

A Strawberry Mountain View of:

Hezbollah,

Hamas

&

Christians



by

Frederick L. Pattison

“Pray for the peace of Jerusalem. . .” (Psalm 122:6a)

The biblical passages quoted in this booklet are largely taken from the TNIV (Today’s New International Version of the Bible).

Copyright © MMVI as a Strawberry Mountain View aka Olive Tree Ministries
All Rights Reserved

A Topsy-turvy World

I am neither a warmonger nor a politician although I opposed the entry of the United States, my native land, into what I view an aggressive war in Iraq. I am a Christian, somewhat a pacifist, but not exclusively. I believe in defending oneself and one’s property. However, I believe that deliberate and blatant aggression on the part of any nation, including our own, is a **violation** of the Prince of Peace who declared:

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.” (Matthew 5:9)

I might also add at this point that I am not Jewish. However, as a Christian, I am indebted to the Jews for the spiritual roots of my faith in the Jewish Messiah – **Yeshua** [Jesus]. I somewhat, although not altogether, follow the tenets of the Anabaptist tradition which arose during the Protestant Reformation as a viable alternative to the Lutheran, Reformed and Anglican segments of that Reformation. Anabaptism was not a single movement but had a number of streams flowing from it. It is often referred to as **the Radical Reformation** or the stepchildren of the Reformation. It should be noted that the Anabaptists are neither modern-day Baptists nor anti-Baptist. Rather, modern counterparts are the Mennonite, Brethren and kindred groups of Christians including some groups of Baptists.

The original Anabaptists were pacifists to varying degrees. They placed a special emphasis upon the teachings of Christ as recorded in the pages of the four Gospels of the New Testament. The Anabaptists viewed as **their constitution the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew chapters 5, 6 & 7)**.

The aspect of war that I oppose is that which I refer to as **aggressive warfare**. Unlike a true pacifist I do not take the position that the Christian is to idly sit by and allow one’s own bodily harm or one’s possessions to be devoured and/or destroyed by an outside force. If a nation is attacked and invaded by an outside force, such as what happened during World War

II, I believe that that nation is justified in retaliating to the aggressor. In the case of Iraq our nation was not attacked by Iraq, therefore in this case we were the aggressor. I am also well aware of the fact that our nation, just as with every other nation on this planet, is not “Christian” in the biblical sense and meaning of Christian. **The United States** is largely a **secular nation** having developed its own “**civil**” religion into which many Christians have bought “hook, line, and sinker.” This is very unfortunate. And though we often parade before the world that we are a nation giving devotion and allegiance to God, I’m not always sure **which god**. Personally, I do not believe that it is **the God** revealed in both the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures; the **Lord God Almighty**.

I’ve titled this section “A Topsy-turvy” world.” *What do I mean by this?* Our world appears to continually be in a state of turbulence. It is chaotic to say the least. *Who could accurately believe and declare that our world is not in-a-mess, mixed-up and in disarray?* Yet, in spite of all of this this is the planet upon which we live and move and have our being. It is the place that we call home, at least at this point in our existence. As children of God we have been placed upon this planet as caretakers, not abusers.

After all that I’ve already said you may at this point wonder just where I am going with all of this. So with this all said here I go. . . .

Christians

“*Love, love, love!*” This was **the watchword** of the nineteen sixties **But was it really love**. Personally, I think not. The love advocated during the sixties was a kind of mushy, messy, sappy and often promiscuous love that really can’t even be called love. It was largely amoral. It was during this period of history that the so-called “**peace**” movement arose. In reality this was not new, because some Christians had been vigorous advocates for peace for centuries. History reveals that the earliest New Testament Christians were pacifists. Unfortunately,

organized Christendom bought into the so-called “**just**” war theory of Saint Augustine. It has become common for Christian to fight Christian. This is totally out-of-sink with the very essence of the Christian faith as set-forth by our Lord and by the original apostles under the New Covenant [Testament].

It is true that **the bottom line and basic message** of authentic Christian faith is **love**. Not the kind of love that secular America and the world advocate. Christian love begins and ends with and in God for God is Love. Our Lord, Master and Savior declared,

*“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so **you must** love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, **IF** you love one another.”*
(John 13:14-15)

Unfortunately the world is still looking to see this love.

Some Christians do not appear to understand the “*what*” and “*why*” of Christian love. This love is not a “mushy” touchy-feeling kind of love. It is a love that is pure, holy, and righteous. It desires the best for all people. One of the very best descriptions of this love is recorded in the apostle Paul’s first letter to the church a Corinth, chapter 13.

As a follower and disciple of Jesus Christ I believe that I am obligated to begin love by loving God as fully as is it humanly possible for me while I am still in this flesh. I am aware that my love is not all that it can or should be. It is my desire to love God with my entire being: body, soul and spirit. This is not always brought to full fruition because of my carnal nature. Yes, I did say “**carnal**” nature. You see as a child of God I’ve been **imputed** with a new nature; a spiritual nature. That is the “new creation” that I became when Jesus Christ entered into my life and brought me into the family of God. However, **he did not eradicate my old nature**. I sure wish that he had, but he is sovereign and knows best. What I am referring to is described

in **Romans chapter 7**. The grandeur of this is what **Romans 8** declares,

“There is not **no condemnation** for those who are **in** Christ Jesus.” (Romans 8:1)

Because I am “**in**” Christ and Christ is “**in**” me I am forgiven, redeemed, justified and a “heaven-bound” child of the King. **See – Galatians 2:20**.

It appears to me that many nominal Christians do not really comprehend and/or understand this love that I am referring to. They mix up authentic Christian love with the mushy, muddled, syrupy mess and call it love.

From my earliest recollection God has placed upon my heart a very special love for the Jewish people. *Why?* To be frank I’m not totally sure. **I hate anti-Semitism** as I do all other aspects of hatred, prejudice and racism. What I am addressing in this booklet is because of my love as a Christian. Though my love for the Jews and the Land of Israel is intense, yet God has also placed upon my heart a love for his other children; **the Arabs**. Unfortunately **hate begets hate**. God loves **both** the Jews and the Arabs. As a Christian it is my responsibility to love both. I am well aware of the fact that God has a special plan and purpose for the Jews and for Israel, nevertheless God promises blessings also upon the other children of Abraham; the Arabs.

Hezbollah

Please be aware that what I am addressing in this booklet must not be taken as being anti-Muslim nor anti-Arab. I am not anti anything but **anti-sin, anti-wrong doing, anti-ism**.

The name Hezbollah:¹ “This name is transliterated from the Arabic in a number of ways. Both Hizbollah and Hezballah are common transliterations into other languages with a Latin-based alphabet. It may, however, also be written Hezballah or

Hisbollah, and the literal Arabic version Hizab Allah, which is use by Al Jazerra. ‘Hizb’ (party) is the Modern Standard Arabic pronunciation, and ‘Hezb’ is closer to Persian and to Lebanese dialect. The ‘h’ is a pharyngeal in Arabic, but a normal ‘h’ sound Persian. The ‘-llah’ ending, originally ‘Allah’, means ‘(the) God’. The name is derived from a Qu’ranic sayat {verse} referring to those who belong to and follow the ‘Party of God’”.



(the flag of Hezbollah)

From the onset of this section we discover that **Hezbollah** is a religious organization; “**the Party of God**” or “**the Party of Allah**” making it a Muslim religious organization. As a Muslim organization it is part of **the Shia sect**. The Hezbollah came into being in the nineteen eighties in Lebanon, a nation that borders Israel. Hezbollah is a major political and military organization in Lebanon. As a religious movement Hezbollah maintains a number of social programs including hospitals, clinics and schools. The money for the establishment and maintaining of these programs flows largely from Iran. However, don’t let these social endeavors deceive you. Unfortunately there appears to be a sinister motivation behind these efforts for Hezbollah was born in hate and continues to foster hatred worldwide.

Hezbollah is well respected and highly regarded as a legitimate resistance movement by nearly all Arab and Muslim countries whereas it is regarded as **a terrorist organization** by the United States, Britain, Canada and Israel. It is interesting to note that the EU (European Union) does not list Hezbollah as a terrorist organization but does list *Imad Mugniyah*, its senior

¹ Definition from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Intelligence officer as a terrorist. It is somewhat surprising that some Christian groups view Hezbollah as a legitimate movement worthy of their support. Representatives of some mainline denominations have periodically visited Hezbollah claiming they were doing this in the name of “Christian” love. This kind of deception is boggling to my mind. If the group or the movement, whatever its label,

“claim to know God, but by their actions deny him. They are detestable, disobedient and unfit from doing anything good. Therefore rebuke them sharply, so that they will be sound in the faith.” (Titus 1:16,13b)

Biblical Christians hate **the methods** of Hezbollah and like-minded organizations while at the same time seeking to love them as individuals into the Kingdom of God.

Although Hezbollah is only one small part of Islam, yet it is disturbing to me that **so many Muslims**, both observant and nominal, **support the aims** of this terrorist group. It is said that **74 percent** of Lebanese Christians are somewhat supportive of Hezbollah. We, American Christians, must not forget nor forsake our Lebanese Christian brothers and sisters even though many of us do not necessarily agree even like their position in dealing with the Jews.

Israel occupied part of Lebanon for a number of years. This was an unfortunate action of the Israeli government. It has created bitter feelings between the Lebanese people and the Israelis, hence the negative feelings that that Lebanese Christians may display toward Israel. Most American Christians do not realize that **40% of the Arabs of Lebanon are Christians**. Not every action of Israel toward its neighbors is in accord with biblical precepts. Many Christians of **the American Religious Right** tend to be completely uncritical of Israel’s behavior and appear to be totally oblivious of the sufferings of Arab Christians who live in the Middle East. These Arab Christians may not be fully sympathetic to the tactics of Hezbollah, but they are

not supportive of some of the military methods used by Israel to target their own families and fellow Arab Christians.

Through the years Hezbollah has continued to periodically send missals into Israel as well as become increasingly entrenched in the Lebanese countryside with military might and power. Upon the withdrawal of Israeli military from Lebanon several years ago Hezbollah continued to build a stockpile of thousands of rockets. It has continued its attacks on Israel. Missals from Hezbollah have targeted Israel’s third largest city **Haifa**. I’ve been to this beautiful city. It is the world headquarters of the Bahai Faith², a religion that has traditionally been advocates of world peace.

Hezbollah has been at the forefront in training, equipping and sending **suicide bombers** into Israel. One of the chief goals of Hezbollah is the total and complete **elimination and destruction of Israel**. It works closely with a number of other militant fundamentalist Islamic organizations throughout the world. It has been greatly influenced by *Ayatollah Khomeini* and other radical Islamic leaders. It has a number of associated organizations including: the Organization of the Oppressed, the Revolutionary Justice Organization, the Organization of Right Against Wrong, and the Followers of the Prophet Muhammad.

Hezbollah has been guilty of kidnap, torture and murder. A report appearing in the *Arizona Republic* in July 2006 stated,

“Israeli soldiers returning from the front in Lebanon talk of battling an intelligent, well-prepared and ruthless guerrilla army whose fighters don’t seem to fear death. The troops describe Hezbollah guerrillas hiding among civilians and in underground bunkers two or three stories deep, evidence, they say, that Hezbollah has been planning this battle for many years. ‘It’s hard to beat them,’ one [Israeli] soldier said. ‘They’re not afraid of anything.’”

² Send for our booklet on “Bahaism”.

Hezbollah was originally formed as a militia group by the Iranian Revolutionary Guards. **Its principle financial support comes from both Iran and Syria.** Since its origin it has rapidly grown. Over the years it has continued to intensify its attacks on Israel by ambushing convoys, laying explosive devices, booby-trapping cars, and launching long range mortar shells and Katyusha rockets into Israel. As already mentioned Hezbollah has launched many suicide bombings. It operates against Israel in four main ways:

1. bringing terrorist and collaborators through Israel border crossings using foreign documents;
2. setting up a terrorist organization inside Israel and in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip;
3. cross-border operations – smuggling weapons and conducting terrorist activities;
4. financial support for radical Palestinian organizations and kindred groups including operating cells in the United States.



(Leader of Hezbollah inciting hatred toward Israel and the Jews)

Increasingly **Hezbollah and Hamas** work closely together in their dastardly work of violence. Many of their leaders fulfill the biblical premise of having **“their consciences seared as with a hot iron.”** (1 Timothy 4:2)

Let me say at this point that I am well aware of the fact that **the secular Israeli government** is far from being Godlike or acting in accord with the Hebrew Scriptures. It is not always

right in its actions towards the Arabs. The Israeli military is often arrogant and mean-spirited toward ordinary Arab men and women. On one of my visits to Israel, when crossing the Jordan River from Jordan into Israel, **I saw firsthand the strong-armed tactics** of some Israeli border guards as they **mistreated Arabs**, both women and men, seeking to legitimately cross from Jordan into Israel. This grieved my heart. I was with a group of Christian tourists and none of them, other than myself, was upset and disturbed by what we viewed. Remember, my earlier statement **“hate begets hate!”** Arabs hating Jews, Jews hating Arabs is destructive in all ways. Pro-Israeli Christians hating Arabs and Muslims is ungodly and certainly un-Christlike. When Christians hate it undermines and discredits the Christian Message. Love is the ultimate winner.

However, I am aware that **Israel must stand** against the terrorism and intrusions of groups such as Hezbollah into their land.

Hamas



(the Hamas logo)

Hamas is a rogue Palestinian **Sunni** fundamentalist Islamist organization. It is listed as a terrorist organization by several Western countries. It is also banned in Arab Jordan. It is viewed by the Muslim world largely as an independence movement. **Its name is an acronym of “Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiyya” or “Islamic Resistance Movement.”** The word formed by the acronym corresponds to an Arabic word meaning “enthusiasm, fire, ardor, fervor, zeal, fanaticism.” The name has bad connotations to Jews, because **in Hebrew** it means “violence, injustice, harsh, wrong” (Oxford

University Press Hebrew-English dictionary). This word is common in the Hebrew Bible, such as in Genesis 6:11, "...the earth was filled with violence."

When the Palestinians held their first election they voted Hamas in as their government. This has created many problems. Hamas is known chiefly for its **suicide bombings** and vicious attacks directed especially against Israeli civilians. **The Hamas charter**, which was written in 1988, **calls for the annihilation and destruction of Israel**. The aim of Hamas is to eventually **drive the Israelis** into the sea. As a Christian who believes the Bible I accept biblical prophecy as part of God's eternal plan.³ I recognize that the State of Israel has been formed in God's plan. I grieve, however, that the Israeli government is so secular that it has basically ruled out the God the Torah as the God who needs to be in charge.

The members of Hamas may be sincere, zealous religious people but their understanding of religion is misguided. It is corrupted vain religious belief. It *is not* the belief of every Muslim. Religion tends to be **the feeble attempt** of human beings **to reach and appease** an angry God. Whether the label is Muslim, Jewish or Christian many people, under the guise of 'their' religion, have created and continue to create problems of all kinds in our world including warfare.

Hamas regards the entire land area of what is present-day Israel to be theirs. They claim that it will never be "surrendered" to non-Muslims. Hamas believes that **it is God-ordained** for it **to take control of the land from the Jews**. Hamas claims that it will **never recognize Israel** as a sovereign state. It refers to Israel as the "Zionist entity." *Dr. Mahmoud al-Zahar*, Hamas political leader has stated,

"There is no place for the state of Israel on this land."

³ I have written a handbook titled "Israel and End Time Events."

According to the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Hamas views the Arab-Israeli conflict as

"a religious struggle between Islam and Judaism that can only be resolved by the destruction of the State of Israel."

The Hamas Covenant (Charter) states that **the goal** of Hamas is to,

"raise the banner of God over every inch of Palestine."

The purpose of this is to establish **the Land given by God** to the Jews as an Islamic Republic.

The slogan of Hamas is:

"God is its target, the Prophet is its model, the Qur'an its constitution: Jihad is its path and death for the sake of God is the loftiest of its wishes."

It is a little creepy reading the purpose of Hamas. There are also Christians associated with the extreme Christian Right, known as **Reconstructionists (Christian Dominionism)** whose goal is similar only, i.e., *the intent is to make the United States a Christian (of their brand and stripe) Republic*. I've written other material dealing with this heresy.

Getting back to Hamas. This violent terrorist organization at the time of this writing is **the political voice** of the Palestine people. Hamas states that its objective is,

"to support the oppressed and wronged and to bring about justice and defeat injustice, in word and deed."

If their objective was what is claimed it would actually sound quite "Christian" in deed. However, what Hamas **'says'** and what **it does** is somewhat different. Hamas believes that:

“the land of Palestine is an Islamic Waqf (trust) consecrated for future Muslim generations until Judgment Day. . . so-called peaceful solutions and international conferences as being incapable of realizing justice or restoring rights to the oppressed, believing there to be no solution for the Palestinian question except through Jihad.”

The Preface of the Hamas Covenant states,

“Israel will exist and will continue to exist until Islam will obliterate it, just as it obliterated others before it.” (a quote by Iman Hassan al Banna).

It is ironic to note how various Western service organizations are mistakenly lumped together with Zionism. Again, quoting from the Hamas Covenant we note,

*“The Zionist invasion is a vicious invasion. . . It relies greatly in its infiltration and espionage operations on the secret organizations it gave rise to, such as **the Freemasons, the Rotary and the Lions clubs, and other sabotage groups.** All these organizations, whether secret or open, work in the interest of Zionism and according to its instructions. . .”* (Article 28)

Hamas is riddled with untruths, hatred with the intent to eventually utterly dismantle, destroy and eliminate the State of Israel. In its attacks on Israel Hamas does not see any difference in distinguishing between Israeli civilian and military targets. Their aim is to kill and maim any and all Jews in any way possible in order to occupy and control the entire land all in the name of Allah.

The ancient sin of **Anti-Semitism** recurs over and over again throughout the world but is especially evident among such groups as Hamas, Hezbollah and to a more subtle degree among some fringe racist Christian groups. Anti-Semitism comes in all sizes and shapes. It has been around since the beginnings of the Jewish people. It did not begin with Hitler's Nazi Germany. The infamous work *“The Protocols of the Elders of Zion”* has

been and continues to be used by anti-Jewish forces in their attempts to discredit the ancient people of God, the Jews. *“The Protocols”* have been discredited time and again as a work filled with vicious lies and untruths relating to the Jews and their faith. Yet this work continues to be used by anti-Jewish forces, both Islamic and sub-Christian, to promote their rabid vicious anti-Semitism.

Some Suggestions

I'm just a simple disciple of Jesus Christ who often wonders what I can or should be doing. Not being a politician or an eloquent theologian I do believe that there are some things that I can do. Let us list some of them for you. I encourage you to join me in these.

- **As a Christian** I am seeking to live by and implement in my life Christ's **Sermon on the Mount** especially that section of his sermon that is referred to as “The Beatitudes” recorded in Matthew 5:3-10. I encourage my Christian friends to do likewise.
- **I pray for the peace of Jerusalem.** Psalm 122 implores the people of God to pray for Jerusalem. To me this is not an option, rather it is an obligation, duty and joy that is mine as one of Christ's followers.
- **I am actively working for social justice** as it relates to areas of living life. As a Christian I need to befriend **both** Jews and Arabs, love them, listen to them, cry and laugh with them as well as be one who exemplifies a Christlike life before them as one of Christ's followers.
- **I seek to stand-up and oppose Anti-Semitism and Anti-Muslim** actions of other Christians however they take shape and are expressed.

Do not be a naïve Christian but be aware that there are forces of evil in our world that we must oppose. One of the best ways in which Christians are able to stand against the forces of evil is found in **Ephesians 6:10-18.**

The forces of the Evil One (Satan) **will one day be defeated by the Prince of Peace (Jesus)** who will return to establish and reign upon the Throne of David. At that point in time he will establish his Kingdom reign over this planet. Until that day I must seek to be about my heavenly Father's business by living a Christlike life as a simple disciple of Jesus Christ.

I am convinced that **one of the best ways** of dealing with groups such as Hezbollah, Hamas and kindred groups is to encourage, challenge and enlist **moderate Muslims** to become firmer in their stands in opposing the evil forces in their ranks who advocate terrorism. This also holds true amongst Christians who must learn to deal more effectively with the evil forces within our Christian ranks. Muslims dealing with Muslims and Christians dealing with Christians is far more effective than is the outside world endeavoring to deal with these evil forces be they Muslim, Jewish or Christian.

As a child of God and a disciple of Jesus Christ I cannot just idly sit by and do nothing. If you are a follower of Jesus Christ I encourage you to become involved.

I invite your comments on this and other issues.

Strawberry Mountain Views

"Unique - Challenging - Controversial"



HC 1, Box 1529

Strawberry, AZ 85544-9740

Email – strawberryviews@mypayson.com