

THE PRESENT 2023 PALESTINIAN & ISRAELI CONFLICT

Based on the *Bible*, We Ask, “What Is a **Christian** to Think?”

PART A

BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION: THE *BIBLICAL BACKGROUND & TONE*

1. Like the present Palestinians and Israelis, the ongoing history of **nations** revolves around the “**blessing/curse**” motif of Scripture (cp. Deuteronomy 28).

This *contrasting motif* is set into motion in one of two ways. **EITHER** nations & individuals repent with Godly sorrow toward sin and then trust in **Christ** for **forgiveness** **OR** they reject **Jesus**, refuse to repent, and thereby endorse **Satan**’s ways of sin and unbelief. This leaves such **non-Christians** to depend on their own efforts or good works to save them *eternally*.

The majority of both Palestinians [*Muslims*] and Israelis [*Jews*] endorse such salvation by works, not by **faith** in **Christ**. In **Galatians 3:5-11** the apostle Paul asks his audience:

...does God supply you with the Spirit and work miracles among you **by your doing** what the **Law** says, or **by believing what you are hearing**?

Abraham is a good example: He **believed** God, and **it was credited to him as righteousness**. (See **Genesis 15:6**.) You see, then, that **those who believe** are **Abraham**’s real sons, that is, since the Scripture foresaw that **God** would **justify [acquit]** the **nations by faith**.

He announced **the Gospel** to **Abraham** beforehand, saying: “Through you [**Abraham**] **all nations** will be **blessed** [that is, because **Jesus** was to come from **Abraham**’s genealogy].” Paul then continues by saying, “So **those who believe** are **blessed** together with **Abraham**, a man of **faith**.”

The apostle now spells out the contrast: “There is a **curse** on all who depend on doing what the **Law** says, because it is written: “Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the book of the Law.” It is clear that **no one** is **justified [declared righteous]** before **God** **by doing** what the **Law** says, because the **just [the ones declared righteous]** will live by **faith**.”

Now let’s consider **God**’s *promise* of “**blessings** or **curses**” on the **nations**

In **Genesis 12:3a** **GOD** predicted: “I will **ble**ss those who **ble**ss you, and in you [**Abraham**] **all** the people in the world will be **blessed**” (cp. 2 Corinthians 5:15).

Genesis 12:3b: Then **GOD** also predicted: “I will...**curse** anyone who **curse**s you [**Abraham**, that is, who does not **believe** in your eventual **Offspring, Jesus**],....”

At this point biblical truth-seekers need to remember the words of John the Baptizer as he spoke to **unbelieving** Jews in Matthew 3:9: He said: “Do not think that you can tell yourselves, ‘**Abraham** is our father.’ For I tell you, **GOD** can raise up children for **Abraham** from these stones,” meaning that **unbelieving** Jews could not be saved since they were not **SPIRITUAL** sons and daughters of **Abraham** nor of **GOD**.

Point in fact, neither **unbelieving** *Muslims* nor *Jews* in the present Palestinian & Israeli conflict are to be favored **SPIRITUALLY** by Christians. Individuals from both groups can only be saved by the **Holy Spirit** as **He** operates through Christian evangelism. They cannot be saved for eternity by our *emotions* **OR** by our *cultural and political* preferences. This is a hard truth that will be expanded-on in our **4-PART** study. So hang on, here we go!!!

2. Tension between *Islam* and *Judaism* from the time of Muhammad (AD 570-632) until today has played-out over-and-over again. (**PART D** of our study will contend that *Islam* is the “political” Antichrist of **Revelation 13:1-12** and that *Jews* will still be around to be saved until the end of time (**Isaiah 66:20-22**).

3. Barack Obama’s take on things, as quoted from the Internet (November 5, 2023): “Nobody’s hands are clean.” **Giessler**: **GOD** protects **Christians** against **unbelieving** *Muslims* & *Jews* by often pitting these *Muslims* & *Jews* against one another in order to protect **Christians** from slaughter.

4. The **Balford Declaration** of 1917: The **Balfour Declaration** was a public statement issued by the British government in 1917 during the [First World War](#) announcing its support for the establishment of a “national home for the Jewish people” in [Palestine](#),.... The declaration had many long-lasting consequences. It greatly increased popular support for [Zionism](#) within [Jewish communities worldwide](#), and became a core component of the [British Mandate for Palestine](#), the founding document of [Mandatory Palestine](#). It indirectly led to the emergence of [Israel](#) and is considered a principal cause of the ongoing [Israeli–Palestinian conflict](#), often described as the world’s most ongoing conflict. Controversy remains over a number of areas, such as whether the declaration contradicted earlier promises the British made to [the Sharif of Mecca](#) in the [McMahon–Hussein correspondence](#).

5. The **EXODUS** — The Ship that Launched a Nation
The story of the **Exodus**, the ship that carried 4,500 Jewish refugees from Europe to Palestine in 1947, summarizes the essence of Israel’s creation — a journey, an exodus, from the hellish depths of the Holocaust to independence and nationhood.

6. What is “**Zionism**”? From Wikipedia: “**Zionism** (derived from the name [Zion](#)) is a [nationalist](#) movement that emerged in the 19th century to enable the establishment of a [homeland for the Jewish people in Palestine](#), a region roughly corresponding to the [Land of Israel](#) in [Jewish tradition](#). Following the [establishment of Israel](#), **Zionism** became an ideology that supports ‘the development and protection of the [State of Israel](#).’”

7. American policy based on a **false** assumption: **Exegesis of Genesis 12:1-3:**

¹The LORD said to Abram, “Leave your land, your relatives, and your father’s home, and go to a **land** I will show you. ²I will make you a **great nation**. I will **bless** you and give you a **great name**, and you will be a **blessing**. ³I will **bless** those who **bless** you [Abraham], and **curse** anyone who **curses** you [Abraham], and in you **all the people in the world** will be **blessed**.”

A comment on **Genesis 22:18**: The pre-incarnate **Christ** said to Abraham, “In your **Descendant** all the people on earth will be **blessed**.” (This explains Paul’s **Galatians 3:16** conclusion.)

As we shall see in #8. below, the **unbelieving** **Jews** of **Jesus’s** day and onward are under the **curse** of **Genesis 12:3b**—and the **land** no longer belongs to them, in fact, the **land** of the whole world now belongs to **Christians** (cp. Matthew 28:19: “baptize all **nations**”), **nations** who by **faith** in **Jesus** can be covered by the **blessing** of **forgiveness**.

8. Understand that **Matthew 23:37-39** is spoken *against* the **Jewish spiritual** leaders! (Note the seven [7] repeats of the statement by **Jesus** where in verses 13-29 **He** says, “**WOE** to you, *scribes* and *Pharisees!*”)

In **Matthew 23:33-35a, 36**: **Jesus** said: “You snakes! Brood of poisonous snakes! How can you escape being condemned to hell? That is why I am sending you prophets, wise men, and teachers of the Scriptures [that is, to tell you that you are condemned to hell]. You will kill and crucify some of them. Others you will whip in your synagogues and persecute from town to town. In this way all the innocent blood shed on the earth will come upon you, I tell you the truth, all these things will come upon this generation. (This was *initially* fulfilled when the Romans leveled Jerusalem & its Temple in AD 70.)

b. In **Matthew 23:37-39**, **Jesus** continued: “Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who murdered the prophets and stoned those who were sent to you, how often I wanted to gather your children together as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! **Behold! Your house is left to you desolate.** For I tell you, you will never see **Me** again until you say, ‘Blessed is **He** who comes in the Name of the **Lord.**’”

c. In the latter passage, **Jesus** “**divorces**” the **Jews** as a **nation**. As a **nation** they had **served their purpose**; through them the *genealogy* of **Jesus** had been preserved. But now **Jesus**—by **Himself**—would generate a “**New Israel**” (namely, the **Holy Christian Church**), not generate a *resurgence* of the present **Jewish nation** or the “**Old Israel!**”

9. Christians should **not** take **SPIRITUAL** sides; however, they can take *political* sides!

WHY?

a. *Israel* is a “parliamentary democracy”!

b. *Islam* (ex. Hamas) is a **Christian** threat (remember America’s “9-11”)

PART B

TO THE HEART AND CORE OF THE PROBLEM

Christians need to understand **Romans 9—11**, especially the *pertinent* verses of **Romans 11:25-27**. The apostle Paul writes:

25 To keep you from thinking too highly of yourselves, my fellow **Christians**, I want you to know this **mystery**: The minds of a part of the *Jews* were closed until the full number of the *Gentiles* comes in. **26** **And in this way all Israel will be saved**, as it is written: The **Savior** will come from **Zion**; He will get rid of **ungodliness** in Jacob. **27** And this will be **My “last will and testament”** with them when I take away their **sins**.

Three [3] views of Romans 11:26a are given by Armin J. Panning in his NPH commentary on *Romans* (p. 193). **View 1**: Premillennialism, is rejected by true *Amillennial* Lutherans. See Article XVII of the Augsburg Confession where conservative-confessing Lutherans denounce **“certain Jewish opinions which are even now making an appearance and which teach that, before the resurrection of the dead, saints and godly men will possess a worldly kingdom and annihilate all the godless.”**

Premillennialism is rejected by **Jesus** when He said to Pontus Pilate, “My Kingdom is not of this world.” (Some Lutherans accept a *limited* form of Premillennialism, and thereby reject the more *drastic* form of Premillennialism, namely, Dispensationalism, as endorsed by Dallas Theological Seminary and Moody Bible Institute. This, however, does not excuse so-called Lutherans [LINO’s] from going against the Lutheran Confessions, teaching that **Jesus** will rule on earth for **1,000** years prior to Judgment day.)

We now cite Panning’s listing of the three [3] prominent views of **Romans 11:26**, in particular the phrase, **“all Israel will be saved!”** (**Views 2 & 3** are seen by true Lutherans as *viable* possibilities; **View 1** is not!)

- a. View 1:** “All Israel” refers to the **nation** descended from Abraham (hence all people of Jewish extraction will eventually be saved).
- b. View 2:** “All Israel” refers to the **Christian Church**, the sum total of all **God’s** elect, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*.
- c. View 3:** “All Israel” refers to **God’s** elect from among the *Jewish nation*, with all of this *Jewish remnant* being saved.

Why is this so difficult to understand? Because it is in the wheelhouse of a **GOD-mystery!!!** (**View 1**, which implies **“partiality”** on **GOD’s** part, is an *impossibility* on the basis of **Romans 2:11**: “for **GOD** does not favor one person over another.” **Think**: If **GOD** were to save all *Jews*, and **not** all *Gentiles*, this would be showing **“partiality”!!!**)

ABOUT THE BOOK OF *REVELATION*—AND ITS OUTLINE

1. Revelation 1:1: Literal **OR** Symbolic/Figurative?

This is the revelation [unveiling] of **JESUS CHRIST** which **GOD** gave **Him** to show **His** servants the things that must happen without delay; and which **He** made known by visual signs when **He** sent it through **His** angel to **His** servant John. (Literal translation!)

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2. The **7-fold** outline of the book of *Revelation*—in repeat mode:

A. Introduction (1:1-20)

1. **First vision:** Seven letters (2:1—3:22)
2. **Second vision:** Seven seals (4:1—7:17)
3. **Third vision:** Seven trumpets (8:1—11:19)
4. **Fourth vision:** The woman and the dragon (12:1—15:4)
5. **Fifth vision:** Seven bowls (15:5—16:21)
6. **Sixth vision:** God’s final triumph (17:1—20:15)
7. **Seventh vision:** God’s new world (21:1—22:5)

B. Conclusion (22:6-21)

3. Revelation 1:1—22:21: Chronological **OR** Repetitious? A **3-fold** example—

a. **Revelation 12:7** (“dragon”); **13:1a** (“beast from the sea”); & **13:11a** (“beast from the earth”)! In **19:19, 20**, one should note both the “beast from the sea” and the “beast from the earth” are paired up. (The *latter* is now called the “false prophet”!)

12:7: And then a war broke out in heaven—**Michael** and his angels had to fight with the **dragon**; and the **dragon** fought and his angels;

13:1a: And I saw a **beast** coming up out of the sea—

13:11a: And I saw **another beast** come up out of the earth;

19:19, 20: And I saw the **beast** [“the **beast out of the sea**,” cf. 13:1ff.] and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered to fight against the **Rider** on the horse and **His** army. And the **beast** was captured and with him the **false prophet** [“the **beast out of the earth**” (cf. 13:11)], who had worked miraculous signs for the **beast** [the one “out of the sea”] by which he [the **false prophet**] deceived those who had received the brand of the **beast** and worshiped his image; both were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur.

b. Revelation 9:13-16:

13 And the sixth angel blew his trumpet. And I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar before God. **14** It said to the sixth angel (he was the one who had the trumpet): “Free the four angels who are held bound at the great river Euphrates.”

15 And the four angels who had been held ready for that hour and day and month and year were untied to kill a third of the people. **16** And the number of soldiers on horses was 200,000,000; I heard how many there were.

c. Revelation 16:12-14:

12 And the sixth poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates. And the water in it dried up to prepare the road for the kings from the east. **13** And I saw three unclean spirits, like frogs, come out of the mouth of the **dragon** and out of the mouth of the **beast** and out of the mouth of the **false prophet** [the “beast out of the earth”]. **14** For they are spirits of **demons**, working miraculous signs, who go out to the kings of the whole world to gather them for the war [**Armageddon**] on the great Day/Judgment Day of the Almighty God.

d. And what about the “millennial” interpretation of Revelation 4:1?

1 After these things I [John the apostle] looked, and there a door open in heaven, and I heard the first voice like a trumpet speaking to me. It said: “Come up here, and I will show you what must happen after these things.” **The “rapture”? NOT!**

PARTS A & B—A Summary of & Addition to:**SUMMARY**

1. Everything concerning the past (from the AD 600s) & present Palestinian & Israeli conflicts **is** about the “ **blessing/curse**” motif laid out in **Genesis 12:3a, b**. The *Muslim* faction, as well as the *Jewish* faction, have rejected **Jesus** as **Savior** and **His** plan of **redemption**. Thus, both groups have come under the **curse** of the Almighty **GOD**, because both groups denounce the doctrine of the **HOLY TRINITY** and **HIS** spelled-out way of **salvation**, namely, trust in **Jesus** for the **forgiveness** of human transgressions. Since the *Jews* rejected **Jesus** when **He** was on earth, **Matthew 23** tells us that **Jesus** **divorced** the *Jews* as a **nation**, putting them under **GOD’s curse** and taking the **land** of Canaan away from them. After that, **Jesus** gave the **land** of the whole world to **Christians** and told them to *evangelize* it before they die and inherit the **land** of heaven. As for *Muslims*, they also fall under **GOD’s curse** since they also have rejected the true genealogical line of Abraham which ran through **Isaac** down to **Jesus**. Instead, they have chosen to follow the **non-messianic line** of Abraham which ran through Abraham’s non-chosen son, **Ishmael** (see Galatians 4:21-23).

2. During our last session, we also concluded that Paul’s statement in **Romans 9:26**, namely, “**all** Israel shall be saved,” cannot mean that at the end of time every living *Jew* will come to **faith**—and be taken to heaven. That would be showing **favoritism** on **GOD**’s part if He did not also take every *Gentile* to heaven. **Romans 2:11** teaches that God does **not** show “**partiality**”! (Of course, this conclusion is rejected by the *majority* of evangelicals who, for the most part, are of a Premillennialist or Dispensational persuasion.)

ADDITIONS—WITH SOME REPEAT TO LET “TRUTH” SINK IN

1. Great confusion often fills the minds of Lutherans (both pastors and laypersons) who listen to media personalities like David Jeremiah, Hal Lindsey, Chuck Missler, John Hagee, etc. They all preach “**Christ** and **Him** crucified,” assumedly are saved **Christians**, and are very dynamic and persuasive preachers. However, they are **not** to be trusted when they treat the **apocalyptic** sections of books like *Isaiah* and *Ezekiel*—and this especially includes the book of *Revelation*. These heralds of the “**secret rapture**,” advocating two [2] Comings of **Jesus** prior to **His** Final Coming, well, they throw many biblical teachings out of kilter, contrary to our Lutheran Confessions.

A sample of just one wild interpretation: Hal Lindsey/Chuck Missler and the “locusts” of **Revelation 9:7a**: “locusts looked like horses prepared for battle.” Both men say the “locusts” are a prediction of “helicopters” that will fight against **Christians** in the last days. (**NOTE:** They switch from literal to symbolic at will.)

2. Remember the words of Article XVII of the Augsburg Confession where conservative-confessing Lutherans denounce “**certain Jewish opinions which are even now making an appearance and which teach that, before the resurrection of the dead, saints and godly men will possess a **worldly** kingdom and annihilate all the godless.**”

Also recall that the idea of “premillennialism” is rejected by **Jesus** when He said to Pontus Pilate, “My Kingdom is **not** of this world.” **Christ** will **not** be reigning on earth for a **thousand** [1,000] years] **BEFORE** Judgment Day.

3. Those Lutherans, who endorse “millennialism,” are **not** true *Amillennial* Lutherans. *Amillennial* Lutherans do **not** believe that **Revelation 20** teaches a “*literal*” **1,000** year reign before **Satan** is “loosed” for a “short period of time”. (We shall deal with **Revelation 20** next time in **PART C** of our study—for the whole session.)

As stated last week, these *deceived* Lutherans can be called **LINO**’s, “Lutherans-In-Name-Only”! They definitely side with Israel against the Palestinians, feeling that **GOD** sides with Israel—**politically**. They do **not** have a clue that **GOD** looks at the Palestinian-Israeli conflict **SPIRITUALLY**. They also tend to rip **Psalms 122:6** where it says, “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee”--KJV) out of its OT context and

away from its **SPIRITUAL** meaning. Once again, this is right in line with *secular* American politics which fears that **GOD's curse** will fall on any *nation* that does not side with Israel. Of course, this is a total misinterpretation of **Genesis 12:3**, as we have taught. Those who do not have **sharp SPIRITUAL** eyes will only see things from a **political** viewpoint. So sad and dishonoring to our **GOD!!!**

PART C

THE "REVELATION 20" DEBATE

1. Two [2] basic views of the number **1,000** years in **Revelation 20**:

- a. The "literal" view
- b. The "symbolic/figurative" view

2. The Lutheran interpretation of **Revelation 20:1-15**:

THE DEVIL'S LAST BATTLE

1 And I saw an **Angel** coming down from heaven,
holding the key to the bottomless pit and a large chain in **His** hand;

2 and **He** overpowered the **dragon**—
he is the **old serpent**, which is **Devil** and **Satan**—
and **He** bound him for a **thousand** years,

3 and threw **him** into the bottomless pit,
and shut it
and sealed it over **him** to keep **him** from deceiving the Gentiles anymore
until the **thousand** years would end;
after these things **he** must be set free **for a little while**.

4 And I saw thrones,
and **they** sat on them and to **them** was given authority to judge;
and I saw the souls of **those** who had been beheaded,
because of **their** testimony of **Jesus**
and because of the word of God.

And they had not worshiped the **beast** nor **his** image
and were not branded on their foreheads and on their hands;
and **they** lived and ruled with **Christ** for a **thousand** years.

5 The **rest of the dead** did not live until the **thousand** years came to an end.
This is the first resurrection.

("Rest of the dead" refers to those not converted during the **1,000** years. However, those who are converted to **CHRISTianity** become part of the **First Resurrection**, that is, they became alive—**SPIRITUALLY** (see **Ephesians 2:1-5**).

6 Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection.
The second death has no power over them.
But **they** will continue to be **priests** of **God** and of **Christ**.
And **they** will rule with **Him** for a **thousand** years.