



# *Diakrisis* (Australia)

*‘But strong meat belongs to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern [diakrisis] both good and evil’, (Heb.5:14)*

PO Box 432, Babinda, Qld. Australia, 4861.  
E-mail: [taministries2@gmail.com](mailto:taministries2@gmail.com) Ph. 0411489472  
Website: [www.taministries.net](http://www.taministries.net)

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TA Ministries is a non-denominational faith ministry,  
*teaching, informing and equipping* the church.  
Editor: Terry Arnold (Dr.Th; MABS; Dip.Bib.&Min.)

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## Editor's Comment

### Depravity in the Nations

The Israel/Hamas war has brought to light human depravities on a scale arguably not seen for a hundred years. When millions of Jews were once exterminated, gassed and tortured - *the same hatred is now rising again*. Regardless of where one stands on the Israel Palestinian conflict, the irrational hatred of Jewish people and the chanting for their annihilation, is alarming. Muslims in Australia *publicly* chant 'gas the Jews'. In other countries Jewish children cannot wear uniforms for fear of violence, and Jewish people are afraid in public to look or dress Jewish. Universities now have students threatening Jews. In America huge crowds smeared blood like stains on the White House walls. When the death slogan '*from the river to the sea*' becomes a chant of huge crowds, you know what could happen to Jews if these groups were allowed control over Jews in their own countries. It's not just a dislike for the Jews, its a desire for the annihilation of a nation. That same hatred is coming closer to our own doors.

What is overlooked is the propaganda and lies by Hamas and Palestinian leaders. Despite overwhelming evidence that Hamas builds tunnels under hospitals and fire rockets from beside children's playgrounds, much of the media jumps on any first reports issued from Palestinians - such as when they claimed that Israel bombed a hospital. Never mind that time and time again the truth comes out later, yet that is often not reported. Polls show 50% of people in the west now think that the slaughter, rapes, burning and beheading of babies, the genocide of October 7th - *was justified*. The uncensored videos of these atrocities when shown to seasoned journalists caused many of them to be sick and traumatised. The same atrocities were publicly shown to Arabs in Gaza and they cheered.

Have Christians shown a better spirit? Most today say Israel has no divine right to their land and some say they are Christ haters. Evangelical churches around the world are calling for a cease fire to the war on Hamas. The silence of many churches to denounce Hamas, yet who are loud in denouncing Palestinian deaths, is ominous. Perhaps we have become weak on what war is, in comparison to wars fought in the past with millions of lives lost *for the sake of freedom*. This war may have gone past the point of the saying '*If the Palestinians put down their guns there will be no war; If Israeli's put down their guns there will be no Israel*'.

How can the world have steeped so low against a minority of people - *less than a few percent* of most western countries? Is there a spiritual side to this?...

### Depravity in the Soul

What the world is showing now is nothing new. It is symptomatic of what is *in the heart of every human*. The sins of hatred and malice lurk in *every human heart*. This is what the scriptures teaches concerning the heart of every person. '*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*' (Jer.17:9). The phrase '*deceitful above all things*' is not a partial 'sickness' but a

crookedness '*above all things*' - *above any other deceit known*. The phrase '*who can know it*' implies we might be shocked at what we are capable of.

We see this depravity in history over and over again, such as in the days of Noah and Lot, which showed an intensity of wickedness and evil, and of which the last days would be - '*like the days of Noah and Lot*' (Matt.24; Lk.21; 1Pet.3:20). Similarly, mankind will be *increasingly* more sinful and evil (2Thess.2:3; 1Tim.4:1-3; 2Tim.3:1-5; 4:3-4; Jude 1-25).

This depravity begins in the womb: '*Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me*' (Ps.51:5). We are born '*in iniquity*' with a heart '*deceitful above all things*' and we will die with it unless that heart is changed in some way. Isaiah crushes any argument against any goodness in the heart: '*We are all as an unclean thing, all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags*' (Is.64:6).

The scriptures are scathing concerning the heart of unsaved man: '*There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understands, none that seek after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that does good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulcher; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes. Now we know that what things soever the law says, it says to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God...*' (Rom.3:10-20).

This passage is a description of every human!

Finally, to be sure of what is in our hearts: '*For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man*' (Mk.7:21-23).

Why do I labour this condition of the heart? Because this is the heart that needs saving! This is *why* man needs the Messiah to dwell in the heart of a man born again from above, saved from every sin of that heart. Any gospel message without this reason is no gospel man needs. The Gospel speaks of an imputed righteousness that sits on the right hand of God. *There is no other solution to the depravity in the world today, or for any individual*. It is this Gospel that has changed the heart of even Hamas followers to love Christ and even love God's elect Israel!

But there is another point to be made here. Just as the world cannot afford to be soft on a war against terrorists, so Christians cannot afford to become soft on another war - the war in our hearts. The Scriptural words linked with sanctification are fighting terms! - We are told to *murder* the sinful lusts of the heart, to '*mortify*', '*crucify*', '*strive*', '*wrestle*', '*fight*' (Rom.6:12,13; 8:13; Col.3:5; 15:30; 1Tim.6:12; 2Tim.4:7; 1Cor.9:26; Heb.10:32; Eph.6:12...).

God is watching the evil in the world and has promised to come back to its hotspot, Jerusalem. But more personally, are you in battle with the lusts of the heart, training and ready for His soon coming to you, in either death or His return?

**Terry Arnold**

## 7,000+ Methodist U.S. Churches Split

*The number of congregations that have left the United Methodist Church amid the schism over the denomination's stance on homosexuality has passed the 7,000 mark...over 5,200 leaving this year alone...There are still about 440 congregations affiliated with the regional body. These include four congregations whose disaffiliation votes were not approved...*

*Over the past few decades, the UMC has been embroiled in a divisive debate over whether the country's second-largest Protestant denomination should amend language from its Book of Discipline that prohibits the blessing of same-sex unions and the ordination of clergy in same-sex romantic relationships. Although efforts to change the Book of Discipline have failed, liberal leaders within the denomination have often refused to follow or enforce the rules, drawing the ire of many theological conservatives.*

*While thousands of congregations across the United States have disaffiliated from the UMC under the parameters of paragraph 2553, some congregations have either had their disaffiliation votes rejected by their regional conferences or have faced other obstacles in their bid to leave.*

*Some of those churches have filed legal action against their respective conferences, accusing them of either not properly following the disaffiliation process or arguing that the process is unfair.*

*...Thousands of congregations that have disaffiliated from the UMC have joined the Global Methodist Church, a theologically conservative denomination launched as an alternative to UMC last year...*

*(Christian Post, 22/11)*

### **Editor's Comment:**

**The editor has faced this personally in 2013, (but being evicted out of a denomination, rather than negotiating to leave as these Methodists have done or are attempting to do. See booklet '*The Day They Evicted Our Church*').**

**Similar evictions and separations from denominations are occurring each year in Australia.**

**In most denominations now there is a stream of churches, sometimes a remnant, that are unchanging, refusing to go with the flow of the liberal, unbiblical trends of their denominations. These apostate denominations are simply following on the heels of the latest cultural change. Many of these cultural changes are simply unbiblical, immoral and antichrist to scripture. At the foundation of this is a low view or no view of inspiration and the all sufficiency of the written scriptures as God's infallible inerrant Word.**

**Whoever thought we would see the day when such a *low view of the word of God* would have Methodist churches with transvestites in the pulpit teaching children? How closely paralleled are we to the days of Noah and Lot? How far the church of the world has strayed from *the Gospel of Christ crucified for our sinful state*? Where is the fear of God, the '*terror of the Lord*' that the apostle Paul spoke of (2Cor.5:11)?**

## **Prosperity Gospel Increasing**

*An increasing share of American Protestant churchgoers believe financial prosperity is part of God's plan for them and giving more money to church will result in blessings from God, according to a recent study by Lifeway Research.*

*The study found that 52% of churchgoers say their church teaches that God will bless them if they donate more, up from 38% in 2017. Additionally, 76% believe God wants them to prosper financially, an increase from 69% in 2017. The belief that they must do something for God to receive material blessings has also risen to 45% from 26%.*

*'In the last five years, far more churchgoers are reflecting prosperity gospel teachings, including the heretical belief that material blessings are earned from God', Scott McConnell, executive director of Lifeway Research, said...*

*The prosperity gospel, or the 'Word of Faith Movement' teaches that believers can use God for material gain, a belief that contrasts with traditional Christian teachings... 'Younger churchgoers - those 18-34 (63%) and 35-49 (66%) - are more likely than older churchgoers to affirm that if they give more money to the church and charities, God will bless them', McConnell added...*

### **Editor's Comment:**

**The word 'prosperity' is mentioned only a few times in Scripture and it primarily has to do with the soul, not money (3Jn.1:2). The word 'prosper' literally means 'easy to travel through; to prosper ones journey, to give success'. The prosperity gospel turns people to self rather than Christ crucified.**

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## **Apology for Woman Arrested Twice For Praying**

*British police have decided not to press charges against a pro-life activist for praying silently outside an abortion clinic...and have issued an apology to her...*

*Vaughan-Spruce stated 'What happened to me signals to others that they too could face arrest, interrogation, investigation, and potential prosecution if caught exercising their basic freedom of thought...*

*Vaughan-Spruce was arrested on two separate occasions for silently praying outside the Robert Clinic in Birmingham, with police officers contending that her actions violated a Public Space Protection Order newly implemented by the city.*

*...Video footage of her arrest shows a police officer asking her why she was standing outside the facility and if she was praying. 'I might be praying in my head, not out loud,' she responded...*

*Vaughan-Spruce was later confronted by police again as she engaged in silent prayer outside the abortion clinic...One of the officers told her, 'You've said you're engaging in prayer, which is an offense'; Vaughan-Spruce replied that she was simply engaging in 'silent prayer'.*

*(Ryan Foley, Christian Post, Nov/2023)*

# Myths of Israel and the Middle East

## The Event of the 2023 War

On 7th October 2023 the terrorist organisation *Hamas* ('*Islamic Resistance Movement*', founded in 1987) entered Israel and slaughtered soldiers and civilians, gang raping (some in front of family), torturing, burning, beheading, cutting off limbs, putting babies into ovens, ripping mothers open and slaughtering both...and unspeakable acts even to the dead. Hundreds, including babies, were taken hostage. These acts were substantiated with videos, by eye witnesses and backed by *testimonies from captured Hamas soldiers*. The brutality was on a scale not seen before, some say worse than the Holocaust, worse than the ISIS terror groups of years before.



Yet astonishingly, the media from nation after nation increasingly sides with the Palestinian cause. The myths and hypocrisy associated with this are *not natural*.

## Hamas

Hamas were doing what their charter clearly spells out - no peace with Jews and '*Israel will exist and will continue to exist until Islam will obliterate it, just as it obliterated others before it*' (1988 charter). Hamas, with millions of dollars of funding from around the world supposedly designated for humanitarian efforts, have instead consistently built and fired thousands of rockets each year into Israel.

Hamas is a religious cult which slaughters with the mantra of '*Allahu Akbar!*' (God is great). Such groups have *rejected peace offer after peace offer - offers which Israel have accepted*. Hamas and Islam itself will not tolerate Jews in what they consider their land. The original Hamas charter quoted the Islamic *Hadith* and stated: '*The Day of Judgment will not come about until Muslims fight Jews and kill them. Then, the Jews will hide behind rocks and trees, and the rocks and trees will cry out: 'O Muslim, there is a Jew hiding behind me, come and kill him'*'.

## The Myth of 'Palestine'

Prior to the 1967 Arab-Israel War, there was *no serious movement for a Palestinian homeland*. In the six Day war, when Israel was attacked by Egypt, and Israel captured Judea, Samaria and East Jerusalem, *they captured them from Jordan's King Hussein, not from any Palestinians*.

'*Palestine*' never existed with its own identity, language or culture. The people are simply Arabs. The first time the name was used was in 70 AD when the Romans committed genocide against the Jews, destroyed their temple and declared the land of Israel no more. They named it 'Palastina' as an insult to the Jews, the name being derived from Israel's old arch enemy - the Philistines.

What is 'Palestine' today has been ruled by many foreign empires. *Today Israel has less than 1% of the Arab middle east!* Yet that is still too much for the Arabs.

## The History of The Land

### *Abraham; Moses; Canaan*

God told Abraham that he and his descendents would be given the land *forever* (Gen.13:15). God made a covenant, not with Abram, who He put to sleep, but *with Himself*: ‘for when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, He swore by himself’ (Heb.6:13). God promised that Abraham and his seed would possess *the land* encompassed by the rivers of Egypt in the south and the Euphrates to the north. In 1898 BC God confirmed His covenant as an *everlasting* one. ‘*And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your seed after you in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto you, and to your seed after you. And I will give unto you, and to your seed after you, the land wherein you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God*’ (Gen.17:7,8).

Patriarchs of the Jewish people settled in the land. Famine forced the Israelites to then migrate to Egypt. In the 13thc BC Moses led the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt. The Israelites settled in the Land given to them by God, known as Canaan (which had independent cities at times under Egyptian or Hittite kings).

In 1000 BC Jerusalem was the capital of David’s kingdom. Forty years later the first Temple, the national and spiritual centre of the Jewish people, was built in Jerusalem by King Solomon. Later the kingdom was divided into Judah and Israel.

### *Assyrians/Babylons/Persians/Greece (722-142)*

In 722-720 Israel was crushed by the Assyrians and the 10 tribes exiled. In 586 Judah was conquered by the Babylonians and another exile followed. The land was later conquered by the Persians in 538, and then Alexander the Great in 332.

### *Hasmonean Dynasty (140-37)*

The Hasmonean dynasty were descendents of the *Jewish* Maccabees family who ruled in the times of the Second Temple period from c. 140 BCE to 37 BCE.

### *Roman Conquest/Byzantine (63-313AD; 390-637)*

The Roman general Pompey invaded and captured Jerusalem. The Romans named the Land ‘Palastina’ (derived from the ‘Philistines’) as an insult to the Jews. The Roman Empire later split. The east was known as the Byzantine empire.

### *Arab Muslim Caliph*

In 638 CE, an Arab-Muslim Caliph took Palastina, adopting the Greco-Roman name (they pronounced it ‘Falastin’), and made it part of an Arab-Muslim Empire.

### *The Crusaders (1099-1291)*

In 1099, Crusaders from Europe conquered Palestina-Falastin.

### *Mamluk Rule (1291-1516)*

The Mamluks were a military class ruling Egypt and Syria, including Palestine.

Palestine was joined to Syria as a province of the Mamluks.

### *Ottoman [Turkish] Empire (1517-1917)*

The Ottoman conquest in 1517 ruled from Istanbul. Jewish families lived in the country, mainly in Jerusalem, Nablus (Shechem), Hebron, Gaza, Safed (Tzfat) and the villages of Galilee. The rest were immigrants from North Africa and Europe.

### *British Rule (1917-48); The Balfour Declaration*

The Ottoman empire, an ally with Germany, was dissolved following the first world war. The British captured Jerusalem in 1917 and British Foreign Minister Balfour supported a 'Jewish national home in Palestine'. The Balfour Declaration of 1917, confirmed by the League of Nations Mandate in 1922, committed the British to the principle of a Jewish National Home in Palestine. This mandate included all of what is now Jordan and now Israel, and territories between. Transjordan had three-fourths, one fourth was for the Jewish national home. Lord Balfour expressed hope that when the Arabs had been given so much, they would 'not begrudge' the Jews the 'little notch' promised to them.

### *Balfour Declaration Broken*

When Great Britain's war time ally Emir Abdullah was forced to leave the Hashemite domain in Arabia, the British created an area for him that included all of Mandate Palestine east of the Jordan River. It became known as the Jordan kingdom. Jordan seized territory now known as the west bank. (Later the 1967 war redrew that boundary). *The British cut more than 75% out of the Jewish National Home and restricted where Jews could live or buy land.*

During this period of the Mandate, *the Jewish population were known as 'Palestinians'* (even some who served in the British Army in World War II). By 1939 there was an end to admission of Jews to Palestine. Many Jews were thus left in Europe and died in the gas chambers. Yet at the same time immigration was occurring in massive numbers into west Palestine *from Arab countries.*

### *The United Nations (UN)*

In 1947 the United Nations proposed the establishment of Arab and Jewish states in the Land. The British mandate ended on May 14th 1948 and a state of Israel proclaimed the same day. *This resolution or partition was greeted with overwhelming joy in Jewish communities but with outrage in the Arab world.*

### *1948 War of Independence*

Following the UN resolution and Israel declared a nation, *Israel was invaded by five Arab states.* Egypt, Transjordan, Syria, and forces from Iraq took control of Arab areas. Trans-Jordan illegally took Judea and Samaria (West Bank) and Eastern Jerusalem, killing or driving out all Jews, banning them from Jewish holy places, destroying 58 synagogues, vandalizing 3,000 year old Jewish holy cemeteries. *Egypt and Jordan then controlled the Gaza Strip and the West Bank respectively until 1967.* For those 19 years, *there was never a bid for an*



*independent state of 'Palestine'*. Until the late 1960s, the word 'Palestinian' meant Jews, and 'Palestine' the Jewish homeland. The Israel newspaper was called the 'Palestine Post', the Israeli Jewish orchestra was the 'Palestine Orchestra'.

## **The Myth of 'Displacement'**

Arab officials were often stating that there is no such country as Palestine and that 'Palestine' was a term the 'Zionists' invented. *'Our country was for centuries part of Syria. 'Palestine' is alien to us. It is the Zionists who introduced it'*. (Local Arab leader to British Peel Commission, 1937).

By more than 1,000 years, 'Israel' predates 'Palestine'. It is said that Arabs have long been established in Palestine, until the Jews 'displaced' them. But history shows the Jews have been in the land going back more than 3,000 years. It could well be argued Arab immigration into Palestine 'displaced' the Jews. (Israeli Jewish communities, 'settlements', comprise only 2% of Judea/Samaria).

In 1937, 1947, 2000, 2008, Palestinian Arabs *rejected two state solutions or proposals for an Arab State within the Jewish homeland. Each time Israel accepted but the Arabs rejected, wanting the riddance of Jews altogether.*

### *The PLO*

In 1964, the *Palestine Liberation Movement* [PLO] was founded. Ahmed Shukairy, the first chairman, had always *denied the existence of 'Palestine'*. *Their charter proclaimed its sole purpose was the destruction of Israel.* This is mostly where the propaganda began that the world came to believe concerning *the myth of an Arab nation whose territory was unlawfully 'occupied' by the Jews.*

### *Six-Day War (1967)*

In 1967 Arab states (mostly Egypt, Syria, Jordan) amassed on the borders of Israel. Israel made a pre-emptive strike on Egypt defeating the Egyptian air force on the first day. Israel then defeated three Arab armies and *returned the territory to Biblical Judea and Samaria*, occupied by Jordan since the 1948 Israel war.

### *2002-2005 Withdrawal*

In 2002 Israel began building fences to stop terrorists from killing Israeli citizens. In 2005 Israel *withdrew all Jewish presence in Gaza* as part of efforts towards peace with the Palestinians. *They did not 'occupy' any of Gaza since.*

### *Hamas Government 2006*

The Palestinians elected Hamas in 2006, which then took total control after a violent and brutal conflict with their rival political party, Fatah.

### **'Jerusalem'**

King David founded Jerusalem. The Koran has no holy sites in Jerusalem. Mecca never mentions Jerusalem (the Jewish Tenach mentions it 700 times), and no history has Mohammed ever going there. For over 3,300 years, Jerusalem was

the Jewish capital. The Arab Palestinians never had sovereignty over any of the Holy Land and never governed until Israel turned over control of some areas in Judea and Samaria under the Oslo Accords (1993-95), and then left Gaza in 2005.

## The Contrasts in Hypocrisy

Israel is composed of both Jewish *and Arab citizens* reflected in the nation's governing body, the *Knesset*. Elected representatives from *both Jewish and Arab ethnicities*, with *equal voices* in the *democratic* function of government. Israeli citizens are both Jewish and Arabic in ethnicity. Over 2 million Arabs live in Israel and enjoy the same rights as Israelis (most say they would not want to live elsewhere). *Israel is the most liberal, democratic nation in the Middle East.*

Israel cannot be blamed for the terrible conditions in Gaza when *they supplied electricity, water and aid for the Palestinians*, despite Hamas ceasing payments in 2017 (now over \$4.5 billion owing). Yet the supply continued. Billions of dollars of aid given to Gaza from around the world was not used for the improvement of Palestinians' daily life, but for *war machinery* and thousands of *bombs* which are constantly fired across to Israel *week in week out* (one clip *by Hamas* shows *thousands* in just weeks).\* While Palestinians live in poverty, many Hamas leaders have amassed extraordinary wealth, living in luxurious palaces in Qatar.

The Israeli war ethics are to target terrorists, understanding civilians may be caught in collateral damage. They drop millions of leaflets, phone and warn civilians. The Hamas use civilians as shields, station war machinery in amongst civilians, including hospitals, and even shoot those who try to leave. Many of their tunnels are under such buildings, as substantiated by the terrorists themselves.

The Israel army do not engage in war crimes of rape, torture, beheadings and atrocities. The Palestinian groups and Hamas openly commit these crimes. Yet everything Israel does, they are guilty of 'war crimes', 'genocide'...

Many examples of hypocrisy and lies exist with the PLO and Hamas. As far back as the PLO Yasser Arafat when he published his '*The Palestinian Vision of Peace*' in the *New York Times* - he wrote that Palestinian people yearn to live '*as an equal neighbour alongside Israel with peace and security for both*'. He even stated: '*I condemn the attacks carried out by terrorist groups against Israeli civilians...They are terrorist organizations, and I am determined to put an end to their activities*'...That was Sunday, in English. On Wednesday, in Arabic, Arafat addressed a rally in Ramallah, firing up the crowd with his call for '*a million martyrs marching on Jerusalem*'...That night, a Palestinian terrorist donned an Israeli uniform, infiltrated the small community of Hamra, and murdered three people - a 33-year-old Ethiopian immigrant and an unarmed mother and daughter, aged 45 and 11 years. The next morning Arafat's *Voice of Palestine* radio jubilantly reported: '*The man carrying out the operation...became a heroic martyr*'. The killer was from the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Squad, a division of Fatah, the PLO faction led by *Arafat*...Arafat then addressed a rally in Ramallah: '*We will make the lives of the infidels Hell!...Millions of martyrs marching to Jerusalem!*'

\* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=99eX5upR0Dw>

(*'What 'Peace' Means To Arafat'*, Jeff Jacoby, Boston Globe, Feb.10, 2002).

The UN also have an astonishing hypocrisy in Israeli Arab conflicts. *'Of 175 Security Council resolutions passed by the U.N. before 1990, 97 were against Israel. Of 690 General Assembly resolutions before 1990, 429 condemned Israel. The U.N. is obsessed with Israel. And that is a great example of why we should treat the U.N. for what it is - an evil and irrelevant group of global busybodies. Israel is no threat to anyone except those who seek to destroy it...'* (Joseph Farah)

The U.N was silent while 58 Jerusalem Synagogues were destroyed when Jordanians systematically desecrated the ancient Jewish cemetery on the Mount of Olives, when the Jordanians enforced an apartheid-like policy of preventing Jews from visiting the Temple Mount and the Western Wall.

Many western nations are now added to this hypocrisy. Many Women's rights groups and in the UN are pro Palestinian/Hamas and silent on, even denying the rapes of the October massacre of Israeli women. Meanwhile, Palestinian children are brainwashed at school that Jews are to be killed and even shown how to do so.

The world fails to see that Israel has never hijacked a plane, a bus or a ship, or blown up crowded civilian centres, or taken hostages. The news media hardly ever reports the *thousands* of rockets indiscriminately fired into Israel, yet rather majors on the *responses by Israel*. In the various pauses in the current war, Hamas released *civilian hostages* (women and babies included); yet Israel released more than twice as many hardened *criminals*. The western world has not understood the plight of Israel as spoken by Israel's Netanyahu: *'If the Palestinians put down their guns there will be no war; If Israeli's put down their guns there will be no Israel'*.

## **The Mystery of Anti Semitism**

There is a serious and mysterious anti-Semitism at work in governments and the populace of most countries. It is not natural, no matter how evil one thinks Jews are (and Israel has many of the evils and immorality of western nations). When Hamas people are saved and come to Christ by Grace through faith, many come to love Israel as God's elect nation! This is not 'normal', but supernatural!

*The hatred for the Jews throughout every age does not exist with any other race.* Anti Semitism is first a cosmic battle in the heavenlies perhaps explained by Israel being God's elect nation. No matter how evil they have been, He is coming back for at least a remnant of this nation as the scriptures teach! The mystery is further unveiled when one considers what the Bible says of the last days and Israel.

### *Is there a Future Israel?*

Increasingly today many see Israel as having been cast away by God in AD 70 when the temple was destroyed, that God has finished with the nation and the people. That theology defies many scriptures but also geopolitical events. If God has finished with Israel then why the livid hatred for the Jews, and why are the nations now all squabbling over Jerusalem? Why is God coming back to Jerusalem and not any other country? Why is there a future '*New Jerusalem*' Heaven with the names of the Jewish apostles written on the foundations?

Continued next page >

The Major and Minor prophets speak of Messiah's return to Israel. The books of Acts and Revelation also explicitly place His place of return as national Israel. *Without Israel Christ cannot fulfil these prophecies.* To believe otherwise is to ignore a myriad of texts - most notably Zechariah chapter 14 which details the '**day of the Lord**' and Him '**gathering all nations against Jerusalem to battle...his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives**', with an '**earthquake**' following...'**and the Lord shall be king over all the earth...there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited...all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles**'.

The *detail, geography* and the *physical coming* of the Lord in this passage is surely literal. God has not finished with Israel (Mic.4:11-13; Jer.31:36,37).

Does God cast away His chosen 'elect'? If so can He cast us as individuals away too when we are His 'elect'? He says of Israel: '**For you are a holy people unto the lord your God, the Lord your God has chosen you to be a special people unto himself, above all the people that are on the face of the earth...**' (Deut.7:6-8 ); '**...He chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day**' (Deut.10:15); '**For the Lord has chosen Jacob for himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure**' (Ps.135:4); '**For Jacob my servants sake and Israel's mine elect, I have called you by your name.**' (Is.45:4).

The same phraseology is brought into the New Testament in 1Peter 2:9: '**You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people...**'.

God does not cast away his 'elect' for '**Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifies**' (Rom.8:33,34). Israel has been set aside, but only '**until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in**' (Rom.11:25). '**Has God cast away his people? God forbid...God has not cast away his people which he foreknew...there is a remnant according to the election of grace...Israel has not obtained that which he seeks for; but the election has obtained it...God has given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, ears that they should not hear; unto this day...Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles...blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved...For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins...as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance**' (vs.2-29).

But further, the New Testament covenant was first and originally *to Israel!* '**Behold, the days come, says the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel...this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, says the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people...for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more... The sun...the moon...the stars...If those ordinances depart from before me, says the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me forever...If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they**

**have done, says the Lord'** (Jer.31:31-37 cp Rom.11:26,27).

The Bible teaches that the Jews would return to their homeland (Zech.8:7,8; Is.43:5,6; Ez.17:11; Dt.30:3). Some 77 verses in Isaiah, 147 in Jeremiah, 60 in Ezekiel, 7 in Micah, 7 in Zephaniah, and 58 in Zechariah speak of a final restoration of national Israel prior to, and at the time of Christ's return. These promises are unconditional and confirm New Testament writings such as Matthew 24:15-28; Mark 13:14-20; Luke 21:20-24 and Revelation 16:13-16 which clearly depict Israel back in her land at the time of the end.

Why has Israel for so long been on a knife-edge for world war? '**Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it'** (Zech.12:2,3).

Could Israel have something to do with where the battle of Armageddon is fought? (Rev.16:14-16). Could it be this is where Jesus is to return (Zech.14) and reign for 1,000 years on the throne of David? (Ps.2:6-9; 22:27-31; Is.2:1-4; 9:6,7; 24:21-23; Joel 3:14-17,21; Mic.4;1-7; Zech.14).

The view put forth in this article is not new teaching but historic to the earliest of church fathers who were *mostly millennialists and saw a future Israel*. They took Bible passages to do with Israel and the last days as literal. They were followed by eminent scholars down the centuries such as Charles Spurgeon, Jonathan Edwards and other divines who believed in a *future literal reign of Christ*, a physical millennium and a *restoration of the Jews*. Spurgeon warned that the earthly reign of Christ is '*put so literally that we dare not spiritualise it*'. \*

## The Solution

There is never a lasting solution to a charter of violence. The world needs to see truth with *The Land*, the *history* and the tiny nation of Jews who like no other *have been hated every century*. It is the Jews who will one day '**look upon Him whom they have pierced**' (Zech.12:10) - the lamb slain for those who will believe.

The solution of peace will not come with mans war but only with a war waged by the Lord himself when He the *Prince of Peace* rescues Israel from imminent defeat and destruction and *physically returns to the mount of Olives* (Zech.13&14).

God has not forgotten His new covenant first to *Israel* (Jer.31:31-34). '**Thus says the Lord, which gives the sun...moon and of the stars...If those ordinances depart from before me, says the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me forever. Thus says the Lord; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, says the Lord'** (vs.35-37).

Terry Arnold

\* '*Things to Come*' 15:329. See our article/booklet on our website taministries.net in '*Articles*' section and '*Eschatology*', titled '*The Millennium - Literal or Figurative? The Early Church and Beyond - Views on the Millennium*'.

## The Mercy of God to the Nations

*How matchless is his patience! How enduring his mercy! The wicked provoke him, and he feels the provocation, but yet he does not smite. Week after week they still insult him, they even touch the apple of his eye by persecuting his people, but still he lets the lifted thunder drop, and gives space for repentance. He sends them messages of mercy, he implores them to turn from the error of their ways; but they harden their hearts, they blaspheme him, they take his holy name in vain.*

*Still, by the space of many years he bears with their incessant rebellions, and though he is grieved with the hardness of their hearts, he keeps back his indignation. This patience is shown...to myriads of the human family...from generation after generation still doth his good Spirit strive, still doth he stretch out his hands all the day long even to the disobedient and to the gainsayers. Not willing that any of His should perish, he waits long and patiently, because he delights in mercy. Equally wonderful, I think, is the power which God hath over his own mind in the ultimate pardoning of many of these transgressors. It is marvellous that he should be able to forgive any, and so perfectly to forgive.*

*It often happens to us we feel compelled to say when greatly offended, "I can forgive you, but I fear I shall never forget the wrong." God goes far beyond this, for he casts all our sins behind his back, and declares he will not remember them against us any more forever. What, never! Such deep offences; heinous crimes! Such provoking transgressions! Shall they never be remembered? ...Shall there not be at least a frown, a degree of coolness on account of them? No. 'I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, thy sins'. It shows the greatmindedness of God that he should be able to act thus towards the very chief of sinners.*

(From a sermon by Charles Haddon Spurgeon titled 'The Magnanimity of God' delivered October 21, 1877).

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## The Character of God and the Gospel

*'...The greatest issue facing the Christian church...is the character of God. Unless we understand what God is like, nothing else in the Bible will make sense. Apart from understanding God's justice, wrath, mercy, and holiness, there is no way we can understand the Gospel. The cross will make no sense to us if we do not understand why God's character required it.*

*If you understand the character of God, then the doctrine of Scripture, the doctrine of Christ, and everything else falls into place...Everything else can be correct apart from your doctrine of God and you are still a pagan...still an idolater. You may be an inerrantist; your eschatology might be right...you may never miss a quiet time or an opportunity to go to church. But if you do not worship and serve the right God, you worship and serve a false one. Therefore, we must 'press on to know the Lord' (Hosea 6:3). 'For from him and through him and to him are all things. To whom be the glory forever! Amen'.*

(From 'Power Religion' by Michael Horton, 1992)

## The gods of the ‘Once Faithful’

### ‘Deconversions’

One of the latest fads in Christianity is the notable ‘deconversions’ or ‘deconstructions’ of Christians, some of high profile pastors, authors and church leaders.

In 2019 ‘*Diakrisis*’ (Sept/Oct) we wrote of two examples of ‘deconversions’ - one a pastor/author Joshua Harris who wrote some classic best selling books such as ‘*I Kissed Dating Goodbye*’ and one recommended by this author ‘*Stop Dating the Church*’. In 2019 Harris shocked many Christian readers with: ‘*I have undergone a massive shift in regard to my faith in Jesus. The popular phrase...is ‘deconstruction,’ the biblical phrase is ‘falling away’...I am not a Christian*’. Yet Harris was optimistic that ‘*all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well*’. He also did a reversal on homosexuality, stating: ‘*To the LGBTQ+ community, I want to say I am sorry for the views that I taught in my books and as a pastor, regarding sexuality. I regret standing against marriage equality, for not affirming you and your place in the church*’.

Harris who had written much about purity and marriage, also separated from his wife of 20 years, who similarly ‘deconverted’, stating ‘*Christianity experience taught [her] to ignore [her] inner voice...*’ She stated she ‘*still believed in God but was now creating music that will ‘explore themes like identity, authenticity, gender roles and power in the conservative church*’.

Such examples have shocked many. Yet the same scenarios are not new in history or the Bible, but today are made prominent and more public by social media.

### Bible ‘Deconversions’

The Bible is full of examples of those with a faith *in vain* (Jn.2:24; 1Cor.15:2,14,17; 2Cor.6:1) and who *fall away* (Lk.8:13; Heb.6:6). The Parable of the Sower (Matt.13:1-23; Lk.8:4-15) is an example of those who *once believed and fall away*. The four ‘soils’ here are human *hearts* as Jesus explains (Matt.13:19: ‘*sown in his heart*’); the ‘seed’ ‘*is the Word of God*’ as Jesus explains in Luke’s Gospel (Lk.8:11). Three of the soils (hearts) do not bear fruit. In two of the hearts (*the shallow soil and the weedy soil*) the person *stands as a believer for some time*. The shallow soil has those who when hearing the Word of God ‘*immediately with joy receive it*’ but ‘*because they had no deepness of earth*’ they dry up. Jesus goes on to say that they only ‘*believe for a while*’ (Lk.8:13) or ‘*endure for a while*’ (Matt.13:21). These *once faithful*, in that they ‘believed’, end up no better off than any confirmed unbeliever, any whose faith is without works, or even the Devil who also ‘believes’, thus making it a ‘dead’ faith (James 2:14,19).

The reason given for the fall away in the shallow soil is that the person experiences ‘*tribulation or persecution...because of the word*’ (Matt.13:21). The result of this is that ‘*immediately he is offended*’. It is a vain faith because it had ‘*no root*’. The reason for believing was not valid and thus the person will not stand.

There is no real or lasting repentance, thus there is no real or lasting obedience.

Interestingly the Bible teaches that these trials and offences actually are important to a true believer in perfecting and strengthening them in the work of *Sanctification* (1Pet.5:9,10). But they are also a *testing* and often are a good indication in exposing the false believer from the true.

In the third *weedy soil* Jesus said the seed is ‘sown among thorns’ and then ‘choked’ (Matt.13:7). The weeds are ‘*the care of this world, the deceitfulness of riches*’ (vs.22), or ‘*the cares, riches and pleasures of this life*’ (Lk.8:14). This person becomes ‘*unfruitful*’ (Matt.13:22) with ‘*no fruit to perfection*’ (Lk.8:14).

The final soil, the ‘*good Soil*’ is a *prepared heart* and one that ‘*hears the word and understands it*’ with an ‘*honest and good heart*’ (Lk.8:15; Matt.13:23). That heart is ‘opened’ by the Lord (Acts 16:14) to have faith in Jesus and repentance towards God (Acts 20:21), with *understanding* and to bear lasting repentance and *fruit* (Matt.13:23; Lk.3:8; Matt.3:8; Lk.3:3; Acts 26:20).

## The god of Culture

The testing, trials, even persecutions ‘*because of the Word*’ surely include the cultural worldly pressures put upon professing Christians today. The pressure to include gender ideologies and cultural changes in the church have caused some to be ‘offended’ and give in to the changing and fleeting philosophies of the age.

The Bible obviously teaches an awareness of the possibility of the once faithful apostatising and indeed calls us to ‘*examine yourselves, whether you be in the faith; prove your own selves..*’ (2Cor.13:5), and to ‘*make your calling and election sure*’ (2Pet.1:10).

John Mason, founder of the *God First, Life Second* movement, has stated: ‘*When sound biblical theology is neglected for an American, spiritualised, cultural friendly replacement, exposure to that theology will naturally turn away a mind, heart and soul that has never submitted to that eternal truth. In other words, the falling away is the right response*’.

These sad apostasies, ‘deconversions’, only highlight the need for parents and churches to *preach and teach the Gospel accurately* and without the gimmicks and ‘new measures’ to get decisions, most of which today are proving to be shallow and ‘in vain’ (1Cor.15:2; 2Cor.6:1). As an extension to that there is also the need to teach *apologetics* and to *counter the attacks on the Bible as the Word of God*.

A friend of Joshua Harris wrote publicly to him and summed up the state of his ‘deconversion’: ‘*Josh...Your story doesn’t invalidate Christ’s message because He predicted that people would do exactly what you have done...It seems that you thought that Christianity was a series of formulas. Formulas for marriage. Formulas for systematic theology. Fear of choosing the wrong formula. Fear of failing to live up to your formula...Your faith and your marriage were based on formulas. They never went deeper than that. Jesus says about people like you that in the last judgment, He will say, ‘Depart from me, I never knew you’. You know that this means you never actually knew Him. As immersed as you were in Christian culture and a career as a pastor, you never actually knew Jesus. It gives*



*me only heartache to say these things to you. And Jesus will take no pleasure in pronouncing those words in judgment of you or anyone. You haven't walked away from a relationship with Jesus. You have walked away from the culture you were raised in...Jesus is real. He doesn't want you to return to your prior formulas. He wants you to come to Him for the first time and learn to love. I am praying for you, Josh. With love and sorrow.* (Mike Farris (<https://www.christianpost.com/voice/a-letter-to-josh-harris.html>))

Real faith is not lost by what we do not understand or can test with our human minds. It is *given by God* at regeneration (Jn.3:3 '*Gennáo ánothen*' - born from above). That 'faith' cannot be lost, but it can be tested and tried. If these cultural 'Christians' have been truly born again, they will return to the faith; if apostates then they are simply going back to what their earthly *nature* demands (2Pet.2:22).

## **The god of Reason**

Another high profile leader, Marty Sampson, a prolific Hillsong worship music writer, in recent years also revealed he '*had lost his faith and believed Christianity is just another religion...and it doesn't bother me...I am so happy now, so at peace with the world it's crazy...Why is the Bible full of contradictions?...How can God be love yet send four billion people to a place, all coz they don't believe?...Science keeps piercing the truth of every religion...Let the rain fall, the sun will come up tomorrow*'.

When Marty Sampson stated the Bible is '*full of contradictions*', it showed his low view of the Word of God as the inspired preserved revelation of Jesus Christ. He does not understand why '*billions*' of people would be sent to Hell for '*not believing*' - but one wonders how many sermons, if any, would he have heard on the subject of Hell in his circles of Hillsong, especially with teaching on the justice of, and the reason for Hell? He says '*science keeps piercing the truth*' of religion. Really? Increasingly science is actually *confirming* the truth of scripture (in archaeology, etc)! But such things are not the reason to believe! *Faith itself stands on its own and must be from above!* Yes, people can '*change their lives*' without religion, but such does not give eternal life.

What Marty Sampson and many others who 'deconvert' exhibit is *another god of reason*. Many today fall away because of reasoning such as '*how could a loving God reject people who were sincere in whatever faith they held?*' This is the '*offense*' many have in thinking that a God of mercy would surely welcome into Heaven everyone who seemed to be honest in whatever faith they had. But this effectively replaces the God of the Bible with a new god, one that suits ones own fallen image. It's a god that fits fallen human reasoning, logic and personal preferences...Put simply, the God of scripture is not what they want Him to be! Hence increasingly today people are denying any existence of Hell. Even former evangelical pastors have turned from biblical faith by denying Hell.

But if we are honest there will always be parts of the Bible uncomfortable and which we might not ourselves accept by logic. Many have loving family members destined to Hell if they do not believe. Yet would we embellish our logic and deny

that God might be angry with sin that is the very opposite to His own character, it being rebellion against His created order? Does God not have the right to justly punish evil? Can the holy righteous One turn a blind eye to human evil?

God is not human and sinful like us. He is also not one to conform to our thinking or our *fleeting and changing standards* of what is right and wrong, pure and evil, righteous and unrighteous. His character does not change. *He is not accountable to us, we are accountable to Him!* He does not have to plead for our approval and debase himself.

## **The God Without Exceptions**

Deconversions, falling away, and questioning God's actions and plans are really *another god*. But that god is not based on any inspired infallible revelation, as is the Bible, but rather human logic, emotions and reasoning. It might seem harsh, but when we accept the God of the Bible we accept the God in *all of the Bible* - the God who with holy purposes engages in wars; who has women, infants commanded to be slain; who commanded Saul to kill all and reprimanded him when this was not done; who had Samuel chop a man to pieces; who had Achan and his family slaughtered; who disintegrated the cities of Sodom and Gommorah; who had homosexuals stoned; who will have all fornicators suffer in Hell; and who allowed faithful Job's entire family to be killed, his wealth stolen, his health broken - This is the God of the Bible! How do we reconcile these things with fallen human logic and reasonings?

God does not justify himself but states '*Shall he that contends with the Almighty instruct Him? He that reproves God, let him answer it*' (Job 40:2).

Further, what about those who accept almost all in the Bible *except* some selective passages? Many today refuse to teach predestination, election and the sovereignty of God as it is Biblically expounded. Many try to reconcile and harmonise the sovereign election of God with the responsibility of man and in the process twist and turn scriptures to suit the man with so called 'free will' whom God is trying to save. Again, God does not justify his sovereign actions, instead He states his eternal right to do as He pleases: '*Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid...I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion...O man, who are you that replies against God?...Has not the potter power over the clay...*' (Rom.9:14-21).

Oh, the gods that we invent! Yet God before the foundation of the world hatched a rescue plan for fallen sinful mankind in sending his only Son, the Lord Jesus Christ to suffer and die as a sacrifice in the place of our sin as a full satisfaction for the penalty to be paid. Most will not accept this and many will prefer their own gods to suit their own fallen image. Those who add these gods will not be able to face the one creator God on the day of judgement and have any excuse for breaking his laws. Those who receive him as Saviour and Lord are promised adoption into His family and eternal life in a sinless perfect Heaven. It is then that we will truly reconcile any human difficulties in understanding God's nature, his character and His plans!

## Your Comments and Questions

(Views expressed here are not necessarily those of the editor)

*Dear sir, I was very interested to read the article 'The History of Israel' [Diakrisis Nov/Dec 2023]. The author gave a good overview of the history of Israel and the Arabs. One thing he forgot to mention was that in 2006 the Palestinian Arabs voted in the terrorist group Hamas whose charter proclaims its devotion to killing Jews...Many people are suffering because of this...Until the Arabs stop wanting to kill Jews there will be no peace in the Middle East. Arabs who live in Israel have a good life and are treated well and get on with Jewish neighbours. They don't want to live in Gaza under a Hamas government. A friend of mine who has been to Israel 5 times told me this after talking to many in both groups.*

**(R.W., NSW)**

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*Hi Terry,*

*I've re-established contact with a couple of old Roman Catholic friends after decades of lost contact. However, as soon as I've revealed that I've converted to Biblical Christianity from Roman Catholicism, they all immediately stop talking to me. It's as if I'm a lost heretic to be avoided. I feel like I'm a leper that former Roman Catholic friends are avoiding at all costs. One 80-year old fellow even gave me a rude 'thumbs down' to end the contact. I remembered this guy was a very devout Roman Catholic who chanted on his rosary beads regularly...*

*When I was a youth, I regarded rosary beads, scapulars, statues and pictures of saints and popes, with great reverence. I thought they were means of salvation! ...My dear old Roman Catholic friends are avoiding me like a plague. Also, when I was a youth, I regarded the Roman Catholic Church as the only true church possessing the true path to Heaven. I thought the other denominations were lost in their ways. I thought they must be lost in their ways without the Pope, without Mary and the rest of the saints, without the archangels, etc. Poor me, even 'purgatory' is beyond my reach!*

**(J.C.)**

### **Editor's Reply:**

**I know what it is like to be estranged from family. After conversion it was about a decade before I had contact again with most members of my family. Some died as staunch Roman Catholics or with a works idea of salvation, trusting in traditions of Mary, sacraments, etc, hardened towards the doctrine of the necessity to be born again, saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ crucified alone (Eph.2:8,9; Rom.4:2-6; Acts 4:12; 1Cor.1:23)...**

**...But such a separation from family actually spurred me on to grow spiritually and proved to me that such people are religious rather than at all loving and godly. Your reward is in Heaven. We 'press on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus' (Phil.3:14)!**

## Your Comments and Questions

(Views expressed here are not necessarily those of the editor)

Dear Diakrisis,

Thank you for sending 'Diakrisis' over many years. I thank you all for your faithfulness to the Lord - by teaching me the whole counsel of God. It has saved me from much false teaching and has been a good encouragement by you Terry to understanding the Gospel, by explaining it clearly. I am very old now and look each day for Jesus coming. By your teaching me about the Holy Spirit and His sanctifying works in the salvation of our souls by the blood of Jesus Christ as we trust in Christ by faith and rest in His promises, I know salvation is by grace alone (Rom.8:29,30). What hope we have in Jesus Christ for our eternal life yet to come! God's blessing to you all. Love in Christ...to God be honour and glory forever...

(J.M., WA)

### 'Theology'

*Theology is made up of two words - 'theos' (God) and 'logos' (word). It is narrowly about doctrine and widely about the character of God. It engages the mind, then moves the heart; it engages the will and transforms the soul. It mystifies some, it intimidates others.* (Editor)

### Itinerary 2024

The editor is soon to begin planning another extended trip to various states in the second half of this year. If any churches wish to be included please contact Terry so we can plan accordingly.

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