innocent and unarmed people are killed every day – many young children, women, the elderly, defenseless, sick and vulnerable people. The imposed blockade, understood as “collective punishment” over hundreds of thousands of innocent people, contradicts all norms of international law, universal human morality, but above all and most of all – the divine gospel law. “The voice of your brother’s blood

⁶⁴ Tatiana Marinova. Julyrian Orthodox Church Calls for Prayer for Fellow Christians and Innocents Suffering in the Middle East, BTA, 21 March 2025, at <https://www.bta.bg/en/news/bulgaria/856667-bulgarian-orthodox-church-calls-for-prayer-for-fellow-christians-and-innocents-s>. March 21, 2025. See also <https://bg-patriarshia.bg/news/obrashtenie-na-sv-sinod-otnosno-tragichnite-sabitia-v-blizki>.

cries out to me from the ground” (Gen. 4:10) – and today this shed blood cries out to heaven and to our conscience.⁶⁵

The positions articulated by the Bulgarian Orthodox Church (Bulgarian Patriarchate, BOC-BP) show the absence of any special theological stance toward the state of Israel. This approach is consistent with Eastern Orthodox theology on the issue and provides a framework for an adequate assessment of the genocide and the war in Gaza in the period from 2023 to the present.

4. *The eschatological and liturgical horizon.* Eastern Orthodox eschatology is cosmic and eucharistic, not nationalistic.⁶⁶ The ultimate fulfillment of God’s promises lies in the heavenly Jerusalem, not in a temporary political restoration. This is most clearly expressed in the Divine Liturgy, where the Church becomes a foretaste of the Kingdom. Father Alexander Schmemmann emphasizes that the Church does not await the restoration of a temple or the renewal of a physical earth, but the full manifestation of Christ’s Kingdom, already revealed in the Eucharist: “The Church is not a continuation of the earthly kingdom of Israel, but a manifestation of the Kingdom that is not of this world.”⁶⁷

This eschatological reserve means that Eastern Orthodox theology refuses to interpret contemporary events—including the founding of the State of Israel—as direct fulfillments of prophecy. It also preserves an openness

⁶⁵ Address of the Holy Synod of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church – Bulgarian Patriarchate on the occasion of the ongoing blockade of the Gaza Strip. July 18, 2025. <https://bg-patriarshia.bg/news/obrashtenie-na-svetia-sinod-na-balgarskata-pravoslavna-tsark>.

⁶⁶ However, there is a discrepancy between theological views and church political drifts toward Caesaropapism in Orthodox countries. In Bulgaria, for example, the state effectively established a state Orthodox Church at the beginning of this year, denying registration to the Old Style Orthodox Church despite legal provisions, the constitutional protections, and decisions of the European Court of Human Rights. (Author’s note.)

⁶⁷ Fr. Alexander Schmemmann, *For the Life of the World* — 1973. The SVS Press first edition was in 1973 (often reprinted since).

to the “unresolved question” of the role of the Jewish people in salvation history (see Romans 11).⁶⁸

The Eastern Orthodox Church thus approaches the modern State of Israel not through the prism of prophetic fulfillment, but through the theological categories of incarnation, ecclesiology, and eschatological expectation. The Church understands itself as a transformed Israel—not as a replacement for the Jewish people, but as the extension of God’s covenantal purpose through Christ to all nations. While recognizing both the historical suffering of the Jews and the theological significance of Israel, the Church critiques any attempt to sacralize contemporary political power or territory. Its call remains a summons to justice, reconciliation, and hope in a Kingdom that transcends all earthly boundaries.

Continuity and Incompatibility Between the Old and New Testaments

Finally, we will highlight another direct connection between Old Testament prophecies and their New Testament fulfillments. Although the Bible never explicitly uses the phrase “Jesus is the true Israel,” the New Testament strongly affirms the following theological concepts:

1. Jesus fulfills the calling of Israel and embodies faithful Israel;
2. The Church—composed of both Jews and Gentiles who believe in Christ—is now the people of God, representing the continuation and transformation of Israel through Him.

The key Bible passages supporting these ideas can be grouped into two major themes:

⁶⁸ It is remarkable that this question is often considered unresolved. While passages such as Romans 11, which discuss the salvation of “all Israel” and God’s election, may appear ambiguous, there is no biblical or New Testament basis for attributing any special, further eschatological role to the unbelieving ethnic group, today called “Jews” or “Israelites.” It remains unclear why this position—which can be supported particularly by covenant theology—remains largely in the background, while prevailing theological perspectives across Protestant, Evangelical, Catholic, and Orthodox traditions avoid even acknowledging it as a viable interpretation.

1. *Jesus as the true Israel (the faithful son who fulfills the calling of Israel)*. Specific Bible passages illustrating this theme are listed below, identified by book, chapter, and verse, followed by brief explanations:

Matthew 2:13–15: “...and was there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken through the prophet: ‘Out of Egypt I called my son.’” Here Matthew applies Hosea 11:1—which originally referred to Israel’s exodus from Egypt—to Jesus, thereby identifying Him as the true Israel.

Matthew 4:1–11 (The Temptation in the Wilderness): Jesus fasts for forty days, recalling Israel’s forty years in the wilderness. Where Israel succumbed to temptation, Jesus—the true Son—remains faithful, fulfilling Israel’s vocation in perfect obedience.

John 15:1–5: “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-dresser...” In the Old Testament, Israel is depicted as the vine (see Isaiah 5:1–7; Psalm 80:8–16). Jesus now identifies Himself as the true vine, demonstrating that He fulfills the role and vocation of Israel.

Isaiah 49:3–6 (Servant Songs): “You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified... to bring back Jacob... and gather Israel...” Here, the “servant,” named Israel, becomes the one who restores Israel—a prophetic foreshadowing of Christ as the faithful Israel, fulfilling Israel’s mission to the nations .

2. *The Church as God's People in Christ (New Israel)*.

Galatians 3:7, 29: “Know therefore that they which believe, they are the children of Abraham... And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to promise.” Believers in Christ—both Jews and Gentiles—are now heirs of the promises originally given to Israel.

Galatians 6:16: “And as many as walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.” Many interpreters understand “the Israel of God” here as referring to the Church, the community of all who believe in Christ.

Romans 9:6–8: “Not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel...it is not the children of the flesh who are God’s children, but the children of the promise...” Here, the Apostle Paul distinguishes ethnic Israel from spiritual Israel, which encompasses all who are in Christ.

1 Peter 2:9–10: “But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession...” These titles, originally applied to Israel (see Exodus 19:5–6), are now applied to the Church—both Jews and Gentiles.

Ephesians 2:11–22: “Who hath made us both one... to create in Himself one new man, not two... built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets...” Gentiles are no longer strangers but fellow citizens with the saints, forming a new, united people of God in Christ.

Conclusion: Why the State of Israel and the Real Israel Have Nothing in Common Except the Name

The State of Israel is a modern political entity organized on a national-ethnic basis. While it draws on certain religious promises and biblical passages, its foundation is largely shaped by an atheistic, ethnocentric vision of society as it should be structured under this state. The name “Israel” reflects the aspirations of the Jewish community to establish a political entity in defense of communal or national interests, invoking Scripture selectively to support the goals of the political Zionist project.

In contrast, the Scriptures—both Old and New Testaments—point to a fundamentally different Israel. The true Israel is not the modern state, but Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Lord and Savior, together with the Jews and Gentiles who believe in Him. This community, the Church, constitute the

called ones and the new people of God, according to the New Testament of Jesus Christ.

The State of Israel and the true Israel represent two distinct, even opposing, categories. The State of Israel is not Israel; the true Israel is Jesus Christ.

Moreover, as a people, following the coming and work of Jesus Christ, Israel is embodied in the Church of Jesus Christ. It is the new Israel—spiritual rather than carnal. Anyone may claim the name “Israel,” but not all live by faith and obedience to God’s redemptive plan in Jesus Christ. Those who deny Jesus have no part in the true Israel.

Unlike the modern state, the true Israel does not seek to conquer a piece of land through coercion and war, nor does it seek to establish a people at the cost of genocide, war crimes or ethnic cleansing of the local inhabitants, or pursue ethnocentric and supremacist goals in relation to all other peoples. Its mission is to reach all peoples with the knowledge of God’s love and redemption from sin through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. The whole earth, therefore, is the scope of the true people of God’s aspirations.

The true Israel is a harbinger and partial realization of the eschatological Kingdom of God, which will be fully established at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. Already, however, this Kingdom is spiritually manifested through the preaching and ministry of the Church.

GENOCIDE ACROSS 360 SQ. KM IN TODAY'S WORLD OF POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CHAOS

Valentin Kozhuharov

History has recorded numerous instances of genocide across different regions of the world, the most infamous of which occurred during the twentieth century – the Armenian Genocide, the Holocaust, and the massacres in Cambodia, Bosnia and Rwanda. Between 1915 and 1916, the Ottomans exterminated between 664,000 and 1.2 million Armenians. From 1938 to 1945, the Nazis attempted to annihilate the Jewish people. The Khmer Rouge regime in Cambodia caused the deaths of nearly two million Cambodians through executions, starvation, and forced labor between 1975 and 1979. The massacre in Bosnia's Srebrenica from 1992 to 1995 resulted in the murder of over eight thousand Muslim men and boys. In Rwanda, during just over three months in 1994, the majority Hutu population massacred between five hundred thousand and one million Tutsi.

Genocide is measured by the number of victims relative to the total population of the targeted ethnic group that hostile forces aim to erase from existence. From this perspective, the current title may seem puzzling: what kind of genocide could occur in such a small territory—an area only about one-third larger than the urban area of Sofia, the capital of Bulgaria? And how could this genocide be connected to the ongoing redistribution of global power?

This article seeks to answer these two questions, along with others related to them. It does not claim to be scientific or exhaustive but rather offers a personal perspective on events that are interpreted in very different ways by various institutions, organizations, and individuals.

Gaza Strip

The Gaza Strip is the territory in question. In 2024, an estimated 2.1 million Palestinians, the vast majority of them Sunni Muslims,⁶⁹ lived there; a small Christian minority also resides in the area. Together with the West Bank—which is nearly sixteen times larger in area but home to only about 2.7 million Palestinians — the Gaza Strip forms the territory of the State of Palestine, which remains unrecognized by Israel.

Following the Arab - Israeli War of 1948, the Gaza Strip came under Egyptian control. However, after the Six-Day War of 1967, it was occupied by Israel. Under the Oslo Accords of 1994 between Israel and the Palestinians, the territory came under partial administration by the local Palestinian Authority, led at the time by Yasser Arafat and his secular Fatah party. A year later, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) signed a second agreement with Israel, extending Palestinian self-governance to most of the West Bank.

In 2005, Israel withdrew from the Gaza Strip, leaving the Palestinian Authority to govern the territory with its own police and civil administration. However, following the 2006 elections, Fatah lost power, the National Unity Government collapsed, and after a brief civil war in Gaza (June 10-15, 2007), control of the territory was seized by the Islamic Resistance Movement, better known as Hamas, an acronym derived from its Arabic name. Since then, Hamas has governed Gaza, often in tense and complicated relations with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas.⁷⁰

⁶⁹Cf. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gaza_Strip.

⁷⁰ Born in 1935, Mahmoud Abbas became the second president of Palestine in 2005 and, with various degrees of success, remains president to this day, making him one of the oldest and longest-serving presidents in the world. His relationship with Hamas has been consistently complicated, despite the 2014 agreement between the PLO and Hamas to form a unity government. While Abbas is widely considered the president of the State of Palestine, he has often favored the Fatah-controlled territories, whereas Hamas has sought to limit his authority in the areas under its control. The 2021 local elections further strained relations between Abbas and Hamas.

It is noteworthy that nearly 44% of Gaza's population are children under the age of 14, and about 50% under 18.⁷¹ This demographic reality clearly underscores the devastating impact of the ongoing conflict on the most vulnerable. Whether referring to the systematic killing of people in the Strip following Hamas's attack on Israel on October 7, 2023, or to the cruel blockade imposed by Israel —first established in the 1990s and tightened significantly after Hamas took power in 2007 —the suffering of children is immense. Egypt, too, has maintained restrictions on the movement of people and goods since 2007. The blockade's restrictions on food and other humanitarian aid have been particularly cruel, and it is children who suffer the most.

October 7, 2023

The events that began on this date are well known – there is hardly a media outlet in the world that did not report on them, albeit from differing perspectives. Here, we will focus only on certain key features of the conflict, which escalated to the level of full-scale war and has since been described by many observers as a genocide against the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.

Since early 2023, attacks by Israeli settlers against Palestinians had intensified, leading to the displacement of hundreds of residents from their homes. In April 2024, violent clashes erupted around the *Al-Aqsa* Mosque, and in May, fighting broke out between the Israeli military and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad movement. Tensions deepened further in September: on the 13th, Israeli forces killed five Palestinians, claiming they were likely carrying explosives—an accusation Hamas denounced as a lie. Israel then imposed a temporary ban on the movement of people and goods, affecting thousands of Palestinian families. In response, Hamas placed its forces on high alert and, together with other Islamic groups, conducted joint military exercises. On September 29, Qatar, the United Nations and Egypt brokered an agreement between Hamas and Israel to reopen border crossings and allow the entry of food and other essential goods into Gaza.

⁷¹ Cf. Norman G. Finkelstein, *Gaza: An Inquest into Its Martyrdom*, University of California Press, 2021, p. 3.

In the days preceding the Hamas attack, Saudi Arabia warned Israel of a potential “explosion” due to the ongoing occupation and blockade of Gaza Strip. Similarly, three days before October 7, Egypt warned Israel that “the situation is expected to explode —and the explosion will be big.”⁷² Israel later denied receiving such a warning,⁷³ although U.S. Representative Michael McCaul, chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, stated that Egypt had indeed warned Israel three days before the attack.⁷⁴

Early in the morning of October 7, several thousand Hamas fighters — estimates range from 4,000 to 6,000 —along with other Islamic groups and Palestinian civilians, launched a coordinated assault on southern Israel using trucks, pickup vehicles, motorcycles and motorized gliders. The attack began with a massive barrage of several thousand rockets— between 2,500 and 4,300 according to various sources —fired into Israeli territory. Within one to two hours, the attackers entered Israeli territory, killing roughly one thousand people and capturing 250 others.

A significant number of casualties occurred at the Supernova Meets Sukkot outdoor music festival, held in celebration of the Jewish holidays of Sukkot (October 6) and Simchat Torah (October 7), where over 360 civilians and more than 30 military personnel were killed, and 44 people were taken captive.⁷⁵

Further events are also known: The attack was stopped, the Palestinians were driven out of Israeli territory, and Israeli security forces regrouped

⁷² Cf. Agencies, Egypt intelligence official says Israel ignored repeated warnings of 'something big', 9 October 2023, at: <https://www.timesofisrael.com/egypt-intelligence-official-says-israel-ignored-repeated-warnings-of-something-big/>.

⁷³ Cf. Jonathan Lis, 'Utterly Fake': Israel's National Security Adviser Denies Receiving Egyptian Warning of Hamas Attack, Oct 13, 2023, at: <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-10-13/ty-article/.premium/israels-national-security-adviser-denies-receiving-egyptian-warning-of-hamas-attack/0000018b-28c9-d1bc-a58b-69ef2ed70000>.

⁷⁴ Cf. AFP, Senior US lawmaker says Egypt warned Israel 3 days before onslaught, 11 October 2023, at: https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/senior-us-lawmaker-says-egypt-warned-israel-3-days-before-onslaught/.

⁷⁵ Cf. Nova music festival massacre, at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nova_music_festival_massacre.

along the Gaza border. In the following hours and days, Israeli forces began ground operations within the Palestinian territory.

Questions, Questions

When a proposition or event is well-explained and can be understood by the average intelligent person using natural reasoning, few or no questions arise. For example: “Israel’s land, air, and sea space are among the best-defended territories in the world; the interception of hostile land, missile, and sea weapons systems has never fallen below 90% efficiency during the last two or three decades of the Jewish state.” Given our knowledge of Israel’s history, its military and economic power, and Western defense capabilities today, we can reasonably assume this to be true.

However, when we hear a statement like this: “ Hamas surprised Israel and attacked it, penetrating deep into its territory, killing and capturing Israeli citizens without hindrance, and then was forced to withdraw,” we cannot help but raise our eyebrows and question how this is even possible. After all, no other country in the world that has a defense system as modern and powerful as Israel’s—built on the latest military and intelligence technologies and reinforced by decades of preparation in response to the hostile Muslim environment surrounding it. Israel’s borders are lined with advanced military facilities, weapons systems, and surveillance technologies that can detect any movement, down to the smallest details—whether birds, flies, or people. Moreover, the buffer zone along the border, which has expanded from 100 meters to 300 meters, now effectively places anyone within 1.5 kilometers of the border at risk of Israeli attack. This buffer zone occupies 17% of the entire Gaza Strip.⁷⁶

That is why we cannot help but ask questions about what happened on October 7. In fact, our questions mirror those of anyone familiar with the Middle East conflict. Barely a month after the attack, investigative journalists at *the New York Times* reported that Israeli intelligence had possessed,

⁷⁶Cf. International Middle East Media Center, PCHR-Gaza: Israeli Buffer Zone Policies Typically Enforced with Live Fire, May 11, 2015, at: <https://imemc.org/article/71548/>. [Editor’s note: Given all these defenses, the question arises: how could Hamas breach Israel’s borders so easily and with such devastating impact?]

for more than a year before the October 7 invasion, the exact plan for the assault—including details such as an initial massive rocket strike, the use of combat drones to disable cameras, security systems, and automated machine guns along the border, and tactics for infiltrating Israeli territory using trucks, pickup trucks, motorcycles, gliders, and even on foot. “ Hamas followed this plan with astonishing precision,” adds *the New York Times*.⁷⁷

Many more questions could be raised that deepen the mystery of how such an attack was even possible. Yet we are convinced that any unbiased reader already senses at least one answer to these questions: that the invaders were, in one way or another, allowed—or even invited—to enter Israel and commit the atrocities they carried out, driven by their political and religious motivations.

After such reasoning, another logical question arises: why would Israel make such a sacrifice? The most apparent answer—clear even to those only vaguely familiar with Israeli politics—is that Israel needed a justification to address its hostile surroundings. Much of this environment seeks its destruction, while another segment still clings to the increasingly unrealistic notion of “two states on one territory.”

The subsequent events of the genocide of the Palestinians in Gaza have fully confirmed this view. Israel continues, and appears determined to continue, the systematic destruction of men, women and children in the Gaza Strip until the area—360 sq. km in total—is effectively emptied and brought under Israeli control. Some also point to a broader goal connected to the *Al-Aqsa Mosque* and the long-standing ambition of asserting full Israeli sovereignty over Jerusalem.

Another serious question arises regarding the world community’s reaction to Israeli’s response to the attack. And it is indeed a serious question, because, when reasoning with natural logic, it is difficult to comprehend how

⁷⁷ Ronen Bergman and Adam Goldman, Israel knew Hamas’s attack plan more than a year ago, 30 Nov. 30, 2023, Updated Dec. 2, 2023, at: <https://www.ny-times.com/2023/11/30/world/middleeast/israel-hamas-attack-intelligence.html>.

a small country (even if it is Israel) can carry out genocide almost unhindered, regardless of the outrage or indifference it provokes. The genocide continues, and it seems no one is able—or willing—to do anything about it.

Lest anyone think we are alone in labeling these actions as genocide, it is important to emphasize that the majority of the international community shares this assessment. The UN Special Committee on Israeli Policy in Gaza has warned the UN General Assembly: “Our report leaves no doubt: a large-scale genocide is unfolding before our eyes, and if we continue to act, it will destroy the very foundation of international law that we have jointly adopted to protect the peace, security and well-being of all people. Our inaction today sets a cruel precedent for the future. Just think about it.”⁷⁸

Amnesty International has also been unequivocal in its assessments: “Our report examines the policies and actions of the Israeli authorities (...), assesses the allegations against Israel of violence and crimes in the Gaza Strip under international law and from the perspective of the definitions of genocide, concluding that there is sufficient evidence that since October 7, 2023, Israel has been committing genocide in the Gaza Strip.”⁷⁹

Dozens of other countries have condemned Israel's actions, categorically defining them as genocide against the population of the Gaza Strip. While space does not allow us to enumerate every nation, it is unnecessary to reiterate what is obvious to any rational observer.

But the serious question remains: why does Israel continue to destroy the Palestinian population of the Gaza Strip despite widespread protests and concrete political measures taken by many countries against it? Measures

⁷⁸ United Nations. The Question of Palestine. Report of the Special Committee. 19 November 2024, at: <https://archive.ph/20250410202716/https://www.un.org/unispal/document/un-special-committee-press-release-19nov24/>. Here is another document from two months ago: United Nations, General Assembly. The Question of Palestine. Genocide, Displacement and Starvation in Gaza: The Urgent Need for a Permanent Ceasefire and Protection of Civilians – Letter from the State of Palestine, 23 April 2025, at: <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/letter-from-the-state-of-palestine-23apr25/>.

⁷⁹ Amnesty International, Report: 'You Feel Like You Are Subhuman': Israel's Genocide Against Palestinians in Gaza, 5 December 2024, p. 13, at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde15/8668/2024/en/>.

have been imposed on Hamas, and for now, the terrorists are largely prevented from acting. But not Israel – it continues to commit atrocities. This is where we begin to enter the realm of “big politics,” or rather, the “big game” played by the powerful politicians who pull the world’s strings.

Hamas and Islam⁸⁰

Those who think critically today know that, in the world of “big” politics, there is no clear-cut right or wrong – only interests. These interests are tied to power, money, and influence. But at the core, the truth remains: “to-day I do what pleases me.” In personal life, this philosophy only impacts the individual and their immediate circle – family and friends. On the global stage, however, it affects vast populations, sometimes the entire world. Naturally, politicians on the world stage will often cloak their actions with references to international law and appeals to what is best for societies, for individual well-being. After all, a lie must be dressed up in something so that its true nature cannot easily be seen.

So, Hamas. Let's take a closer look. Weren't they once considered the “good guys”? Didn't they support the “moderate opposition” in Syria and fight against Assad at one point? After all, these “rebels” were hailed as bringing democracy to Syria, and the new Western liberals praised their “democratic” actions (which often consisted of beheadings and raping Syrian women). But now, Hamas has suddenly become the villain and is labeled as terrorists (which, to be fair, they are—since only terrorists can commit the atrocities they did on October 7). Why? Because they attempted to “make peace” with Assad and returned to their original goal of working toward the destruction of Israel.

And what about the numerous rallies that took place across many Western European cities, where crowds celebrated the strike against Israel? What was most striking was that those gathered were not only Muslims from the diaspora but also white representatives of the new liberal movements. Naturally, those who understand the deeper dynamics are not surprised, for they

⁸⁰ The topic of Hamas and Islam is based on an idea from a Facebook posting from two years ago by user Irini Zikidis. (Author's note.)

know that the Muslim Brotherhood has long established roots in many European cities and even in some local governments. And they also know that Hamas is, in essence, the militant core of the Muslim Brotherhood.

The new communists, the modern liberals, were the very ones who helped usher this form of political Islam into Europe—and now they find it unsettling. Yet, for decades they have been promoting and accommodating it within their cities and institutions. Who empowered it with money, influence and social legitimacy? Its Arab allies and the European liberals themselves.⁸¹ Today, it has even become difficult to track the financial “donations” made to Hamas by various Western countries, not to mention its well-known backers in the Middle Eastern and Far Eastern.

But this is the nature of big politics— “the big game.” When it suits certain interests, it will politicize issues in favor of one side, and when it no longer serves its purpose, it will turn against them, slandering or even taking measures to “blind” the eyes of the public. This manipulation is part of the game.

Now, let’s return to the Middle East, where yesterday’s enemies suddenly become friends, and vice versa. Just a few years ago, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, and Israel signed a “historic agreement” for peace. This truce between former adversaries naturally caused shockwaves throughout the region, and almost immediately led to a surprising shift – namely, the rapprochement between Qatar, Iran, and Turkey. In the summer of 2020, this thaw in relations coincided with a meeting between Hamas and Hezbollah– something that would have been unthinkable in previous decades.⁸²

⁸¹ Cf. *Deutsche Welle* from four years ago: “Qatar is Hamas’s main financial supporter and ally (...) so far the emirate has transferred \$1.8 million (...), but the organization is also supported by numerous non-state initiatives and foundations, some of which are in Germany; and monetary donations from Germany are increasing, as *Der Spiegel* testifies “ (in David Ehl, What is Hamas and who supports it? *Deutsche Welle*, 15 May 2021, at: <https://www.dw.com/en/who-is-hamas/a-57537872>).

⁸² It is hard to imagine what common goal or common “good” could bring together Sunni Hamas and Shiite Hezbollah, based in Lebanon, which many consider to be the conduit for Iranian policy in the Middle East. During the war in Syria, when Iran supported the

The topic of the Muslim Brotherhood has somewhat faded from the spotlight in recent years, but if we go back a few years to the time of the “Arab Springs,” when several long-standing regimes were overthrown, we can see clearly what the “great game” really entails. During that period, the Muslim Brotherhood began to promote a slightly “softer” version of Islam, incorporating elements of democracy, which likely misled many in the West—including then-US President Barack Obama. This led to another surprising shift in alliances: Israel, the Emirates, and Saudi Arabia supported Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi’s military coup to remove the Muslim Brotherhood from power. This approach was similarly adopted in Libya.

Benjamin Netanyahu, for his part, was quick to expel George Soros and all his liberal NGOs from Israel, aligning with a broader geopolitical strategy. Meanwhile, Syria emerged as a battleground between several major international players. One side, the Obama administration and the European Union supported the actions of the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria. On the other side, the Lebanese Hezbollah, Syria, and Iran, rallied against the Brotherhood. The Middle Eastern “troika” of Israel, Saudi Arabia, and the Emirates, which had initially been in conflict with Assad, found themselves united in a shared interest: they all sought to overthrow Assad but were equally determined to prevent the Muslim Brotherhood from seizing power.

When Donald Trump was elected in 2016 and shifted U.S. policy to a friendlier stance toward Israel—cutting off funding for “Arab Spring” initiatives and all Muslim Brotherhood-linked groups in the Middle East and Africa and attempting to curb China’s regional expansion—the new liberals (especially in the American liberal press) denounced him as short-sighted for trying to label the Muslim Brotherhood a terrorist organization. They somehow forgot the movement’s slogan, “Islam is the solution,” which it has consistently tried to realize since its founding by Hassan al-Banna in Egypt in 1928. Of course, the Muslim Brotherhood routinely promotes “peace, love, tolerance,” “Islam for everyone,” and communal values over individual demands – messages that appealed to many in Western societies and to some

government of Bashar al-Assad, Hezbollah fought against the Muslim Brotherhood, using various groups for its war.

governments. Yet people overlooked that the Muslim Brotherhood, and Hamas at its core, continue to adhere to the movement's founding creed: "Allah is our goal, the Quran is our constitution, the Prophet is our leader, Jihad is our way, and death for the sake of Allah is the highest of aspirations."

If we examine public life in the West more closely, we cannot ignore the numerous Islamic organizations that seem to be independent of each other but are undeniably advancing the same ideological agenda- the cause of Islam, which has been championed for nearly a century by groups like the Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas.⁸³ One prominent example is Islamic Relief Worldwide, a charity based in Birmingham, UK. It is not only the largest Muslim charity in the UK but also the largest in the world, with offices in over 50 countries and hundreds of millions of dollars in funding. The organization holds consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council, maintains relations with the European Commission, the Red Cross and Red Crescent, and many other global entities.

However, the organization has been involved in numerous controversies. In the summer of 2020, a major scandal erupted when the entire board of directors resigned over comments made by its chairman, Almutaz Tayara, which were widely perceived as antisemitic and supportive of terrorist organizations. A similar scandal occurred in Germany that same year, where politicians accused Islamic Relief of having ties to the Muslim Brotherhood or groups connected to the Islamic movement.

Is this behavior new for the organization? Have Westerners forgotten that in 2014, Israel banned Islamic Relief due to its ties to the Muslim Brotherhood, and the United Arab Emirates labeled it a terrorist organization?

Our story about Islamic Relief Worldwide is just one example among many. There are numerous other, though smaller and less influential, Islamic organizations operating across the globe. However, just as the allegations concerning Islamic Relief have faded from public attention, so too have similar cases involving other Muslim organizations with reported ties to groups operating in the Middle East and beyond.

⁸³See <https://islamic-relief.org/>.

This raises an important question: Are such developments simply overlooked, or is there a deliberate permissiveness toward the growing presence of Islamic institutions in Western societies? Some may regard such a thought as a conspiracy theory, yet don't the facts seem to support it? We can clearly observe a steady increase in the number of Muslims in Western societies, along with the increasingly apparent decline of Christianity in people's everyday lives. Not to mention the "mandatory" appointments of minorities representatives to various positions - just look at how many prominent roles have been filled by Muslims in accordance with laws and regulations promoting the so-called "multicultural nature" of society.

We should recall that Islam has functioned as a political doctrine since its inception, with a worldview fundamentally different from the Christian one. It imposes a collectivist philosophy and practice, seemingly aligning with the globalist and liberal promotion of collectivism in the Western world. And isn't the goal of today's social engineers similar: to gradually erase individual rights and personal worldviews in order to subordinate the individual to the "needs" of society?

Have we forgotten that the individual in a Muslim society is bound by norms that enforce self-censorship, to such an extent that the likelihood of him emerging as a revolutionary in an Islamic environment is almost negligible, whereas in a Christian context, such revolutionary thinking is often seen as a duty of the believer.

Is there anything more advantageous for globalists than a society that has lost the ability to assess life critically and is incapable of desiring change or resisting totalitarian pressure on its consciousness? Although contemporary Islam in the West presents itself as a religion of peace, a cultural trait rather than a faith, and emphasizes community as the foundation of life, we only need to look at events in the Middle East to be reminded of its true character.

Genocide in a Time of Global Uncertainty and Unpredictability

Let's return to Israel and world politics.⁸⁴ In recent months, it has become increasingly clear that the interests of the major players shaping world affairs are constantly shifting. Until recently, the West was positioned against with Russia, China, Iran, North Korea, and some African and South American governments. After the arrival of Trump, however, the balance of power tilted in a different direction, revealing a new distribution of global influence.

Various state alliances that were not previously impossible now promise significant upheavals in societies, many of which remain unsure whom to trust or turn to for help in times of need. It seems that only two countries – Israel and China – remain largely unaffected by these global changes. Both continue to pursue their chosen policies and long-term goals with remarkable consistency, regardless of the upheavals that have shaped the world over the last seven or eight decades.

The events in the Middle East since October 7 could once again tip the balance of world power. The Israeli strikes on nuclear facilities in Iran in June of this year, together with the American strikes on June 22, suggest a potential escalation of military actions in the region—and perhaps even beyond it.

Given the recent developments in Israel and its neighboring countries, it remains uncertain whether Israel will achieve its goal of genocide against the Palestinian population in Gaza or whether its strategy will shift in another direction, at least temporarily setting aside its plan to capture the Strip and include it within the borders of the Jewish state. The world today is too uncertain for anyone to make confident predictions, but one thing is clear: the chaos in world politics and within individual societies is far from over. As

⁸⁴ While describing the various ways in which Hamas is supported by different organizations and countries, we must also note that the same applies to Israel. In its war against the Palestinians, especially since October 7, 2023, Israel has been receiving the assistance, equipment, and technology from numerous companies across the world; cf. e.g. a UN report from July 1, 2025: Federica Marsi, UN report lists companies complicit in Israel's 'genocide': Who are they? 1 July 2025, at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/7/1/un-report-lists-companies-complicit-in-israels-genocide-who-are-they>. In his investigation, the author describes the activities of 48 organizations and companies from different countries that continue to provide assistance to Israel in its war against the people of Palestine.

long as this global instability persists, countries like Israel and their policies of genocide against anyone who would oppose them cannot be stopped.

They cannot be stopped – not because there is no strength to do so, but because there is no will. The interests of the major global players are directed elsewhere, and few seem genuinely concerned about the genocide currently taking place. Of course, statements are made, reports are published, and the actions of both Israel and Hamas are publicly condemned – enough, perhaps, for societies to believe that their governments and international organizations are taking action. Yet beyond these words, events continue to unfold precisely in the direction that someone has anticipated.

It is becoming increasingly clear to many that the era of the so-called international organizations —such as the United Nation, the World Health Organization (WHO), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)—is coming to an end. The only states still implementing the decisions of these “international” bodies are those bound by legacy treaties and alliances, such as NATO, the European Union, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the World Bank, UNESCO, and others.

Meanwhile, countries like China, Russia, Iran, and several African and South American nations have long ceased to follow the directives of these organizations. Although still former members, in practice they no longer comply with their decisions. Unlike during the so-called pandemic of 2020—when the UN and WHO exerted influence over nearly every nation — today these bodies, and others like them, hold only partial authority.⁸⁵

⁸⁵ We are speaking not only about the international character of these organizations but also about the flow of information flow—especially through the Internet—given that many countries now maintain their own networks, separate from or only minimally connected to the “global network” dominated by Microsoft, Apple, and other major technology companies. The current fragmentation of political and informational strategies, as a reaction against globalism, may encourage the formation of new relationships among the great powers —relationships that were once impossible and that remain difficult to define even today. It appears that Bulgaria, as a member of the EU, will likely continue to follow the rules and decisions of the UN, EU, WHO, and IMF for a long time to come, adhering to the policies these organizations.

In the current global situation, we can only speak and reflect on Israel's genocide against the Palestinians, but we can do little in practical terms. We are too bound by the interests of the major world powers and too entangled in our own problems, which often seem more important to us than the suffering, displacement, starvation, and murder endured by people living on a mere 360 square kilometers of land, just fifteen hundred kilometers away from us.

ZIONISM IS...ANTISEMITISM – FOUR THESES WITH A PRELUDE

Atanas Dimitrov

Zionists hate Jews. But how so? How can a project for a great, powerful and independent Jewish state harm Jews or even more – be a project of hatred against themselves? How could it be an antisemitic project?

Much has been said about the origins of Zionism. About its supremacist genesis; about its extremely anti-Christian aspirations; about its hostility toward, and disrespect for, other ethnicities, cultures, faiths, and nations; about its overt militarism and brutal *realpolitik*⁸⁶ (a merciless pursuit of national interest). There has also been much said about its effectiveness as a dominant political-religious construct. Is it effective? Definitely—often to the detriment of other nations and peoples. Seemingly always to the benefit of the people and the state idea in whose name it was created. But is this really so?

This work presents four theses on why Zionism is an antisemitic doctrine. Looking at its fruits—if we use biblical terminology—that is, following the results of its application, such an argument is not difficult to make. We also see endless attempts by world media, politicians, academics, international organizations and cultural figures in recent decades to convince us of exactly the opposite: that there is an equals sign between Jewish ethnicity (in a broad sense, as we will be discussed later in the article) and, on the

⁸⁶ See the article “Realpolitik and the Return of Cruelty” on the website of “Freedom for All” from October 23, 2024. <https://svobodazavseki.com/realpolitik-and-the-return-of-cruelty/>.

other hand, the Jewish religion, the political movement of Zionism, and the Jewish state of Israel —where criticism of one is equivalent to criticism of the others. This is a logical absurdity, of course, although in some countries — such as the USA, for example — anti-Zionism is officially equated by the authorities with antisemitism.⁸⁷

But first, a prelude with three definitions to distinguish between the perceptions of the terms we will be dealing with, as dictated by modern politics, and theological reality.

Definition 1: Israel, Semites, Jews, Israelites

These terms are often used interchangeably, without much insight into their differences and nuances. Since the focus of this issue of the journal is on the theological truth revealed to us through the Old and New Testament Christian scriptures, we need to briefly look at the biblical genealogy of the origin of peoples (without delving into the historical and linguistic sciences that study these terms) in order to understand what the above ethnonyms mean from this starting point.

Israel. I open this parenthesis, although our Lord Jesus Christ recommends to us, through Apostle Paul, not to pay too much attention to family trees and bloodlines (cf. 1 Tim. 1:4), one reason being that, through the revelations of the New Testament and His coming to earth, He made it clear that the spirit is essential, not the flesh. That is, with regard to the salvation of man, we all have only one path to reach it: Christ; and regarding the value of the human soul and life: we are all equally valuable—there are no more valuable or less valuable people and nations. What is in the heart of a person, rather than in the body, is key, and the true (in spirit) offspring of Abraham is spiritual Israel, i.e. the church, made up of believers in Christ — both Jews and Greeks, Bulgarians and Russians and Americans, etc.:

⁸⁷ Cf. H.Res.894 - Strongly condemning and denouncing the drastic rise of antisemitism in the United States and around the world. 118th Congress (2023-2024). <https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-resolution/894>.

For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise. (Galatians 3:26-29)

The Gospel of John even records a case in which ethnic (by blood and conviction) Jews claimed their privilege, being Abraham's offspring and "God's special people." The Lord Jesus Christ Himself directly explained to them that they were neither special nor Abraham's offspring (even though they were so by flesh), because God was not present in their hearts and because their father was the devil (cf. John 8:39-42).

In this line of thought, there are at least four definitions of "Israel" between which we must distinguish:

1. Israel – the ancient state of the Jewish people and the ethnonym for the ancient nation of the Jews.
2. Israel – the people of God in the Old Testament, through whom the Scriptures reached the peoples of the world and from whom the Son of God was born on earth.
3. Israel – God's people in the New Testament, made up of all believers, regardless of ethnic origin.
4. Israel – the modern State of Israel.

While the political reality in 2025 uses "Israel" primarily in reference to the current Jewish state and nation, the biblical reality points to point 3 above as the only one that is important from a theological perspective.

Ethnonyms. We have defined who spiritual Israel is (and who is real in the higher sense). It is also appropriate to explain the differences —again, from a theological point of view —between the ethnic terms "Semites," "Jews," and "Israelites." These are terms that should not be used as synonyms, because they are not. For this purpose, below you will see a brief and selective compilation of the family tree of the peoples and ethnicities in

question, according to what is described in the book of Genesis from the Old Testament:

Generation:	Father/sons:	They originate from:
1	Noah -> Shem, Ham and Japheth (Genesis 10:32)	All peoples of the Earth
2	Shem -> Elam, Asshur, Arphaxad, Lud and Aram	The Semitic peoples
3	Aram -> Uz, Ul, Gether and Mash	
4	Arphaxad -> Sala	
5	Sala -> Ever	
6	Ever -> Falek and Joktan	The Jewish peoples
7	Peleg -> Ragav	
8	Ragav -> Seruh	
9	Seruh -> Nahor	
10	Nahor -> Tara	
11	Tara -> Abraham, Nahor and Aran	
12	Abraham (the father of faith) -> Isaac and Ishmael, etc. (Genesis 25)	Spiritual Israel
13	Isaac -> Esau and Jacob	
14	Jacob (called Israel) -> 12 sons, from whom the 12 tribes of Israel descended, including Judah (the fourth son; Genesis 29)	The Israelites
15	Judah	The Jews

Table 1. Biblical Origin of Nations

If we carefully follow the biblical texts, we see – from the bottom up – that: 1) the Jews are only one (1/12) of the tribes of Israel; 2) the Israelites are one of two nations descended from Isaac, and one of several nations descended from Abraham; 3) Abraham's descendants are one of the many Jew-

ish nations (the nations descended from Eber, six generations before Abraham); 4) the Jewish nations are only one part of the Semitic nations (descended from Shem).

This topic has an infinite number of nuances from a historical, linguistic, theological and other points of view and is the subject of countless academic studies conducted over the centuries, with a wide variety of different theses. It was necessary to focus on the biblical source in order to distinguish the biblical concept of the terms from the meaning of the unified term “Jew,” used today both in Bulgaria and around the world.ⁱ Presumably, “Jew” is used according to the current political reality to describe the following:

- A person who identifies as Jewish (as postmodern as it may sound);
- and/or a person professing one of the branches of the religion of Judaism;
- and/or a person with a presumed or actual ethnic connection to the ancient Israelite people;
- and/or a person who is a citizen of the modern State of Israel.

So, who is Israel in the flesh? Another reason why engaging in genealogies is a futile and counterproductive endeavor (cf. 1 Tim 1:4) is that we should immediately ask the logical follow-up question: what percentage of blood common to the original Israelites must a person have in order to be classified as an Israelite? 100%? 50%? 1%?

There are quite a few studies of the genetic makeup of the Semitic peoples and the peoples inhabiting Palestine, the Levant, and the Near East, which show that, for example, Palestinians are much closer ethnically to the ancient Israelites than European Jews from Central and Eastern Europe,⁸⁸ who are genetically closest to Italians and the French. I mention this line of thought as yet another argument pointing to the absurdity of tracing family trees, their use in arguments concerning spiritual matters, and the bottomless

⁸⁸ Cf. Glausiusz. J. Blood Brothers: Palestinians and Jews Share Genetic Roots. Haaretz. October 15, 2015. <https://www.haaretz.com/science-and-health/2015-10-20/ty-article/palestinians-and-jews-share-genetic-roots/0000017f-dc0e-df9c-a17f-fe1e57730000>

pit of research and controversy on the subject, given that theological truth categorically states that flesh, genes, and blood relationships have no bearing on the spiritual reality, value, and salvation of a person.

In other words, the modern Jewish people (in or outside the State of Israel) are simply one of hundreds and thousands of peoples in the world; some believe in Jesus Christ, some do not, and a third group (of certain religious denominations) are fierce enemies of Christ.

Definition 2: Zionism

The Oxford English Dictionary says the following about Zionism:⁸⁹ “A movement for (originally) the restoration and (nowadays) the development and defense of a Jewish state, which is currently Israel.”

The Encyclopædia Britannica expands the definition, stating that Zionism is “a Jewish nationalist movement aimed at the creation and support of a Jewish nation-state in Palestine, the ancient homeland of the Jews.”⁹⁰

The Jewish Virtual Library, a project of the American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise (a non-governmental organization dedicated to strengthening American-Israeli relations, abbreviated AICE), lists a number of different types of Zionism on its library website:⁹¹ political Zionism, religious Zionism, American Zionism, Christian Zionism, Messianic Zionism, territorial Zionism, etc.

Looking back to the Old Testament scriptures and to the history of the ancient Jewish people, who were four times settled in the Promised Land of Palestine and three times exiled from there, we see the source of modern Zionism—namely, the unquenched centuries-old pain of the Jewish people for “their” land (of course, arguments can certainly be made that Zionism has perverted this idea and this dream beyond recognition). Here is a brief historical and biblical context:

⁸⁹ Definition of Zionism in US English: Zionism. <https://web.archive.org/web/20181225204638/https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/us/zionism>.

⁹⁰ Britannica. Zionism. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Zionism>.

⁹¹ Cf. Jewish Virtual Library. Zionism. <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/zionism>.

Exodus of the Jewish people from Palestine:

1. In Egypt - probably around 1250 BC.
2. In Babylon – between 597 – 586 BC.
3. From the Roman Empire – in 70 AD.

Settlements there too:

1. Originally through Abraham – around 2000 BC, if we assume that Abraham equals the Jewish people, which is not factually correct according to the Old Testament, as can be seen from the table in *Definition 1* above.
2. Through Moses – after Egyptian slavery around 1400 BC.
3. After the collapse of the Babylonian Empire, during the reign of King Cyrus II the Great of Medo-Persia, in 538 BC.
4. Finally – assuming that the modern Jewish people have the same ethnic composition as the ancient ones, or that they are indeed, for whatever reason, their successors – at the end of the 19th and the first half of the 20th centuries, before and after the formation of the new State of Israel in 1948, during the original Zionist migration and the British Mandate.

Taking into account the above statement and the definitions of the AICE, it becomes impossible to speak of Zionism solely as a political movement. For the purposes of this essay, we will use a general and generally accepted (by default) definition of “Zionism” that includes the characteristics of territorial Zionism (dreams of a Greater Israel), religious Zionism (the Promised Land of Palestine of the Old Testament, promised to the ancient Jewish people by God, and the ethnic-racial superiority and domination over other peoples promoted by the authors of the Talmud), and political Zionism (a strong and independent Jewish state professing the principles of harsh *realpolitik*, supported by a world Jewry working in this direction).

Definition 3: Antisemitism

The term “antisemitism,” according to the logic of the biblical definitions above, should be used for manifestations of hatred (whatever that means) towards all Semitic peoples. Moreover, if we follow biblical genealogies or genetic studies, the term should apply to a greater extent to Palestinians, for example, than to a significant part of the Jewish diaspora around the world. The result is an absurdity in which we would have to say that the Israeli state and the Israeli army are committing an antisemitic crime through their actions (genocide) against the Palestinian people in Gaza.

That aside, following the biblical genealogy set forth in *Definition 1*, we should divide the peoples of the world into three arche-ethnos:

- Semitic peoples: all those who descend from Shem;
- Japhethian peoples: all who descend from Japheth;
- Hamite peoples: all who descend from Ham.

The term “antisemitism” nowadays, however, just like the term “Jews,” is used in a different sense, aside from its literal meaning according to the biblical logic of “hatred or harmful action against Semitic persons or peoples.” Generally speaking, the term currently means hatred of the Jewish people (persons identifying as Jews and/or citizens of the State of Israel, etc.), and its misuse by totalitarian demagogues and culture carriers —aiming to silence criticism against harmful actions or words of people of alleged or real Jewish origin, those professing a form of Judaism, working for the interests of Zionism, or against the actions of the State of Israel —has been widely discussed and continues to be discussed increasingly often.⁹²

The widespread meaning of “antisemitism” today is a grandiose straw construct built on distorted facts, insinuations, missing definitions of terms, and the selective, self-serving direction of its use as a silencer of criticism and a bludgeon against opponents of, for example, Zionism (such as the 2024 decision of the US Congress, which ruled that anti-Zionism equals antisemitism). “Anti-Semite used to mean a person who does not like Jews. Now it

⁹²See issue 62 of the magazine “Freedom for All” and the article “Judaism in Christianity and Antisemitism as Tools of Censorship”. December 2023. <https://svoboda-zavseki.com/download/sv-br62/>.

means a person whom Zionists do not like,” said Dr. Chayo Meyer, a Jewish Holocaust survivor, years ago, quoted by the website of Jews Against Racist Zionism.⁹³

There is no biblical concept of antisemitism. Any fictitious, subjective, and misleading terms for “hate crimes,” such as “anti-Egyptianism” (hatred of Egyptians), “anti-Japhethism” (hatred of peoples descended from Japheth), “anti-Leviticism” (hatred of the third tribe of Israel), etc., do not exist at all.

Thesis 1: Zionism was started by anti-Semites

Although, as we mentioned, the idea of Zionism finds its origin in the Old Testament writings and the interests of the then-Israeli people, modern Zionism can be seen, to some extent, as an antisemitic creation. After the unsuccessful attempts and calls during the Haskalah (the Jewish Enlightenment of the 18th century) for Jews to be assimilated and integrated into European culture, a counter-idea was formed: instead of integration into Europe, all Jews should be settled in a territory designated for them.

Put another way – “an ethnic group or people should be displaced and moved somewhere else,” — we would be one step closer to the definition of “ethnic cleansing,” which, of course, is a matter of perspective.

Nazi Germany called it “expulsion,” “deportation,” and “purification,” while the Zionists called it “settlement” and “rescue.” Here, the interests of Nazi Germany and the Zionists overlapped. History remembers the Ha'avara Agreement of 1933:⁹⁴ an agreement between Nazi Germany, the Zionist Association of Germany, and the Anglo-Palestine Bank (a Jewish institution) for the settlement of 60,000 German Jews in Palestine.

⁹³Meyer, H. Jewish Auschwitz survivor Dr Hajo Meyer: “An anti-Semite used to be a person who disliked Jews. Now it is a person who Jews dislike.” May 12, 2021. <https://sites.google.com/site/jewsagainstracistzionism/meyer>.

⁹⁴ Cf. Jewish Virtual Library. Haavara. <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/haavara>.

There are many connections with Nazi Germany.⁹⁵ Another example is Adolf Eichmann, an SS officer and a key player in organizing the Holocaust and the Final Solution to the Jewish Question, who saw Zionism as aligning with the Nazi Party's ideas about settling Jews in Palestine. Jewish writer Richard Silverstein cites several sources on the subject⁹⁶ and provides the following quote from Eichmann: "I am also a Zionist. I want every Jew to go to Palestine."

Similar shocking words are attributed to Theodor Herzl, known as the "creator of Zionism": "Even if entire clans of Jews have to be destroyed, it is worth it, as long as a Jewish state in Palestine is created."⁹⁷

In order to avoid yellow journalism and shock effects, I note that, yes – the quotes are out of context. The purpose of sharing them is to show that the diametrically different starting positions of the Nazis and the Zionists in those years overlapped in a strange and grotesque way on a practical level, and at the very least point to a non-idealized view of the cause of Zionism.

Another key figure in the history of Zionism is British Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour, who sent his emblematic letter to Lord Walter Rothschild in 1917 (the Balfour Declaration), which *de facto* began the creation of the Jewish state and the settlement of Jews in Palestine. In his introduction to the book "History of Zionism: 1600 – 1918"⁹⁸ by Jewish writer Nahum Sokolov, Balfour says the following:

⁹⁵ This article by the Jew Stephen Moore, a "vehement critic of Zionism," in his own words, contributes another perspective. Cf. Moore, S. Consortium News. The Treachery of the Nazi-Zionist Alliance. June 24, 2024. <https://consortiumnews.com/2024/06/24/the-treachery-of-the-nazi-zionist-alliance/>.

⁹⁶ Silverstein, R. Adolf Eichmann: "If I Were a Jew, I'd be a Fanatical Zionist." May 27, 2016. <https://www.richardsilverstein.com/2016/05/27/adolf-eichmann-if-i-were-a-jew-id-be-a-fanatical-zionist/>.

⁹⁷ Najjar, R. CounterCurrents. Annexation or Uneventful Occurrence - what do you see? June 16, 2020. <https://countercurrents.org/2020/06/annexation-or-uneventful-occurrence%E2%80%8A-%E2%80%8Awhat-do-you-see/>.

⁹⁸ Balfour, A. and Sokolow, N. History of Zionism, 1600-1918, Vol. 1. 1919. <https://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/70864/pg70864-images.html>.

For, as I understand its meaning (i.e. Zionism), among other things, it is a serious attempt to alleviate the centuries-old misery created for Western civilization by the existence in its midst of a Body which for too long has been considered alien and even hostile, but which in due course has been equally impossible to expel or absorb. Certainly, for this reason alone [Zionism] must receive our support.

Thesis 2: Zionism is hated by Jews

From the very beginning of the new secular idea of Zionism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, a large portion of Jews around the world have been opposed to:

The Zionist movement, which can rightly be seen as an outgrowth of the traditional Jewish aspiration to return to Palestine, nevertheless meant the secularization of this ideal, with an emphasis placed primarily on the national rather than the religious character of Judaism. It was this secular and non-religious approach of the Zionists at the very beginning of their movement that provoked opposition from various Orthodox and Conservative segments of American - Jewry.⁹⁹

Jewish opposition is not just a thing of the past. Today, there are many Jewish thinkers critical of the State of Israel and the Zionist idea, both within Israel and around the world. One such example is the International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network (IJAN), whose followers succinctly and accurately describe their main criticism of the movement on their website:

We protest against the exploitation of Zionism and the desecration of the history of Jewish persecution and genocide to justify that

⁹⁹ Cohen, N. The Reaction of Reform Judaism in America to Political Zionism (1897–1922). *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society* 40, no. 4 (1951), pp. 361–94. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43059795>.

which cannot be justified – the colonization of Palestine and the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians, the theft of their land and the destruction of their families, communities and way of life.¹⁰⁰

Another example is the organization IfNotNow (INN). This Jewish movement frequently participates in public debates in Israel on topics related to Zionism and anti-Zionism, as well as in protests against the state. Their main arguments are similar to those mentioned so far, with INN standing against war and authoritarianism, opposing Israel's ethnic cleansing in Gaza, and calling for an end to all funding of the state of Israel by the United States and taxpayers.¹⁰¹

The Jewish Virtual Library has a well-referenced article that is an excellent starting point for exploring the topic of Jewish anti-Zionism, both historically and in modern times.¹⁰² There are also rabbis who emphasize the antisemitism of Zionism,¹⁰³ and the resistance to the ideology has an international character across various spheres.¹⁰⁴

Thesis 3: Zionism strengthens antisemitism

A natural human reaction in the face of injustice is for the spirit to grumble. And when the injustice is great—such as in the Armenian genocide, the massacres of Bulgarians during the suppression of the April Uprising, or the endless atrocities during World War II, such as the Holocaust, the bombings of Dresden, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the rapes of millions in Berlin—the reaction naturally grows in intensity, mass acceptance, collective memory, and rebellion against evil.

¹⁰⁰International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network. Who we are. March 5, 2014. <https://ijan.org/who-we-are/>.

¹⁰¹ Cf. IfNotNow. Our Principles. <https://www.ifnotnowmovement.org/principles>.

¹⁰² Cf. Greenfeld, K. Jewish Virtual Library. Anti-Zionism Among Jews. <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/anti-zionism-among-jews>.

¹⁰³ One example: Rabbi Weiss, Y. The Voice. Zionism Is the Real Antisemitism – A Betrayal of Judaism. May 25, 2025. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XhnIZTMM2-w>.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Lauria, J. Consortium News. Three Blows Against Zionism in a Single Day. June 26, 2025. <https://consortiumnews.com/2025/06/26/three-blows-against-zionism-in-a-single-day/>.

Such is the case with the genocide and total humiliation of the Palestinian people in Gaza, as well as the *de facto* apartheid against the same people there and in the West Bank. Against such injustice, unless one's conscience is completely hardened, an outcry is inevitable. The more such examples of uncompromising policies in the name of the Zionist idea erupt, the more noticeable the growth of hatred among bystanders becomes. This hatred is easily transferred to the entire Jewish people of today. The bystander sees that the State of Israel—the state of the Jews—is acting in a supremacist, cruel and destructive manner and associates these actions with Jewishness, whatever spectrum of definition we use here. Whether due to ignorance, lack of detailed knowledge, delusion, or the (un)conscious turning of a blind eye to the complexities of the topic, the result is the same: antisemitism, defined as hatred against today's Jews, is growing around the world, encompassing Zionists, anti-Zionists, neutral Jews, and others; in other words, the innocent are blamed alongside the guilty.¹⁰⁵

Thesis 4: Zionism destroys the Jews (for eternity)

I have saved the most important thesis for last. The ideas of Zionism influence both directly and indirectly not only the life and well-being of Jews in this world but also their eternal destiny. Those dedicated to the Zionist idea—especially where it overlaps with religious Zionism, but not only—through the failure to recognize biblical truths, the unclear use of concepts, and, above all, through the ideologization of the State of Israel and its goals (this inseparable connection of the political concept with the religious and messianic) become the cause of widespread religious delusion and pharisaical hardening, promoting supremacism,, ethnic or racial superiority, and the perceived privileges of their nation.¹⁰⁶ All this, naturally, directly conflicts with the teachings of Christ and is contrary to God.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. Zirin, D. The Nation. How Zionism Feeds Antisemitism. December 5, 2023. <https://www.thenation.com/article/politics/zionism-antisemitism-congress/>.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. Jewish Virtual Library. Zionism: Religious Zionism. <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/religious-zionism>.

Unconsciously —or rather unknowingly, since those professing religious branches of Zionism may realize that they are acting against Christ and Christianity but do not fully grasp what this means for themselves—Zionism is antisemitism because it leads to the delusion and hardening of the hearts of the Jews who profess it. If this delusion is not corrected and hearts are not softened, the risk of losing the most precious thing is inevitable: the immortal souls of the Jewish people for eternity. Ergo, at its root, Zionism is antisemitism.

We should also note —opening another parenthesis — that Jews are not the only group negatively influenced by the doctrines of Zionism. There have been – alas, successful – attempts by Judaizing demagogues to mix concepts and worldviews that are unnatural, impossible and harmful to combine: namely, the Christian revelation about the world, humanity and the purpose of existence with distorted Zionist ideas. These distortions are filtered through another branch of Zionism, namely Christian Zionism. Here the modern rabbinical and Talmudic religion of Judaism (instead of the Old Testament, orthodox and priestly traditions)¹⁰⁷ has infiltrated many church communities, mainly in Protestant denominations, to such an extent that the result borders on heresy. This problem is also discussed a lot in Christianity.¹⁰⁸ The word “heresy” is used intentionally, because in some church circles the Gospel is distorted to the point where a doctrine proposing an alternative path for the salvation of the human soul, distinct from Christ, appears – either directly stated or implied.

Militaristic, Judaizing Christian preachers —who (unknowingly) act in service of Zionism —such as those calling for the extermination or ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian people in Gaza, harm both Christians and non-

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Wittenberger, P. *Marching to Zion*. 2015.

<https://youtu.be/8cVL0ViBB7E?si=WBYY1TZAXfu9dHQB7&t=400> (accessed July 17, 2025: here is an example of the widespread censorship in defense of the Zionist idea. The reference leads to the film “Marching to Zion”, subsequently deleted from YouTube).

¹⁰⁸ A recent example is this Eastern Orthodox priest, who in less than 10 minutes manages to cover a large part of the problems of Judaizing Christianity: Father Spyridon. Do Christians Have a Duty to Support Israel? July 10, 2025. https://youtu.be/wOLWbx7L-gI?si=TxKp_KFSM6cPkVzI.

believers, who witness the injustice and evil and are repelled by this false Christian message.

Conclusion

The biblical truth and the current political reality of Israel (the state), the Jews (the people), and the aggressive political movement of a portion of the Jews (Zionism) are drastically different. Even at the level of definitions, we see profound differences that inevitably lead to further degeneration of the original ideas and concepts found in the Bible. Like every untruth, half-truth, and lie, the harm is widespread, and one of the main victims— in this case, at risk of losing the most valuable thing, namely the immortal soul of the person caught in the flood of deception – is precisely the modern Jewish people.

THE PEOPLE AND THE STATE OF ISRAEL – ORIGIN, CONFLICTS AND CHALLENGES TO CHRISTIAN VIEWS

Ivaylo Tinchev

The emergence of the Jewish people and the creation of the state of Israel are undoubtedly a unique phenomenon in human history, playing a key role in interpreting the past, understanding the present, and recognizing the future of the world. The descendants of the biblical patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, with their distinct religion, culture and traditions — whether protected and supported by centers of global political and religious power or threatened and persecuted by them — have had, have, and will continue to have a huge influence on geopolitical processes and the decisions of the Great Powers. There are many reasons for this, closely related to the origin and history of the Jewish people and the neighboring Arab countries, as well as to the religious views within Judaism, Islam and Christianity, which can serve as a catalyst for either confrontation or reconciliation in the Middle East. Christianity can play an important and indispensable role in achieving peace in the regional context of Israel and Palestine.

Origin of the Jewish People

The Jews trace their origins to the Book of Genesis, the first book of the Torah (the Pentateuch for Christians), which is also the first book of the Hebrew Bible, the Tanakh (the Old Testament for Christians). In Genesis

12:2-3, God makes the following promise to the founder of the Jewish people, Abraham: “I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.”

The same promise is later repeated by God to Abraham’s son Isaac in Genesis 26:4: “I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars of the sky, and I will give all these lands to your descendants; and in your descendants all the nations of the earth will be blessed,” and then to Abraham’s grandson Jacob, son of Isaac: “Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth; you will spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and in you and in your descendants all the nations of the earth will be blessed.”¹⁰⁹

These texts lead to the assumption that, in some form, all the biological descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are a “chosen people,” granted a special blessing and mission to reach all nations for as long as the world and humanity exist.

Origin of the Arab Peoples

Those familiar with the Old Testament texts know that although Isaac was the son given to Abraham by God’s promise through his lawful wife Sarah and the heir of the promises,¹¹⁰ the founder of the Jewish people also had an earlier son by his maidservant Hagar – Ishmael, from whom a large part of the Arab peoples subsequently descended.¹¹¹ God also promised to make Ishmael a great nation.¹¹²

The Peoples of Canaan

¹⁰⁹ Genesis 28:14.

¹¹⁰ See Genesis 21:12.

¹¹¹ The Arab peoples, in which Islam is the predominant religion today, are mainly descendants of Ishmael, but some of them are descended from Abraham’s six sons by his wife Keturah (Genesis 25:1-2).

¹¹² See Genesis 21:18.

According to some interpretations, the land of Israel has always belonged to the Arabs, and therefore the Jews must leave it and return elsewhere. However, if we follow the biblical narrative, a very different picture emerges. Genesis 15:19-21 lists the peoples who lived in the territory of Canaan (the Promised Land) before Israel conquered it:

- The Kenites were a nomadic rather than a settled tribe who lived in various parts of Canaan and Arabia. Their most notable connection is with Moses. Moses' father-in-law, Jethro, was a Kenite priest.¹¹³ Jethro's family traveled with the Israelites through the wilderness and helped them as guides.¹¹⁴
- The Kenizzites are probably related to Kenez, who appears in the genealogy of Edom.¹¹⁵
- The Kadmonites have no established genealogy according to historical sources, but the fact that they are listed among the Canaanite peoples suggests that they probably also descended from Ham.
- The Hittites descend from Heth, who was the son of Canaan, who was the son of Ham.¹¹⁶
- The Perizzites have no ancestor named in the Bible but are assumed to be descendants of Ham through Canaan, as they inhabited only a small part of the same territory.
- The Rephaim are a people said to be the ancestors of the Anakim and Emim – tribes of giants or people with physical anomalies. Not much is known about them.
- The Amorites descend from Amor, who was the son of Canaan, who was the son of Ham.¹¹⁷
- The Canaanites were a Canaanite tribe that inhabited the plains and coastal regions of Canaan.

¹¹³ See Judges 1:16.

¹¹⁴ See Numbers 10:29-32.

¹¹⁵ See Genesis 36:11, 15.

¹¹⁶ See Genesis 10:15.

¹¹⁷ See Genesis 10:16.

- The Gergesenes descend from Gergesh, who was the son of Canaan, who was the son of Ham.¹¹⁸
- The Jebusites descend from Jebusi, who was the son of Canaan, who was the son of Ham.¹¹⁹

As we can see from the brief overview above, the main tribes living in Canaan at the time Israel entered the Promised Land were descended from the lineage of Ham, not from that of Shem, from whom Abraham — and consequently Isaac and Ishmael — descended. Even if there were Arab peoples in the territory, they were insignificant in number compared to those descended from Ham.

Israel's Ancient Enemies

It is also important to note that the neighboring peoples who were opponents of Israel and are described in the Old Testament likewise have no genealogical connection to the Arabs (the sons of Hagar and Keturah), but are of completely different origins:

- The Arameans (Syrians) are a Semitic people descended from Aram, the son of Shem.¹²⁰
- The Egyptians descended from Mizraim (the ancient Hebrew name for Egypt), who was the son of Ham.¹²¹
- The Philistines originated from the peoples of the Aegean region (probably Crete or the surrounding islands)¹²² and were not a Semitic people.¹²³
- The Amalekites/Amalekites are descended from Amalek, a grandson of Esau.¹²⁴

¹¹⁸ See Genesis 10:16.

¹¹⁹ See Genesis 10:16.

¹²⁰ See Genesis 10:22-23.

¹²¹ See Genesis 10:6.

¹²² Cf. Philistine people, Britannica, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Philistine-people>.

¹²³ See Genesis 10:13-14.

¹²⁴ See Genesis 36:12.

- The Moabites and Ammonites descended from Lot, a nephew of - Abraham.¹²⁵
- The Edomites descended from Esau, Jacob's brother.¹²⁶
- The Assyrians descended from Ashur/Assur, the son of Shem.¹²⁷
- The Babylonians descended from Nimrod, the son of Cush, who was the son of Ham.¹²⁸

As can be seen, the origins of these peoples are clearly described in the Bible. Arab tribes descended from Ishmael were nomadic or semi-nomadic, or had long inhabited other territories, such as the areas east of the Jordan River, the Sinai Peninsula, and the Arabian Peninsula. Although there are periods when the Bible describes raids or short-term conquests of the land of Israel, even some six centuries after the Jewish exodus in the first century, Arabs had not yet inhabited or laid claim to the Promised Land of Israel in its entirety.

The Conflict Between the Jewish and Arab Peoples

Only after the emergence and spread of Islam in the 7th century did the Arab conquerors seize the former territories of Israel from Byzantium, and these lands became part of the so-called Arab Caliphate – a theocratic state ruled by the successors of the Prophet Muhammad. The Arabs completely rejected the right of Isaac (Arabic: Ishaq) to be considered the heir to the promises and blessings of Abraham (Arabic: Ibrahim), since this claim was in direct contradiction to their new religion and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad. Muhammad, as the successor of Ishmael, was believed to have received a new, true and final word of God directly from God (Allah), as the last prophet in human history (“Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets [the last of the prophets]”¹²⁹).

¹²⁵ See Genesis 19:30-38.

¹²⁶ See Genesis 36.

¹²⁷ See Genesis 10:22.

¹²⁸ See Genesis 10:8-10.

¹²⁹ Quran 33:40.

Thus begins the conflict between the descendants of the two direct heirs of Abraham, in which each side claims that the promises of God belong to it: the heirs of Isaac (the Jews), because he was given according to God's promise to Abraham and Sarah, in the way chosen by God; and the heirs of Ishmael (the Arabs), because of physical birthright, the teachings of Muhammad, and the rejection of the sequence of God's blessings in the Tanakh.

The Muslim claims that Jews cannot be heirs of the promises of Abraham are based on the following main reasons they give:

1. The Jews have purposefully manipulated and altered the biblical narrative to their advantage, ignoring Ishmael as Abraham's firstborn son and elevating Isaac as the heir to the promises and blessings.

2. Muhammad is the last true prophet and a direct descendant of Ishmael, to whom were given all the final revelations, interpretations, and truths of the Scriptures, exactly as they were known in the ancient world, and not as they were transmitted by the Jews.

3. The Jews were never truly a "great nation," as described in the promise to Abraham, whereas the Arab nations were far more populous and therefore much stronger.

Historical Authenticity of Biblical Texts

The claims that the Jews altered the texts given to them by God, and that Ishmael was replaced by Isaac as the primary heir of Abraham, have not yet been proven by scholars through reference to ancient written sources.¹³⁰ This leads to the conclusion that, before the founding of the religion of Islam in the 7th century by Muhammad—who declared himself the last and only true recipient of the Scriptures from God—the descendants of Ishmael did not claim to have received all the promises made to Isaac.

The Qumran manuscripts, discovered in 1947¹³¹ and mostly dated to the period from 3rd century BC to 1st century AD, and their comparison with

¹³⁰ There is a general consensus in the field of Old Testament textual criticism, supported by comparative studies of ancient manuscripts.

¹³¹ For more information, see the works of scholars such as Emanuel Tov and Eugene Ulrich on textual criticism of the Qumran manuscripts.

all other earlier texts available at the time (such as the silver amulets from Ketef Hinnom, dating to the 7th – 6th century BC¹³² and the Nash Papyrus, from the 2nd century BC¹³³) once again confirm the consistency and integrity of the written tradition and the accurate transmission of the Old Testament texts both before and after the advent of Christianity and Islam.

Unlike the Jewish texts in the Tanakh, which were written and supplemented by many authors, Islam teaches that the Quran was given by the archangel Gabriel (Jibril) through a single individual—Muhammad—and was written down by his companions,, since he was illiterate and could not read and write. There are no known prophecies from the period between Abraham and Muhammad that would indicate the appearance of such a prophet who would reject all previously written books of law, history, prophecy, poetry, and wisdom and replace them with an entirely new teaching, lacking full continuity with earlier authors.

For example, unlike the prophet Muhammad, Jesus Christ fulfilled between 300 and 400 prophecies of the Old Testament, some of which are very specific – such as birth from a virgin, birth in Bethlehem, being sold for 30 pieces of silver, and the casting lots for his clothes. Christ himself declared that he did not come to abolish the Law, but to fulfill it, and that the prophecies point to Him as the expected Messiah.

Promises to Descendants

As for the blessing given to Isaac and Ishmael regarding a large number of descendants, objectively speaking there are two points to consider. On the one hand, the Jews cannot claim to have ever been a “great nation” in the sense of being more numerous than the Arabs or other peoples of the world or possessing more territory than the Arabs. On the other hand, however, the promise of many descendants was given to both Isaac and Ishmael.^{134,135} That is, if we consider the blessing of a “great nation” given to Abraham for

¹³² Cf. Ketef Hinnom Scrolls, Armstrong Institute of Biblical Archaeology.
https://armstronginstitute.org/45-ketef-hinnom-scrolls_.

¹³³ Cf. Nash Papyrus (MS Or.233). https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-OR-00233/1_.

¹³⁴ See Genesis 12:2.

¹³⁵ See Genesis 21:18.

his two descendants, it cannot be a matter of opposing the superiority of one over the other, but rather of God's good intention for both.

The word used in the original texts for both direct descendants of Abraham is the same, and in different contexts in the Old Testament it is translated as "big" or "great."ⁱⁱ In this sense, if Muslims who claim to inherit the promises and blessings from Abraham accept that the text referring to Ishmael refers to a large offspring in terms of numbers—as the text suggests—then the text referring to Isaac should have the same meaning.

When God repeats his promise to Abraham in Genesis 15:3-5, in the context that Isaac would be the heir and not Ishmael, he says: "Look now toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them. [...] So shall your offspring be." If God (Allah) keeps his promises at all, he must have kept them to Abraham's two heirs. Science tells us that with the naked eye, up to 3,000 stars can be seen in each hemisphere of the earth at night, and just one cubic meter of sand contains up to several billion grains of sand. Therefore, we can easily conclude that the texts in Genesis regarding the number of Abraham's descendants (through Isaac and through Ishmael) can be understood more as symbolic language, pointing to the fulfillment of the promise of descendants and their multiplication in the future, rather than leading to a mandatory expectation of a specific large number of descendants. God promised that each of Abraham's two descendants would become a great nation.

It is also important to note that this is not the case with God's promise to Abraham and his descendants when it concerns the extension of the blessing to all nations or tribes of the earth. In Genesis 22, in the context of Abraham willingness to sacrifice his "only son" Isaac (v. 12) in obedience, God confirms his blessing to Abraham through Isaac: "and in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice."¹³⁶ When God repeats his promises directly to Isaac, he again adds to the blessing of a great nation that "in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed."¹³⁷

¹³⁶Genesis 22:18.

¹³⁷Genesis 26:4.

When God speaks of Ishmael, however, his blessing is limited to his own people and descendants.¹³⁸ Therefore, from the perspective of the book of Genesis and traditional Christian theology, the main difference between Islam and Judaism regarding the promises given in the Tanakh or referred to in the Quran is the prophecy to Israel about the coming of the Messiah and the spiritual salvation of the people, which is confirmed by the rest of the prophecies in the Hebrew Scriptures and by the very coming of Christ to fulfill them. This understanding is affirmed in the New Testament, where the Apostle Paul, long before the advent of Islam, uses the contrast between salvation by law (associated with works, and linked to Ishmael and Hagar), as Jews and Muslims believe, and salvation by promise (associated with faith, and linked to Isaac and Sarah) in his letter to the Galatians (Galatians 4:21–30). For it is precisely through the promises to Abraham and their union with faith in Christ that the salvation that God has promised to all comes.

Periods of Israel's Statehood

The name “Israel” is first encountered in the context of Genesis 32:23–33, which describes the story of Jacob’s physical wrestling with God all night long, until God finally injures the sinew in his thigh but gives him His blessing. From a modern perspective on Israel’s history, this story can be seen as a symbolic prophecy of the struggles that Abraham’s descendants would endure for millennia to come. This is also the meaning of the name “Israel” – “he who wrestles with God.”

When discussing the state of Israel, most political analysts focus on the modern Jewish state, as it is the source of all conflicts in the Middle East. However, it should be noted that Israeli statehood —although interrupted for about 2,000 years —has existed in various forms throughout history and can be divided into three main periods.

The Theocratic State of Israel

¹³⁸ See Genesis 16:10, Genesis 17:20, Genesis 21:13, Genesis 21:18.

According to the book of Genesis, while Jacob was still alive, his sons sold their brother Joseph into slavery in Egypt.¹³⁹ However, God elevated Joseph to a position of prominence in the land after Pharaoh¹⁴⁰ and helped Jacob's entire family (now called Israel) move to Egypt.¹⁴¹ Over the years, the Israelites became numerous and were treated as slaves by the Egyptians, which caused the people of Israel to remember their promises and turn to Him in prayer.¹⁴² Jehovah heard their voice and provided a way out of their difficult situation by sending Moses and lead them out of Egypt and through the miraculous crossing of the Red Sea.^{143,144}

Called to the Sinai Desert, the Jews received God's law to observe under a theocratic form of government and to prepare for entering the Promised Land.^{145,146} Subsequently, because of disobedience and idolatry, God left the people of Israel in the wilderness for 40 years until a generation had passed.¹⁴⁷

Only after the adoption of the Law (as recorded in Deuteronomy, the restatement of the law previously given) and after the crossing of the Jordan River and Israel's entry into the Promised Land can it be said that the theocratic state of Israel was founded for the first time. At this point there was not only a basic law for everyone (a constitution), but also a specific territory where it was to be applied, together with the built tabernacle, where they could worship God. From there God himself continued to govern his people through the priests, prophets, and judges.

The Kingdoms of Israel

Centuries later, during the reign of the judges in Israel, the elders requested that the state be governed by a man like other nations, rather than

¹³⁹ See Genesis 37.

¹⁴⁰ See Genesis 41.

¹⁴¹ See Genesis 46.

¹⁴² See Exodus 1.

¹⁴³ See Exodus 2-13.

¹⁴⁴ See Exodus 14.

¹⁴⁵ See Exodus 19 and following chapters.

¹⁴⁶ See Exodus 33.

¹⁴⁷ See Numbers 14:33.

directly by God. With God's permission, the prophet Samuel anointed and installed Saul as Israel's first king.^{148,149} The next kings of the united Kingdom of Israel were David and Solomon. After the death of Solomon, the kingdom split into the northern Kingdom of Israel and the southern Kingdom of Judah. Together, these two states had numerous separate kings and queens—nineteen in the north and twenty in the south—each ruling their respective kingdoms for many generations.

During this period, both kingdoms eventually went into captivity, as foretold by the prophets: the northern Kingdom of Israel was conquered by the Assyrian Empire, while the southern Kingdom of Judah later fell to the Babylon Empire.^{150,151}

After 63 BC, when the Roman Empire conquered Israel, rulers from the Hasmonean and Herodian dynasties also ruled. The final abolition of Jewish statehood occurred in 6 AD, when Judea came under direct Roman rule. Subsequent uprisings, including the destruction of the Second Temple by the Romans in 70 AD during the First Jewish-Roman War, and the revolt of Simon bar Kokhba (132–135 AD), resulted in a huge number of casualties and the deportation or dispersion of much of the Jewish population outside the territory of Israel, scattering them throughout the world.

The Modern State of Israel

After the expulsion of the Jews from the territories they inhabited until the 1st and 2nd centuries, their communities repeatedly became victims of persecution and genocide in various forms. During the first centuries of Christianity, Jews were often stigmatized as guilty of the death of Jesus Christ, and over time this contributed to strong anti-Jewish attitudes and actions. In much of Europe during the Middle Ages, Jews were segregated into ghettos because their distinct religion, culture and traditions made their integration and assimilation difficult or impossible.

¹⁴⁸ See 1 Kings 8.

¹⁴⁹ See 1 Kings 9-10.

¹⁵⁰ See Hosea 11:5.

¹⁵¹ See Jeremiah 25:11-12.

For various reasons and on various grounds, Jews were deported en - masse at different times, including from England (1290), France (1182, 1306, 1322 and 1394) and Spain (1492). During the Crusades, on the way to the Holy Land, many Jewish communities were massacred as perceived enemies of Christianity. The Christian Reformation, led by Martin Luther, did not improve their situation either, and in his later years the former Roman Catholic priest and monk wrote treatises against the Jews and called for various forms of violence against them.ⁱⁱⁱ

Pogroms against the Jews also occurred in Russia in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. However, the culmination of all persecution of the Jews occurred in the 20th century, when the National Socialist government (1933–1945) of Adolf Hitler came to power in Germany, which legally killed about six million Jews, both directly and through concentration camps. All these historical facts and circumstances led to the need to find a way to address the obstacles to the peaceful existence of the Jewish people.

Already in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, a new movement emerged – Zionism — whose goal was the restoration of the Jewish state within the ancient Land of Israel, which occupied the territory between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea, as well as the protection of the Jews. The founder of the modern Zionist movement is considered to be Theodor Herzl (1860 – 1904), who, in his 1896 book *The Jewish State*, describes in detail the idea of creating a new independent Jewish state in the 20th century.¹⁵²

The Restoration of Israel and Geopolitical Conflicts

After World War I, during the British Mandate for Palestine, in 1917, British Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour sent a formal letter of declaration to the Jewish Zionist leader Lord Walter Rothschild, stating that Great Britain would establish a “Jewish national home” in Palestine, on the condition that “the rights of existing communities there shall not be prejudiced.”¹⁵³

¹⁵²Herzl, Theodor. A Jewish State: An Attempt at a Modern Solution of the Jewish Question. . https://books.google.bg/books/about/A_Jewish_State.html.

¹⁵³ Balfour Declaration, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Balfour_Declaration .

Shortly before the British Mandate expired, in 1947, the UN passed Resolution 181, which partitioned Palestine into two separate states—one for Jews and one for Arabs — with an international regime for Jerusalem.¹⁵⁴ The Jewish state was established on May 14, 1948, as a parliamentary democracy with a multi-party system in which religious parties had a very strong influence on political life.

Due to the incompatibility of the theologies of Judaism and Islam, the overlap of the territories on which the two religious communities expect to develop their eschatological views, and the constant struggle for supremacy between the descendants of Isaac and Ishmael, Israel and its neighboring countries have been in constant conflict since the creation of the modern Jewish state to the present day. A number of wars have been fought, and additional conflicts have continually sustained the tension between the warring countries.^{155,156}

The people of Israel see in the restoration of their state and the unification of the descendants of Isaac in one territory both an opportunity for protection from centuries of persecution and genocide and the fulfillment of God's promise to inherit the Promised Land.¹⁵⁷ The Arab peoples, for their part, support the right of the Palestinians to self-determination and the creation of an independent state in the territories occupied in 1967. However, some extreme Islamist groups seek the destruction of Israel and the establishment of an Islamic Caliphate, which is why they categorically reject the idea of concessions.

Prophetic Significance of Jerusalem

¹⁵⁴ United Nations General Assembly Resolution 181, https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/res181.asp.

¹⁵⁵ Arab-Israeli War (1948–1949), Suez Crisis (1956), Six-Day War (1967), Yom Kippur War (1973).

¹⁵⁶ War of Attrition (1967–1970), Operation Litani (1978), First Palestinian Intifada/Uprising (1987–1993), Second Palestinian Intifada (Al-Aqsa Intifada) (2000–2005), Second Lebanon War (2006), military operations in the Gaza Strip (2006, 2008–2009, 2012, 2014, 2021, 2023).

¹⁵⁷ See Genesis 12:7, 15:18–21; Exodus 23:31; Deuteronomy 1:8.

The role of the holy city of Jerusalem is also key to the fulfillment of end-of-the-world prophecies in both religions.

In Judaism, Jews hope to rebuild their temple on the Temple Mount in anticipation of the coming of the Messiah — something that is currently impossible due to the presence of the Muslim holy sites, *the Dome of the Rock* and the *Al-Aqsa Mosque*. Their desecration or destruction would cause unprecedented global conflict.

Arab Muslims also have expectations regarding the coming of a world leader, the Mahdi, who will lead the Muslim community, as well as the return of the important prophet Jesus (Isa), who will fight the Antichrist (Dajjal) and establish justice. His return is among the main signs of the approaching end of the world and the Day of Judgment. Therefore, Muslims seek to maintain control over East Jerusalem, which is sacred to Islam, and support the creation of an independent Palestinian state in the territories occupied in 1967 (the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, with East Jerusalem as its capital).

The conflict between Jews and Muslims, and between Israel and the Arab states, is extremely complex and multifaceted. The religious element is a major factor in the escalation of tensions, especially when promoted by extreme religious factions, but there are also many additional reasons for its continuation, such as nationalism, historical grievances, injustices, and other factors. Long-term and sustainable peace between Jews and Arabs currently appears to be an unattainable goal.

Challenges to Christian views

The Christian world today is divided over the issue of the state and people of Israel and the ongoing conflicts in the Middle East. The main reasons for this, in my opinion, are twofold: first, a misunderstanding of God's plan of salvation for humanity, which is realized solely through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ; and second, an inability to separate those prophecies that apply only to physical Israel from those that apply to all Christians, who are the descendants of Abraham by faith.

If these two reasons are combined into one that is most easily observed, it would be the differences in Christian eschatological positions and the contradictions on specific topics between historical premillennialists and dispensationalists, on the one hand, and postmillennialists and amillennialists, on the other.^{158,159}

God's Plan of Salvation for Humanity

Already in the third chapter of the book of Genesis, where the Fall of man is described in the opening verses, God announces His plan for victory over Satan and His plan of salvation for man. In verse 25, He declares: “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he will bruise your head, and you will bruise his heel.” In order to keep His promise to Adam and Eve and His plan of salvation, God makes the next covenant known to us – with Noah – and promises that He will never again destroy the entire earth with a flood.

The Promise to Abraham and to Israel

The next extremely important step toward the salvation of all people is the establishment of God's covenant with Abraham. God gives the patriarch of His people the following promise: “I will make of you a great nation and I will bless you and make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.”¹⁶⁰ If we accept this text as an unconditional promise to the entire people of Israel, understood as the biological heirs of Abraham, we encounter several serious and seemingly insurmountable contradictions.

¹⁵⁸There are four main Christian eschatological positions, or models, concerning the future of the world, and some of them are in significant opposition to one another.

¹⁵⁹ Eschatology (from Greek *eschatos*, meaning “last” or “ultimate,” and *logos*, meaning “word” or “teaching”) is a branch of theology that deals with the doctrine of the final events in the history of the world and humanity, as well as the ultimate fate of the human soul.

¹⁶⁰Genesis 12:3.

The Mosaic Law. While God's covenant with Abraham contained a promise of unconditional blessing, when God later gave the Law to Israel through Moses, He not only decreed blessings for Abraham's descendants but also curses under certain circumstances.

Deuteronomy 28:1-14: “And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt diligently hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD thy God will set thee high above all nations of the earth.” (An enumeration of blessings follows.)

Deuteronomy 28:15-68: “But if you do not obey the voice of the Lord your God, to be careful to do all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, then all these curses will come upon you and overtake you.” (An enumeration of curses follows.)

In fact, the conditional curses of the Mosaic Law far outweigh the conditional blessings, some of which directly contradict the blessings promised to Abraham to his descendants:

“You will be left few in number, though you were as the stars of heaven for multitude, because you did not obey the voice of the Lord your God. And as it pleased the Lord to do you good and to multiply you, so it will please the Lord to destroy you and to bring you to ruin; and you will be plucked up from off the land which you are about to possess. The Lord will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth even to the other end of the earth; and there you will serve other gods, which neither you nor your fathers have known, made of wood and stone.”¹⁶¹

Only faith in Jesus Christ saves from the curse of the Law. The curse of the Law comes upon all who rely on it for justification. The Law was given

¹⁶¹ See Deuteronomy 28:62-64.

to make sin known, and no one but the Messiah has the ability to fulfill it.¹⁶² Those who do not accept the saving sacrifice of Jesus Christ, just as Abraham accepted God's promise, cannot receive righteousness. This applies to all people, including the Jews. Romans 4:22-25 explains this clearly:

And that it was imputed to him for righteousness was not written for his sake alone, but for our sake also, to whom it will be imputed for righteousness, who believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered up for our trespasses, and was raised for our justification.

Jesus teaches directly that those who do not believe in Him and do not accept His words as truth, even if they are biological heirs of Abraham, are not truly heirs according to God's promise.¹⁶³ He goes further, declaring that those of his own countrymen who reject Him are children of the devil. If Christians truly accept the words of the Lord, they must acknowledge that the salvation of anyone who rejects Him is absolutely impossible .

It is no coincidence that when the Apostle Paul discusses salvation - through faith alone and the inheritance of Abraham's promises, he leaves no room for a different interpretation of the Old Testament texts. He states: "Even as Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness. Know therefore that they which are of faith, the same are Abraham's seed."¹⁶⁴

And then he explains:

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us; for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree,' so that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles

¹⁶² See Romans 3:20.

¹⁶³ See John 8:33-44.

¹⁶⁴ Galatians 3:6-7.

through Christ Jesus, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.¹⁶⁵

And finally, he resolutely affirms:

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, heirs according to the promise.¹⁶⁶

All these verses show us that the Church has not replaced or taken the place of Israel. Rather, the Church and Israel are one and the same entity, encompassing all believing and born-again Christians, from every nation – from Abraham to the end of days. Israel is not defined by biological descent alone, nor by the modern state founded in the Promised Land, even though it bears that name in a historical and ethnic sense.

Other statements affirming salvation in Jesus Christ alone are found in John 1:12, John 14:6, Acts 4:12, Romans 9:6-8, Romans 10:9-10, and elsewhere. When the apostle Paul uses the allegory of the olive tree in Romans 11 to explain the relationship between God, Jews, and believing Gentiles, he emphasizes that both Jews and Gentiles are grafted into the “fat root of the olive tree” by faith and are broken off by unbelief. There are various interpretations of what the “fat root” represents — the New Testament, the promises of Abraham, the plan of redemption — but it certainly cannot be the physical seed of Abraham, for both Jews and Gentiles are spiritually grafted in by faith or broken off by unbelief from the olive tree.

The promises and blessings of Abraham are for his true descendants. Considering all the biblical texts and the statements of Jesus and the apostles above, we can conclude that all believers in Jesus Christ—both Jews and Gentiles—are the true Israel. By entering into the covenant of Jesus Christ,

¹⁶⁵ Galatians 3:13-14.

¹⁶⁶ Galatians 13:28-29.

Christians receive all the blessings promised to Abraham. The text of Ephesians 1:3 confirms this: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly - places in Christ.” The Apostle Peter, writing to scattered believers, many of whom were formerly Gentiles, also makes this clear: “You who were once not a people, but are now the people of God; you had not obtained mercy, but now you have obtained mercy” (1 Peter 2:10). Both passages affirm that the people of God are one—those who have joined the Church through faith in Christ.

How many brides does Christ have, and does God share His love? If we continue the discussion of who the true people of God are and the salvation of physical Israel, we encounter deeper questions: Did God ever have a covenant “marriage” with two women at the same time—Israel and the Church? Did He ever “divorce” either of them in the sense in we understand today? How does God view the disobedience of the physical descendants of Jacob to this day, and why has He allowed the destruction of their nation and temple? Unfortunately, the format of this article does not allow us to explore all these questions in full detail.

Prophetic Figurative Language versus Literal Interpretation

When the Lord Jesus Christ spoke to His contemporaries, He addressed people who were already well acquainted with the Old Testament Scriptures, having read and heard them many times. They were familiar with both the content and the manner in which these texts conveyed their messages. For the Jews, the use of prophetic figurative language — and its connection to Old Testament — was a natural and effective way of communicating important spiritual truths.

Apocalyptic Paintings and Coming in the Clouds

When, for example, in Matthew 24, Jesus speaks of the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem, which had already occurred in 70 AD, he answers two questions of the apostles – “Tell us, when will these things be? And what

will be the sign of your coming, and of the end of the age?”¹⁶⁷ – with clear answers that can only be understood in the context of the culture of that time.^{iv} Unfortunately, due to the limitations on the length of this article, I cannot dwell on the entire chapter and the interpretation of all the prophecies, setting aside the premillennial view that has prevailed in Protestant circles. But I will draw attention to a few verses that are taken literally, without foundation and hermeneutical analysis: “Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.”¹⁶⁸

To give an example of how taking this verse literally is not the way Jesus' disciples perceived it, I will point out a few sample texts from the Old Testament that were written as prophecies in the same way:

Isaiah 13:10, a prophecy about the destruction of Babylon:
For the stars and constellations of heaven will not give their light;
the sun will be darkened in its rising, and the moon will not give its
light.

Isaiah 34:4, a prophecy of the coming judgment upon Edom:
And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall
be rolled up like a scroll; and all their host shall fall as a leaf falleth
from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree.

Amos 8:9, a prophecy of the fall of Samaria:
In that day, says the Lord Jehovah, I will cause the sun to go down
at noon and darken the earth in broad daylight.

¹⁶⁷ Matthew 24:3. I have purposely replaced the word ‘advent’ in the quoted text with the word “coming,” because in the Greek language there is no specific word for “advent” in this or other verses. The word is παρουσίας (parousias), which literally translates as “coming,” “arrival,” or “presence.” The replacement of the word with a specific one related to the Second Coming of Christ is probably the result of the premillennial view of the translators of the biblical text.

¹⁶⁸ Matthew 24:29.

Ezekiel 32:7, a prophecy about the destruction of Egypt:
And when I extinguish you, I will cover the heavens and darken their stars; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon will not give its light.

Isaiah 30:26, a prophecy of the restoration of God's people:
At that time, the light of the moon will be like the light of the sun, and the light of the sun will be sevenfold—like the light of seven days, on the day that the Lord binds up the bruise of His people and heals the wound of their stroke.

It is clear that all these prophecies were fulfilled, and also that nothing of the described apocalyptic picture literally happened in the physical world.^v These are images used by the prophets to show the importance and consequences of certain significant events. The same applies to the fact that, often in the Old Testament, God is described as coming “in the clouds,”¹⁶⁹ “riding on a cherub,”¹⁷⁰ “in a chariot on the wings of the wind,”¹⁷¹ etc. This is also meant by Jesus’ words about His coming in the clouds “immediately(!) after the tribulation of those days,” when the temple is destroyed and the judgment comes upon Jerusalem, for whom Jesus weeps because He was rejected by it.¹⁷²

The Third Temple

Supporters of the idea of building a Third Temple in Jerusalem believe that this must physically happen in the future, but we have a large number of biblical texts from which we can conclude that the Third Temple is already being built.

Jesus Christ first spoke of the Third Temple when he said, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. [...] But He spoke of the temple

¹⁶⁹ Isaiah 19:1.

¹⁷⁰ Psalm 18:10.

¹⁷¹ Psalm 104:3.

¹⁷² Matthew 23:37, Luke 19:41-44.

of His body.”¹⁷³ That is, we see that Jesus Himself said that His resurrection was connected with the creation of a new temple—His body. The disciples understood the meaning of these words after the Resurrection.

During the trial of Jesus, described in Mark 14, the witnesses claimed, “We heard him say, ‘I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another made without hands.’”¹⁷⁴

In 1 Corinthians 3:16-17, the Apostle Paul supports this by saying: “Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him; for the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.” He does the same in Ephesians 2:19-20: “You have been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building, fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God in the Spirit.” And also in 2 Corinthians 6:16: “[...] For we are the temple of the living God, as God has said: ‘I will live in them and walk among them; and I will be their God, and they will be my people.’”

As we see, the construction of the Third Temple is underway. If the Church is a true temple of God, which we cannot deny, then the construction of a physical temple in Jerusalem would be the Fourth Temple. But God cannot have two temples at the same time, only one, which is His – the Church.

The New Jerusalem

Continuing the theme of the Third Temple is the theme of the New Jerusalem, described in Revelation 21. In verse 2 we read: “And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.” Some may decide that the city is only prepared “as a bride,” adorned for her husband, and is not the Bride herself, but an angel turns to John and says to him: “Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb’s wife,”¹⁷⁵ and then we can clearly distinguish several facts:

¹⁷³ John 2:19, 21.

¹⁷⁴ Mark 14:58.

¹⁷⁵ Revelation 21:10.

1. The holy city Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven, is the Bride, not her image (v. 10).

2. It has divine glory and is very precious (v. 11).

3. It has twelve gates, with the names of the twelve tribes of Israel inscribed on them, because through the promise to Israel we enter the city of God, whose architect and builder is God ¹⁷⁶(v. 12).

4. It has three gates toward each end of the world, for people from all nations will enter (v. 13).

5. It has twelve stones as its foundation, which are the names of the twelve apostles (v. 14).

6. There is no temple in the city, because the temple of the city is the Lord God Himself and the Lamb (v. 22).

As we can see, the theme of the new city and the new temple in it are united here and lead us to the conclusion that this is the Church of Christ, in which the Triune God Himself lives through His Spirit.

The fact that we have a historical event – the creation of the modern state of Israel – does not necessarily lead to the conclusion that the views of premillennialists (and particularly dispensationalists) are correct, because there may be partial fulfillment of prophecy or a simple coincidence of circumstances. But to declare the people of Israel according to the flesh as the heirs of the promises made to Abraham, without Christ, is to declare the sacrifice of the cross unnecessary.

Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, “and to seed,” as of many, but as of one, “and to your seed,” who is Christ.¹⁷⁷

The Role of Christians in the Peace Process between Jews and Arabs

Over the past 77 years, we have seen that political means have not been sufficient to end the enmity that has existed between Jews and Arabs since the time of Isaac and Ishmael. Religious differences, accumulated hatred and

¹⁷⁶ Hebrews 11:8-10.

¹⁷⁷ Galatians 3:16.

injustice, territorial claims, and other factors have prevented the establishment of lasting peace. It is logical to ask ourselves whether such a peace is even possible, and how it can be achieved.

When the Archangel Gabriel visits the Virgin Mary to inform her that she has gained God's favor to conceive and give birth to the Son of God as a human, he partially quotes the Old Testament texts of 2 Samuel 7:12-16 and Isaiah 9:7: "He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there will be no end," while the original text in the prophetic book of Isaiah reads: "Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness, from now on and forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."

If these two texts were talking about the so-called Millennium, the thousand-year kingdom that premillennialists expect, it would be temporary and would have an end — exactly 1,000 years or a specific period of time. The kingdom of the Messiah, the heir of David, spoken of in the prophecies, however, is endless. It is described in Ephesians 1:20-22 and begins with the resurrection and sitting down at the right hand of God, when all things in this world and in the world to come have been subjected to Him for the benefit of the Church, which is His body. Therefore, the expectation, according to the prophetic words of the Old Testament, can only be that "of the increase of His government and peace" and that we have a King who will provide "justice and righteousness" from His throne directly and through the actions of the Church (the body has feet, and all things are put under His feet, and we sit down at the right hand of God in Christ and reign — Ephesians 1:22; 2:6).

Just because the saints who have come to life are said to reign with Christ for 1,000 years (or a very long period of time) does not mean that Christ's reign is that long or that we should expect a literal physical kingdom. Christ's eternal kingdom is already a fact, and we are a part of it.

When the angels appeared to the shepherds in the field and told them of the birth of a Savior, they praised God, saying: "Glory to God in the highest,

and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased!”¹⁷⁸ When Jesus taught about the Beatitudes, He said: “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called the sons of God.”¹⁷⁹ You see, through the coming of the Son of God to Earth, God is consistent in His desire (His zeal) to establish peace through the Church.

Therefore, the role of Christians in the peace process can take several ways:

1. Strengthening the conviction and worldview of every Christian that God does not want the death of the sinner,¹⁸⁰ but his repentance, and that killing people is the goal of the devil, not God.¹⁸¹ Unreserved support for any peace plan that ends and prevents violence and the death of innocent people.¹⁸²

2. Praying for justice and fairness and adopting a position of love even toward our enemies,¹⁸³ judging correctly¹⁸⁴ — not according to our Zionist or antisemitic understandings, but according to Christ's sacrifice and God's just judgment.

3. Presenting the true gospel to Jews and Arabs so¹⁸⁵ that they may accept Jesus Christ and thus receive the favor of God that they need for salvation and lasting peace.¹⁸⁶

Conclusion

If we read the New Testament texts carefully and study the subject of God's covenants with man, we can easily conclude that the promises that God made to Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and David reach their climax in the covenant and saving work of Jesus Christ. Whether some claim that

¹⁷⁸ Luke 2:14.

¹⁷⁹ Matthew 5:9.

¹⁸⁰ See Ezekiel 33:11.

¹⁸¹ See John 8:44.

¹⁸² See Matthew 5:9, Hebrews 12:14.

¹⁸³ See Matthew 5:24.

¹⁸⁴ See John 7:24.

¹⁸⁵ See Romans 1:16.

¹⁸⁶ See Luke 2:14.

Abraham's heirs are the descendants of Isaac (the Jews) or Ishmael (the Arabs), the New Testament texts of the Christian Bible categorically point us to only one descendant through whom we all receive blessed and eternal life.

World governance, power centers, and political goals may change and, at different historical periods, may give varying political support to the state of Israel or to its enemies. However, the resolution of the long-standing conflict is not yet in sight, as we still await the increasing peace that comes from the throne of David through the Church.

Only the Son of God left his glory, came to earth, and became a man to live as each of us lives. He is the one who fulfilled all the hundreds of prophecies about the coming of the Messiah, healed the sick, raised the dead, and gave help and hope. And after sacrificing Himself for humanity and shedding His blood on the altar of God, He sat on the throne of David at the right hand of God to rule the whole world in peace and justice.

Religion has meaning only if it gives salvation and eternal life, and only Christ proved that he can give these to every person through his own death and resurrection. It is the duty of every Christian to carry the message of reconciliation to every person, because the true peace of God — for Jews, Arabs, or anyone else — comes only through Jesus Christ.

THE STATE OF ISRAEL – THE OPPRESSOR-VICTIM

Yavor Kostov

The beginning of October 2023 did not seem to signal any major upheavals. The war between Russia and Ukraine was following its predictable rhythm; political elites around the world continued to implement their contradictory visions of governance, and the worrying trend of technology outpacing common sense persisted, while the average person sought ways to realize themselves, to find enjoyment, and simply to survive. However, by the 7th of October, it was clear that the calm would not last.

The Victim is a Bully

On that day, gunmen from Hamas — an organization designated as a terrorist group by both the US and the European Union — crossed into Israeli territory from the Gaza Strip and opened fire on civilians. Several hundred people were killed, nearly 1,000 were injured, and approximately 250 individuals from various countries were kidnapped.

Reactions to the terrorist act were immediate and widespread. Geopolitical analysts filled television studios to discuss the origins of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and to assess the likely counteraction of the targeted state. News reports continued to reveal horrific details from the scene of the bloody event, giving eyewitnesses the opportunity to recount terrifying actions carried out by Hamas. The public responded with anger to the assault

on civilians and understandably expected that such a barbaric act would not go unanswered.

Israel's response was immediate. That same day, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu declared that the country was at war — and that it would prevail.¹⁸⁷ Police Commissioner Kobi Shabtai promptly announced the first countermeasures: the entire southern region was closed to civilian movement,¹⁸⁸ the counter-terrorism unit was deployed to the attacked areas, and the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) began positioning along the border. The world looked in shock, yet many hoped for a swift and, above all, just resolution to the crisis.

“Justice,” as defined by Israeli political leaders, was not long in coming. On the night of October 8, the Israeli army carried out strikes on 426 sites in Gaza, destroying several residential buildings while stating that they were targeting Hamas positions. The attacks resulted in the killing of 256 people, including 20 children, and left nearly 1,800 injured.¹⁸⁹

The response was harsh, merciless, and widespread. The Israel Defense Forces launched massive bombing raids, followed by ground incursions intended to eliminate terrorist elements. The so-called “liberation” inflicted significant suffering on countless innocent civilians with no connection to the attackers - yet, yet their plight appeared secondary to the larger strategic objective. What ultimately mattered, according to the IDF’s mandate, was the accomplishment of its mission, regardless of the human cost.

¹⁸⁷ Cf. Washington Post: Israeli troops still clearing houses, as strikes hit Gaza Strip. October 7, 2023. www.washingtonpost.com/world/2023/10/07/israel-gaza-rocket-attack-hamas/.

¹⁸⁸ Cf. Jordan News: Missiles strike southern & central Israel; police declare state of war. October 07, 2023. www.jordannews.jo/Section-20/Middle-East/Missiles-strike-southern-central-Israel-police-declare-state-of-war-31321.

¹⁸⁹ Cf. Goldenberg. Tia and Shurafa Wafaa. AP: Israel declares war, bombards Gaza and battles to dislodge Hamas fighters after surprise attack. October 9, 2023. <https://ap-news.com/article/israel-palestinians-gaza-hamas-rockets-airstrikes-tel-aviv-ca7903976387cfc1e1011ce9ea805a71>.

The scale of the IDF's crackdown — actions that many independent observers have described as genocide¹⁹⁰ — has resulted mass destruction of defenseless people in the territories under attack. According to the *Harvard Dataverse Report*, “at least 377,000 people in Gaza have ‘disappeared’ since the start of the Israeli military campaign in October 2023, with half of them believed to be children.”¹⁹¹ The IDF's so-called “protective” campaign is so grossly disproportionate that any previously stated motives — claiming the operation targets terrorists to ensure lasting peace — now appear, , to put it mildly, both cynical and ridiculous.

Yet the military operation in Gaza, with its unprecedented bloodshed, also produces an unintended effect: the scale of death and devastation briefly exposes a stark truth about the nature of the Israeli state. In the ruins and suffering, the image of Israel as both oppressor and victim comes sharply into view.

The Holocaust – Israel's Victim Status

The effort by certain political circles to present Israel as a perpetual victim and to project the image of Jewish suffering to the world is not new. This approach reflects a long-standing policy that has taken deep root throughout the world.

The idea of Israel's victim status is deeply embedded in the foundations of the state formed in 1948. Emerging on the political scene after World War II, Israel was shaped by a powerful Zionist movement that emphasized the necessity of a homeland for Jews who had suffered persecution under Hitler and the Nazi rule. As a result, post-war generations were instilled with the idea that the Jewish communities were the greatest victims of the war's atrocities.

¹⁹⁰ Cf. Amnesty International. Amnesty International investigation concludes Israel is committing genocide against Palestinians in Gaza. 2 December, 2024. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/12/amnesty-international-concludes-israel-is-committing-genocide-against-palestinians-in-gaza/>.

¹⁹¹ Hundreds of thousands of people have “disappeared” in Gaza. Baricada. June 24, 2025. <https://baricada.org/2025/06/24/misiing-gaza/>.

The Zionist ideological machine, made up of political and cultural institutions, wields the tools of historiography, public memory, and symbolic language as weapons of propaganda to reinforce this narrative. One of its most powerful weapons is the term “Holocaust,” a word that easily evokes profound emotion and recalls the victimized image of the people of Israel.

It sounds outrageous, but for some unknown reason (it is important to clarify here that unknown does not mean non-existent), the state of Israel receives sympathy, authority and recognition through the global emphasis on the Holocaust’s celebration, commemoration and – ultimately – the imposition of its central place in public memory. The birth of the state of Israel and the recognition of Jews as the primary victims of the Second World War are closely connected. Commemoration of the Holocaust has become a vital component of the Israeli national narrative, and from the second half of the 20th century to the present day, any criticism of the historical authenticity of the Holocaust is aggressively attacked and perceived as antisemitism or even blasphemy.

Why blasphemy? The term *holocaust* originally has a theological meaning, referring to the complete burning of an animal as a sacrificial offering. Such a sacrifice, given to a deity, represents the price required for transformation to occur—whether for mercy to be granted, for redemption to take place, or for a community to be restored.

In this sense, consciously or not, the use of this term to describe the Jewish victims of World War II carries a symbolic implication: that their mass extermination constitutes a kind of historical sacrifice— one perceived as having the power to bring about redemption, change, or restoration to Israel, and perhaps even for the wider world.

In the post-war years, a powerful informational and educational campaign emerged around the mass extermination of the Jews, to the extent that today it is almost unthinkable to question *interpretations, emphases, or the narrative framing* associated with the extent of Nazi persecution, the forms of repression, or the immense scale of suffering under Hitler's regime. When we compare the extensive documentation of the massacre of European Jews with the far more limited treatment of communist atrocities, we cannot help

but notice an imbalance: about the historical record of Nazi crimes is continually revisited and reexamined, while the history of communist brutality is often neglected, minimized, or obscured.

This puzzling phenomenon raises a complex question. Viewed through the prism of the Holocaust, Jews are undeniably presented as victims. But viewed through the prism of communist totalitarianism, many individuals of Jewish background (excluding the few true Jews who, because of their faith in Jesus Christ, belong to the people of the Church) were involved as participants in the apparatus of repression.

The horrors of the Second World War are beyond dispute. The suffering endured by countless peoples, including the Jewish people, cannot reasonably be denied. Yet it remains worth asking whether certain ideological circles, consciously and systematically, distort historical truth in order to advance political goals? This question may seem almost unacceptable to raise, partly because contemporary society has long been taught that challenging dominant historical narratives is itself taboo.

In his book “The Lie of the Six Million,” Richard Harwood presents facts, documents, and even asks questions—including those often deemed inadmissible—that appear logical, challenge the narrative established by the Zionist political lobby regarding the number of Jewish deaths, cast doubt on the existence of gas chambers in German camps, and ultimately debunks the perceived victim status of this people.¹⁹² Although it may sound like a far-fetched conspiracy theory or harmful antisemitic propaganda to many, in Chapter 11 of *The Lie About the Six Million*, the writer presents the following:

It is no doubt true that thousands of Jews died in the war, but this must be seen as a reality of the war, which resulted in the deaths of millions of people on all sides. 700,000 innocent civilians died during the siege of Leningrad, more than 2,000,000 German civilians died as a result of Allied bombing, expulsion and evacuation from

¹⁹² Harwood, R. *The Lie of the Six Million*. Firebird, Sofia. 2002. See <https://chitanka.info/text/21030-lyzhata-za-shestte-miliona>.

Prussia, Western Poland, the Sudetenland of Bohemia. The Swiss newspaper *Die Tat* of January 19, 1955, in a review of the Red Cross statistics on those who died in the war, concluded that “the number of victims persecuted on grounds of racial and ideological policy between 1939 and 1945 does not exceed 300,000, and not all of them were Jews.” And this figure seems to be the closest to reality.

The Victim-Abuser Dynamic and Freedom of Speech

The figure of 6,000,000 Jews killed by the Nazis has been so widely circulated that the quote from Richard Harwood's book may sound absurd. Setting aside the author's reasons for holding such a position, we can still ask: does he have the right to express such an opinion?

Freedom of speech refers to the ability to present, demonstrate and argue differing worldviews—differences that naturally arise from the inner freedom of man and reflect personal expression. Granted by God, recognized by societies, and enshrined in documents such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, freedom of speech does not allow the restriction of ideas or opinions unless the expression of those opinions violates other fundamental human rights, such as the right to life, freedom of conscience, or equality before the law. In other words, one has the freedom to express one's thoughts but must also accept the possibility of criticism in response.

But this freedom does not seem to extend to criticism of Israel. Anyone who dares to openly challenge a pro-Israeli position risks being accused of antisemitism. Today, there is a global trend toward restricting freedom of speech under the pretext of combating antisemitism. A clear example of this unequal dynamic can be seen in the following excerpt from the “Working Definition of Holocaust Denial and Distortion,” adopted at the plenary session of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) in Toronto on October 10, 2013:

Holocaust denial in its various forms is a manifestation of antisemitism. Efforts to deny the genocide of the Jews are an attempt to shift the blame and responsibility of National Socialism and antisemitism for the genocide of the Jewish people. Forms of Holocaust denial

also include accusing Jews of exaggerating or creating the Holocaust for political or financial gain, as if the Holocaust itself was the result of a conspiracy conceived by Jews. The goal of these efforts is to place the blame on the Jews and to re-legitimize antisemitism. Often, the goal of Holocaust denial is to rehabilitate overt antisemitism and to promote political ideologies and conditions conducive to the occurrence of the same types of events that are being denied.¹⁹³

Whether the 2013 working definition text falls into the category of “the thief cries ‘catch the thief’” – an old time-tested tactic to shift the focus from an uncomfortable truth and suggest guilt—is an intriguing question worth considering. But the broader question remains: were 6,000,000 Jews really murdered in Hitler’s camps, or is this one of history’s greatest manipulations? Very few openly question the Holocaust, but for those who do, the consequences are severe. Holocaust denial is punishable by imprisonment in numerous countries: Austria, 6 months to 20 years; Germany, 1 month to 5 years; Israel, 1 to 5 years; Italy, 3 to 4 years; Lithuania, 2 to 10 years; Poland, 3 months to 3 years; Romania, 6 months to 5 years; Slovakia, 1 month to 3 years; Hungary, up to 3 years; France, 1 month to 5 years; Czech Republic, 6 months to 2 years; and Switzerland, 12 to 15 months.¹⁹⁴

The conclusion so far: the image of Jewish suffering—rooted in the memory of the Holocaust—has successfully been used by the state of Israel in ways that influence public discourse, including debates about freedom of speech and thought. This is typically justified as a protective measure, intended to ensure that the horrors of National Socialism can never be repeated.

Ideological Motivation of the Abuser-Victim Dynamic

¹⁹³ International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance. Working Definition of Holocaust Denial and Distortion. <https://holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definition-of-holocaust-denial-and-distortion>.

¹⁹⁴ See Wikipedia. Holocaust denial. https://bg.wikipedia.org/wiki/Отричане_на_Холокоста.

Insights into the motivational nature of the political-theological ambitions of the State of Israel is explored by the Bulgarian writer Nikola Nikolov, born on July 30, 1920, in the city of Vidin. His books “The World Conspiracy” and “The Secret Protocols”—condescendingly dismissed by supporters of the officially accepted narrative, a.k.a. “historical truth”—present ideas that are shockingly unconventional—once condemned as harmful and false conspiracy theories—yet they examine the genesis of the hidden agendas of the Zionist ideologues.

In “The Secret Protocols,” Nikolov translates documents that became public knowledge and sparked significant public outcry at the beginning of the 20th century. He is neither afraid nor ashamed to put into writing the thoughts born from his own view of the world’s socio-political development—thoughts that had also occurred to many other, far more accomplished writers, who nevertheless chose to self-censor in the quiet chambers of their conscience. He writes the following:

Another question arises: does Zionism really aim to gather in one place the Jews scattered throughout the world?...The Protocols of the Elders of Zion, which I have translated from their English edition and which I am here presenting to the reader, provide the answer to this question. The word *protocol* comes from the two Greek words *proto* (first) and *kolla* (glue), which means a loose sheet of paper glued to an official document. In this particular case, the Protocols are like a draft of the plan of action of the Jewish leaders. In different periods of Jewish history, there have been many such drafts, but extremely few of them have seen the light of day.¹⁹⁵

The scandalous aspect of the Protocols lies not only in the authoritarian tone of the Jewish builders of the new world, marked by their drive for domination, but also in the unnervingly detailed outline of long-planned actions intended to bring the world under their control. Speaking about the content of the documents he translated, Nikolov notes that:

¹⁹⁵ Nikolov, Nikola. *The Secret Protocols*, Sofia, 1993, p. 17.

A detailed analysis of these Protocols reveals their ultimate goal – the establishment of a world autocracy – dictatorship. The intentions of this program are not against the aristocracy, they are not against capital, they are not against governments; on the contrary, its efforts are to unite the aristocracy, capital and the methodology of government to implement the plan. It is directed against all non-Jews in the world – the so-called goyim.¹⁹⁶

In support of the sincere reader's quest to determine whether the “Protocols” represent a fraudulent conspiracy narrative or a cold-blooded blueprint for global domination, Nikolov includes excerpts from the Talmud – the sacred traditions and writings of Jewish religious leaders—which, to a great extent, illuminate the origins of Jewish supremacist ideology and hence the rationale behind the unscrupulous actions of the abuser-victim.

The Real Victim vs. the Oppressor-Victim

From a Christian perspective, the theme of the abuser-victim Israel has a political dimension with a clear theological explanation. Israel, as a scapegoat who must be unconditionally accepted by the world, tacitly and subtly opposes the truth about Christ, His teachings, and the meaning of His work. The worship — though veiled — of the sacrificial image of the Jewish people is idolatry in its purest form. In modern times, idols are not only figures carved from stone or wood; they are also embedded into the ideas that shape the way people think. Because such idols imitate the True God, they demand a sacrifice — a price paid—in order to be honored, to give the appearance of transformation, to show deceptive mercy, and to offer powerless redemption. This is the case with the State of Israel.

The veneration of the victims of the Holocaust — which has acquired religious significance because of its “redemptive” connotation — used by

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., pp. 20 – 21.

certain lobbying circles with religious and political motives, in practice demonstrates a lack of respect for the uniqueness of the sacrifice of Jesus. The sacrifice of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, is not one among many – it is the only one. In this sense, the Holocaust and the state of Israel, as they are venerated and politicized, become competitors to the truth about the crucifixion of the Son of God.

A few final words: exposing the Jewish way of thinking, which stems from the malicious message of the Talmud, is not necessarily antisemitic or prejudiced. It can be an expression of genuine concern and a practical demonstration of love—a love that declares: accept Jesus Christ into your hearts, because He alone paid the price for your redemption.

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Endnotes

ⁱ In the Bulgarian language, the popular word used today for “Jews” is *евреи*, which can be loosely translated as “Hebrews.” A more precise term for “Jew” is *юдеин*. The language has also adopted the term *израилтяни* which means “Israelites,” in accordance with the biblical use of the English term. Contemporary citizens of the state of Israel are referred to as *израелци*, corresponding to the English term “Israelis.” This illustrates the complications that can arise in translation. With the exception of “Israelis,” the other terms are often used interchangeably. (Editor’s note.)

ⁱⁱ The term “big” here is used in the sense of “numerous.” (Editor’s note.)

ⁱⁱⁱ The author most likely refers to Martin Luther’s work *On the Jews and Their Lies* (German: *Von den Juden und iren Lügen*), which, as mentioned previously, was purged from all Bulgarian online book distributors several years after its publication, likely due to its allegedly antisemitic content. This act of censorship made it difficult, if not impossible, to verify the work’s content or the accuracy of such claims. Wikipedia classifies Luther’s work as an example of “religious antisemitism” and also pronounces the New Testament as antisemitic. (Editor’s note.)

^{iv} The author’s suggestion that the word “advent” was used in the translation of Matthew 24:3 to push a certain theological view is not fully justified. Even if the word “coming” is used, it must be understood to mean Christ’s Second Coming, since the disciples are clearly asking of Jesus the question in person. It would be illogical to ask when someone is coming if He is already present. Indeed, “appearance” might be a more accurate choice, as Christ and His kingdom are already “in our midst” through the Holy Spirit. However, even this term implies a distinct act, another “entrance” onto the world stage, since the Lord was already present with those asking the question. (Editor’s note.)

^v It is not easy to adopt the author’s interpretation of these Old Testament prophecies as already fulfilled. It is possible that they are not yet fulfilled but instead remain predictions of events that will unfold during the return of Christ. (Editor’s note.)

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