

Notes: February 22, 2014

Start: 10 AM

Order of service:

1. Meet and Greet
2. Introduction (if new people)
3. Ma Tovv
4. Jeri's Drash
5. Liturgy – Sh'ma +
6. Announcements
7. Praise and Worship Songs
8. Message
9. Aaronic Blessing
10. Kiddush
11. Oneg

Children's Blessing:

Transliteration: *Ye'simcha Elohim ke-Ephraim ve hee-Menashe*

English: *May God make you like Ephraim and Menashe*

Transliteration: *Ye'simech Elohim ke-Sarah, Rivka, Rachel ve-Leah.*

English: *May God make you like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah.*

Introduction: Who Can You Trust?

Who have you trusted to lead you?

How does one know if they are following the right teacher or organization?

I pose these questions because it is important that you aren't blindly trusting anyone with your spiritual well being, including myself.

Recently, the Presbyterian Church of America created a study guide entitled: *Zionism Unsettled*

I am quoting from an article by Susan Michael – International Christian Embassy Jerusalem

A disturbing study guide entitled "[Zionism Unsettled](#)" has been published by an arm of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) The publication is filled with distorted facts and a historical narrative so extreme that some Jewish groups are calling it "hate speech." It vilifies Israel and Zionism while ignoring Palestinian terrorism, calls for the annihilation of the Jewish State, and absconds (avoid arrest) Arab leaders of their culpability in the plight of the Palestinian people.

The study guide proves that the PCUSA has aligned itself with the most radical of positions by equating Zionism with racism, comparing it to centuries of Christian anti-Semitism, and calling for a rethinking of the Holocaust to include the plight of the Palestinians.

I find it odd that such a statement is made, because we just finished Atz Chaim He,

D'ra-cheh-ha dar-chay no-ahm, v'chol n'tee-vo-teh-ha shalom.

“It’s ways are ways of pleasantness, and all of it’s paths are peace.”

Speaking of Torah...the foundation of Israel's life.

The chapter on “Evangelicals and Christian Zionism” skews the facts to portray Christians who support Israel as dangerous and a threat to Middle-East peace. The chapter is taken largely from the writings of Dr. Gary Burge, an evangelical Presbyterian and Professor of New Testament at Wheaton College, who admits to holding a form of Replacement Theology in spite of the fact that it was the root of centuries of Christian anti-Semitism.

Replacement Theology teaches that God abandoned the Jewish people, has broken His promises to them, and has chosen a new people, the Church. The danger with this theology is that it implies that the Jewish people have been rejected and discarded due to their sin and failures. It is fertile ground for the proliferation of anti-Semitism and should be guarded against.

Dr. Burge goes so far as to say that the New Testament teaching spiritualizes and universalizes the Old Testament land promises to the Jewish people by treating them as spiritual metaphor.

This is a common tenant of replacement theology.

Burge attempts then to diminish the reach of Christian Zionism by limiting it as dispensational and dual covenant in theology. While dispensationalism is a theology favorable towards Israel, only one in every ten Christians is a dispensationalist. A much larger number of Christians, from a wide-variety of denominations and theological persuasions, supported the restoration of the Jews to their homeland;

Israel's role, as the vehicle of God’s redemptive plan, does not make her better than any other people groups but rather more accountable to God. The Jewish people are chosen for the blessing of the nations, including the Palestinian people. However, this study construes the chosenness of the Jewish people to be a form of racism that esteems them higher than other peoples, and therefore, not held to the same standard of accountability.

Conversely, the PCUSA has aligned itself with extreme and radical groups such as Sabeel. Founded by Naim Ateek, Sabeel propagates Palestinian Liberation Theology that disregards any portion of scripture that disagrees with Ateek’s anti-Semitic views. Hence, right out of the Sabeel playbook, this study guide calls for churches to stop using hymns and liturgy that use the biblical terms: exodus, covenant, return, blossoming of the desert, Zion and Israel.

This study book uses the acronym BDS – Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions against Israel.

A Palestinian led initiative that has gained acceptance:

The United Methodist Church

The Presbyterian Church

What does scripture say?

Rom 11:25 For, brothers, I want you to understand this truth which God formerly concealed but has now revealed, so that you won't imagine you know more than you actually do. It is that stoniness, to a degree, has come upon Isra'el, until the Gentile world enters in its fullness;

Rom 11:26 and that it is in this way that all Isra'el will be saved. As the Tanakh says, "Out of Tziyon will come the Redeemer; he will turn away ungodliness from Ya`akov

Rom 11:27 and this will be my covenant with them, . . . when I take away their sins."

Rom 11:28 With respect to the Good News they are hated for your sake. But with respect to being chosen they are loved for the Patriarchs' sake,

Rom 11:29 for God's free gifts and his calling are irrevocable.

Rom 11:30 Just as you yourselves were disobedient to God before but have received mercy now because of Isra'el's disobedience;

Rom 11:31 so also Isra'el has been disobedient now, so that by your showing them the same mercy that God has shown you, they too may now receive God's mercy.

Rom 11:32 For God has shut up all mankind together in disobedience, in order that he might show mercy to all.

Rom 11:33 O the depth of the riches and the wisdom and knowledge of God! How inscrutable are his judgments! How unsearchable are his ways!

Rom 11:34 For, 'Who has known the mind of Adonai? Who has been his counselor?'

Rom 11:35 Or, 'Who has given him anything and made him pay it back?'

Rom 11:36 For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.

Let's look at Adonai's position regarding the land of Israel...

Eze 36:1 "Now you, human being, prophesy to the mountains of Isra'el. Say: 'Mountains of Isra'el, hear the message from Adonai.

Eze 36:2 Adonai Elohim says: "The enemy is boasting over you, 'Ha! Even the ancient high places are ours now!' "

Eze 36:3 Therefore prophesy, and say that Adonai Elohim says, 'Because they desolated you and swallowed you up from every side, so that the other nations could take possession of you; and now people are gossiping about you and slandering you;

Eze 36:4 therefore, mountains of Isra'el, hear the message of Adonai Elohim — this is what Adonai Elohim says to the mountains and hills, the streams and valleys, the desolate wastes and the abandoned cities, now preyed on and derided by the other surrounding nations —

Eze 36:5 therefore this is what Adonai Elohim says: "In the heat of my jealousy I speak against the other nations and all of Edom, since, rejoicing with all their heart, they have arrogated my land to themselves as a possession and, with utter contempt, seized it as prey." '

Eze 36:6 "Therefore prophesy concerning the land of Isra'el, and say to the mountains, the hills, the streams and the valleys that Adonai Elohim says this: 'I speak in my jealousy and fury, because you have endured being shamed

by the nations.

Eze 36:7 Therefore thus says Adonai Elohim: "I have raised my hand and sworn that the nations surrounding you will bear their shame.

Eze 36:8 But you, mountains of Isra'el, you will sprout your branches and bear your fruit for my people Isra'el, who will soon return.

Eze 36:9 I am here for you, and I will turn toward you; then you will be tilled and sown;

Eze 36:10 and I will multiply your population, all the house of Isra'el, all of it. The cities will be inhabited and the ruins rebuilt.

Eze 36:11 I will multiply both the human and animal populations, they will increase and be productive; and I will cause you to be inhabited as you were before — indeed, I will do you more good than before; and you will know that I am Adonai.

Eze 36:12 I will cause people to walk on you, my people Isra'el; they will possess you, and you will be their inheritance; never again will you make them childless."

The promise is clear, assuming you take scripture as the final authority. However when you don't, problems arise...

Please keep in mind, that no nation is perfect, including Israel.

The view that many countries are using against Israel stems from a humanistic position that states:

Humanist beliefs stress the potential value and goodness of human beings, emphasize common human needs, and seek solely rational ways of solving human problems.

America as a nation is in no position to be supporting any claim against Israel, given its history. The scale has not completely tipped to the other side, but is headed in that direction.

When you have the commander in chief supporting pre-1967 borders, it is clear what side of the fence he is on. When you have the secretary of state promoting talks based on this position, you know what side of the fence policy is leaning.

Published on January 14 2014 in Haaretz, Vice President Biden confirms to the Prime minister of Israel that the position Secretary Kerry is taking, that of a two state solution is supported by President Obama.

<http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/.premium-1.568507>

Getting back to humanism, the position taken, clearly come from this mindset.

In researching for this sermon, I came across a term that when I thought about it is the lynch pin...

The intent promoted by the Islamic nations, Europe and others is to delegitimize Israel. By delegitimizing Israel as a recognized state legitimizes the Islamic position.

Painting a picture of apartheid towards the Palestinians, that they are experiencing segregation and discrimination on the grounds of who they are, is actually gaining support from other countries.

I find it odd that a people who have been placed into ghettos (segregated), kicked out of just about every country because of who they are (discrimination) would actually be identified as the aggressor. Their vow has been to protect themselves, not to initiate.

The Iron Dome is a defense system used to protect the nation from a continuous threat of weaponry aimed at them and fired on a regular basis.

Taking the humanist position, what is the best solution?

A two state solution.

This is “man's” solution.

God's solution is clearly stated in Ezekiel 36.

I could go on, but that would make this more of a political message than what I had intended. Needless to say, Ezekiel 36, speaks of Adonai's promise to restore Israel to the land. The same land promised to Avraham.

Eze 37:1 With the hand of Adonai upon me, Adonai carried me out by his Spirit and set me down in the middle of the valley, and it was full of bones.

Eze 37:2 He had me pass by all around them — there were so many bones lying in the valley, and they were so dry!

Eze 37:3 He asked me, "Human being, can these bones live?" I answered, "Adonai Elohim! Only you know that!"

Eze 37:4 Then he said to me, "Prophesy over these bones! Say to them, 'Dry bones! Hear what Adonai has to say!'

Eze 37:5 To these bones Adonai Elohim says, "I will make breath enter you, and you will live.

Eze 37:6 I will attach ligaments to you, make flesh grow on you, cover you with skin and put breath in you. You will live, and you will know that I am Adonai." ' ' "

Eze 37:7 So I prophesied as ordered; and while I was prophesying, there was a noise, a rattling sound; it was the bones coming together, each bone in its proper place.

Eze 37:8 As I watched, ligaments grew on them, flesh appeared and skin covered them; but there was no breath in them.

Eze 37:9 Next he said to me, "Prophesy to the breath! Prophesy, human being! Say to the breath that Adonai Elohim says, 'Come from the four winds, breath; and breathe on these slain, so that they can live.' "

Eze 37:10 So I prophesied as ordered, and the breath came into them, and they were alive! They stood up on their feet, a huge army!

Eze 37:11 Then he said to me, "Human being! These bones are the whole house of Isra'el; and they are saying, 'Our bones have dried up, our hope is gone, and we are completely cut off.'

Eze 37:12 Therefore prophesy; say to them that Adonai Elohim says, 'My people! I will open your graves and make you get up out of your graves, and I will bring you into the land of Isra'el.

Eze 37:13 Then you will know that I am Adonai — when I have opened your graves and made you get up out of your graves, my people!

Eze 37:14 I will put my Spirit in you; and you will be alive. Then I will place you in your own land; and you will know that I, Adonai, have spoken, and that I have done it,' says Adonai."

Conclusion:

How can a group of people, in this case the Presbyterian and United Methodist church say they believe in the God of Israel and Messiah who came from them when they create publications that speak to the contrary?

Scripture clearly warns...against false teachers and false prophets

2Pe 2:1 But among the people there were also false prophets, just as there will be false teachers among you. Under false pretenses they will introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, and thus bring on themselves swift destruction.

2Pe 2:2 Many will follow their debaucheries; and because of them, the true Way will be maligned.

2Pe 2:3 In their greed they will exploit you with fabricated stories. Their punishment, decreed long ago, is not idle; their destruction is not asleep!

Mat 7:15 "Beware of the false prophets! They come to you wearing sheep's clothing, but underneath they are hungry wolves!

Mat 7:16 You will recognize them by their fruit. Can people pick grapes from thorn bushes, or figs from thistles?

Mat 7:17 Likewise, every healthy tree produces good fruit, but a poor tree produces bad fruit.

Mat 7:18 A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, or a poor tree good fruit.

Mat 24:10 At that time many will be trapped into betraying and hating each other,

Mat 24:11 many false prophets will appear and fool many people;

Mat 24:12 and many people's love will grow cold because of increased distance from Torah.

Mat 24:13 But whoever holds out till the end will be delivered.

A prophet from a biblical perspective is someone who has been inspired by Adonai to convey His message, whether of warning or encouragement. A prophet is also a teacher.

A teacher is one who instructs and educates others.

Act 5:39 But if it is from God, you will not be able to stop them; you might even find yourselves fighting God!" They heeded his advice.

You will know if you are fighting God, only if you know His Word.

It is imperative that you continue on your path that includes understanding scripture in context and rightly divided. Sha'ul's words to Timothy...

2Ti 3:16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is valuable for teaching the truth, convicting of sin, correcting faults and training in right living;

2Ti 3:17 thus anyone who belongs to God may be fully equipped for every good work.

I want you to keep in mind that the Word of Adonai is just as powerful, when taken out of its intended context to

teach error, encourage sin and promote faults.

When misappropriating the Word of Adonai, all of these things are possible and unfortunately a reality for many believers and they don't even know they are being deceived.

Why don't they know?

They don't know because they don't know the Word of Adonai and are relying on teachers to guide them. Remember the scriptures warning against false prophets and teachers.

Don't let this be you.

Many of you still attend churches on Sundays.

What is your church's position on Israel?

Do they support Israel?

Do they believe the church has replaced Israel?

Do what they preach and teach align with scripture and in its proper and intended context?

What is their position?

I ask this because, based on the scriptures I have used today, God's position is clear.

He prophesied to the land in Ezekiel 36 that the Jewish people would again reside in the land.

He prophesied that the people would again become a nation in Ezekiel 37. I would even take this a step further and state that when Adonai said He would breath life into them, that He was also talking about receiving Messiah Yeshua as well.

I say this because since Israel became a nation again, you have seen the greatest revival of Jewish people coming to Messiah since the 1st century.

Sha'ul told us that God's gifts are irrevocable, meaning they cannot be taken back.

Out of Zion comes the redeemer, nowhere else.

By Susan Michael – International Christian Embassy Jerusalem

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The chapter on “Evangelicals and Christian Zionism” skews the facts to portray Christians who support Israel as dangerous and a threat to Middle-East peace. The chapter is taken largely from the writings of Dr. Gary Burge, an evangelical Presbyterian and Professor of New Testament at Wheaton College, who admits to holding a form of Replacement Theology in spite of the fact that it was the root of centuries of Christian anti-Semitism.

Replacement Theology teaches that God abandoned the Jewish people, has broken His promises to them, and has chosen a new people, the Church. The danger with this theology is that it implies that the Jewish people have been rejected and discarded due to their sin and failures. It is fertile ground for the proliferation of anti-Semitism and should be guarded against.

The Apostle Paul said in Romans 11 that God is not finished with the Jewish people and that their calling is irrevocable. In Hebrews 6, he cites God's faithfulness to the Abrahamic Covenant to encourage beleaguered Christians to keep their faith, knowing they serve a faithful God.

Nevertheless, Burge goes so far as to say that the New Testament teaching spiritualizes and universalizes the Old Testament land promises to the Jewish people by treating them as spiritual metaphor. While it is true that in Galatians 3:29 the Apostle Paul said that Christians do enjoy the blessings of Abraham as spiritual heirs, he did not claim that they "replaced" the natural heirs nor inherit the land. This would require a rewriting of scripture since the land promise to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob was "everlasting" and is confirmed forty-six times throughout the books of the Old Testament.

Psalm 105 says that God does not break covenant, nor alter the word that has gone out of His mouth, therefore, the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob would receive the promises made to them. It is because of these scriptures that the disciples asked Jesus if He was going to "restore the kingdom to Israel now" in Acts 1:6. He simply said the time was not for them to know, clearly indicating that it would happen in God's timing. In Luke 21, Jesus said that Jerusalem would once again be under Jewish sovereignty and put it in an eschatology context.

Burge attempts then to diminish the reach of Christian Zionism by limiting it as dispensational and dual covenant in theology. While dispensationalism is a theology favorable towards Israel, only one in every ten Christians is a dispensationalist. A much larger number of Christians, from a wide-variety of denominations and theological persuasions, supported the restoration of the Jews to their homeland; including John and Charles Wesley, Robert Murray MacCheyenne, Bishop Ryle of Liverpool, Charles Spurgeon, the Puritans, Professor Jacob Janeway of the Scottish National Church, Martin Luther King and many others.

Christian Zionism is also not "dual covenant." Mainstream Christian Zionists are found in all the historical and contemporary church movements, including the Presbyterian Church, and they most certainly believe that Jesus' finished work on the cross is their only grounds of salvation. While the basis for Christian Zionism is found in the Abrahamic Covenant, in which God announced to Abraham His plan to create a people through whom He would carry out His plan to redeem the world, the Abrahamic covenant needed the Mosaic Covenant, the Davidic Covenant and the New Covenant to bring about that great salvation.

Israel's role, as the vehicle of God's redemptive plan, does not make her better than any other people groups but rather more accountable to God. The Jewish people are chosen for the blessing of the nations, including the Palestinian people. However, this study construes the chosenness of the Jewish people to be a form of racism that esteems them higher than other peoples, and therefore, not held to the same standard of accountability.

The PCUSA may wish that Christians that support Israel and the Jewish people are a fringe group, but the fact is that some 70% of Americans are favorable towards Israel. There are a number of reasons why Americans support Israel: personal experience while touring Israel, admiration for Israeli technology and innovation, or appreciation for the only democracy in the Middle East. Bible-believing Christians support Israel because of their reading of the scriptures. In short, God has brought the Jewish people back to their homeland in fulfillment of His promises to Abraham and millions of Christians want to bless and help them.

Conversely, the PCUSA has aligned itself with extreme and radical groups such as Sabeel. Founded by Naim Ateek, Sabeel propagates Palestinian Liberation Theology that disregards any portion of scripture that disagrees with Ateek's anti-Semitic views. Hence, right out of the Sabeel playbook, this study guide calls for churches to stop using hymns and liturgy that use the biblical terms: exodus, covenant, return, blossoming of the desert, Zion and Israel.

It is time that the PCUSA wakes up and realizes that holding radical and anti-Semitic positions, such as reflected in this study guide, will only guarantee their continued membership decline, because most Americans not only shun

hate speech, but admire and stand with the people of Israel.