

Would Jesus **Concur** or **Weep**?

by Tom Compton

Looking at the photo of an innocent, dead, Palestinian child, I want to weep. It appears that the child is a girl of around 3 years old. Her parents are probably Muslims because the population of Gaza is predominantly Muslim. However, there are Christians peaceably living there, side by side with the Muslims. So, there is a small possibility that this little girl's parents are Christians. Of course, it doesn't make any difference whether her parents are Muslims, Christians, or Jews. If her parents are alive, they would still be grieving. And, we as Christians should be grieving.

Americans and our Congress have overwhelmingly supported the actions by the Israelis against the Palestinians in Gaza in the first few weeks of January, 2009. Probably hundreds of young children, as the girl pictured here, were killed.

Typically, a large percentage of Americans view the loss of such young lives as "collateral damage." This is an euphemism used by our military to sooth the American public. We've all heard about the collateral damage in Iraq and Afghanistan. It wouldn't be nice if it were called what it really is: **murder**. One group in the United States that religiously and fervently supports Israel, no matter how it conducts itself against the Palestinians that reside in Israel, are Christian Zionists. They believe that the modern state of Israel is a fulfillment of Old Testament, Biblical prophecy.¹

In a nutshell, Christian Zionists believe unconditional love must be bestowed upon Israel; not doing so would result in condemnations and curses from God. The idea that the modern state of Israel is a fulfillment of Biblical prophecy is a debate topic that can be carried on between Christians of different viewpoints. As Christians, our first and most important allegiance must be to Jesus Christ. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life, no one comes to the Father except through Me." (John 14:6) Nowhere in the New Testament does Jesus or any writer require that a belief in a physical state of Israel is necessary for salvation. Jesus' kingdom is based in the spiritual realm.

Here are some thoughts by Ericka Moore² from **Israel, The New American Idol**:

The mantra of "We will always support Israel" is disturbing enough coming from the President, the Congress, and our media,

but when Christian Evangelical Churches across America are the loudest voices in the chorus, it's time to investigate.

The most-quoted "proof text" referenced universally by Christians who believe we must unconditionally "bless" the modern day state of Israel is as follows:

"The LORD had said to Abram, ...
'I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you.
I will make your name great and you will be a blessing.
I will bless those who bless you,



When you look at this photo of a young Palestinian child killed in Gaza by an Israeli air strike do you want to:
1. **Concur**? or 2. **Weep**?

And whoever curses you I will curse;
And all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." (Gen. 12:1-3)

Assuming that scripture interprets scripture and that the New Testament writers often quote, and under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, explain the meaning of Old Testament passages, let's take a look at the New Testament book of Galatians.

In Galatians 3:8, Paul quotes a portion of this same scripture: "The scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith and announced **the gospel** in advance to Abraham: "All nations will be blessed through you."

And, what is **the gospel message** that God is proclaiming to Abram in advance? Is it the recently gathered, political state of Israel that will be a blessing to all nations?

Paul goes on to explain further in verse 16, "The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his Seed. The scripture does not say 'and to seeds,' meaning many people, but

'to your Seed,' meaning one person, who is Christ."

When we take the verse from Genesis 12:3 and apply it to the present day state of Israel, we are distorting the very gospel itself. Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah, is the Seed through whom "all nations will be blessed." That is, and always has been, the only gospel message of both the Old and New Testament.

Paul closes Galatians 3:26-29 with these profound words: "You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

We are all equal in the sight of God. He displays no favoritism based on race, social status, or gender. Jesus Christ gave his life out of love, not to save a tiny plot of land or a favored ethnicity, but for all mankind. Not for inanimate shrines and places, as much as we may love what they represent to us, but for the forgiveness of sins and salvation of all who will receive Him. His sacrifice was to make us "living stones" in **one** glorious temple, not built by human hands, but by a living God who wants relationship with us. That is the gospel.

The question for the American church today is simple: What gospel are we believing and preaching?

The only real question for Christians should be: "What would Jesus say about the photo of the dead child?" Would He concur that she is collateral damage needed for the state of Israel or would He weep? Brothers and sisters in Christ, you have to choose one or the other. As for me, I know my Jesus would weep.

¹ Refer to our video, **The Roots of Christian Zionism: How Scofield Sowed Seeds of Apostasy** at: <http://eshop.whtt.org/eshop.php?id=22>

² Ericka Moore is a prayer group leader in her evangelical church. Read her complete article, **Israel, The New American Idol** at: <http://whtt.org/index.php?news=2&id=2831>