

Three Reasons Why Young US Evangelicals Are Turning Against Israel

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A Generation Divided: Antizionism Rises Among Young Evangelicals. (Photo: *Holy Bible with a Cross and an American Flag* by Nadezhda Ivanchenko/Adobe Stock/asset ID 1382125771; licensed via Adobe Stock)

Introduction

Opinions concerning Israel among young US Evangelicals are shifting. A survey conducted between March 22, 2021, and April 2, 2021, by the Barna Group, a social research organization, and by Mordechai Inbari and Kirill Humin, two professors at the University of North Carolina at Pembroke, found that support for Israel among US Evangelicals aged 18 to 29 dropped by half between 2018 and 2021. In their 2021 survey, only 33.6 percent of respondents expressed positive support for Israel—down from 69 percent in 2018. The 2021 survey also indicated that 42 percent of young Evangelicals in that age group identified as neutral, supporting neither Israel nor Palestine. There is no polling data that

specifically tracks the attitudes of young Evangelicals toward Israel from 2021 onward. However, an existing recent poll does capture general American attitudes toward Israel across different age groups. Conducted in August 2025 by Harvard University and the Harris Research Foundation, this poll found that a majority of Gen Z (those born between 1997 and 2012) support Hamas. When asked whether Hamas should remain in power if it released the remaining Israeli hostages, 60 percent of Gen Z respondents answered in the affirmative.¹

The 2021 survey was conducted four years prior to Hamas's October 7, 2023, attack on Israel. One could reasonably speculate that the anti-Israel social media tsunami that followed the Israel–Hamas conflict is likely to have played a significant role in further transforming the views of young US Evangelicals from neutral in 2021 to predominantly negative four years later. The 2025 survey itself demonstrates that 60 percent of American Gen Z members from all backgrounds favor Hamas over Israel. The number of young Evangelicals opposed to Israel is likely to have grown beyond what the 2021 polling indicated.

Several factors have contributed to this decline of support for Israel among younger Evangelicals, the most significant being what I will refer to here as deconstructionism—the

spread of woke ideology and biblical illiteracy.

Deconstructionism

Many young Evangelicals are currently reevaluating their faith and beliefs through a process I call deconstructionism. This process leads them either to reject their faith entirely or, in some cases, to embrace a more “progressive” form of Christianity. One core evangelical doctrine being dismantled, specifically in relation to Israel, is dispensationalism. This influential theological framework divides the history of redemption into distinct periods or “dispensations,” each representing a particular phase of God’s relationship with his people. Dispensationalism also holds that Israel and the Church have distinct roles in God’s redemptive plan, especially regarding the Jewish people.

As a doctrine, dispensationalism is closely tied to the eschatological framework of premillennialism, with eschatology defined as the study of end-time events. Premillennialism focuses on the Christian belief in the “Rapture of the Church,” an end-time event in which the Church, meaning the living believers, will be raptured or “caught up” into heaven. There they will meet Jesus Christ in the air, along with resurrected believers who have already died. Described in 1 Thessalonians 4:17, this end-time event is a belief that some—but not all—Christian denominations accept. Most Dispensationalists believe that the Rapture of the Church will occur after the Jewish people have been restored to the land of Israel and that it will precede a seven-year period known as the Great Tribulation. According to premillennial dispensationalism, the Rapture of the Church and the Great Tribulation, together, will usher in the millennial reign of

Christ on Earth—a one-thousand-year period during which Christ will rule on earth.

The dispensationalist theological framework was developed in 1827 by John Nelson Darby, one of the founders of the Plymouth Brethren in Dublin, Ireland. The Plymouth Brethren are a Low Church and Nonconformist Christian movement that spread to the US in the 1860s. Darby’s eschatology held that Christians would escape the coming Seven-Year Tribulation, a perspective known as the pre-Tribulation Rapture of the Church. However, Darby’s new theology faced pushback, particularly with regard to his views on Israel. Darby believed that Israel would be reestablished in the End of Days and that many people within Israel would suffer during the Great Tribulation.

Darby’s critics rejected his notion that Christians could escape early from end-time suffering through the reestablishment of Israel. Their opposition was especially sharpened by the fact that in 1827, when they first voiced opposition to his views, the state of Israel did not exist. To secure both a perceived escape route for Christians and validation for his theology, Darby supported the emerging Christian Zionist cause of helping Jews return to their homeland. This return, he argued, was integral to “proving” that Christians would be raptured—“caught up to heaven”—and that Jews, not Christians, would remain in Israel.

In the late nineteenth century, Darby’s theology influenced leading American Evangelicals and would eventually become a core doctrine for a majority of them. Today, Darby’s views are especially widespread among older American Evangelicals strongly influenced by Christian Zionist Dispensationalists such as Hal Lindsey. In his best-selling book, *The Late Great Planet*

Earth (1970), Lindsey popularized themes, such as the End of Days, the Second Coming of Christ, the Great Tribulation, and the central role of the Jewish return to the land of Israel in the drama of End-Time. According to *The New York Times* of May 17, 1977, the book was the best-selling nonfiction book of the 1970s; it had sold 28 million copies and had been translated into fifty-four languages.²

At the time, it also exerted a major influence on evangelical youth. One elderly Evangelical recalled the powerful influence Lindsay's book had in shaping their own Christian worldview: "As a college freshman in 1971, I brought a copy of *The Late Great Planet Earth* with me to Auburn University. Everyone on my wing of the dormitory, Christian and non-Christian alike, read the book that year. It scared us to death. We thought the end was near."³ Between 1995 and 2007, Evangelicals remained captivated by the end-time themes of the subsequent *Left Behind* series. Co-authored by Tim LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins, the series sold more than 65 million copies and was adapted into five films.⁴

Unlike their parents or grandparents, today's evangelical youth are far less engaged with futuristic events such as the Rapture of the Church or the Great Tribulation. They also show less interest in dispensationalism's complex theology. The restoration of the Jewish people to the land promised to them in the Abrahamic covenant (Genesis 12) has likewise diminished in importance within their own eschatological worldview. Increasingly, they tend to downplay the significance of Israel's restoration in the End of Days, the Rapture of the Church, and the Second Coming of Christ.

Many young Evangelicals are rejecting premillennial dispensationalism, especially

its emphasis on the significance of the land of Israel and its belief that Jews are God's chosen people.⁵ In its place, they are embracing alternatives like amillennialism—the belief that Christ's Thousand-Year Reign is symbolic rather than literal—or postmillennialism, which holds that the Second Coming of Christ will occur after the Church has Christianized the world. As young American Evangelicals steadily abandon their parents' traditional premillennial dispensationalism, eschatology and the Christian Zionist teachings of John Darby and Hal Lindsey have become increasingly peripheral. Consequently, Israel's existence holds little if any significance within the framework of the faith and beliefs of many younger American Evangelicals.

Of course, there are other theological prisms beyond premillennial dispensationalism that offer biblical grounds for robust Christian support of Zionism. However, the decline of this once-dominant theological view appears to have contributed to a more general erosion of support for Israel within the evangelical world. Influenced in part by social media, the theological perspectives and concerns of young Evangelicals have become more diverse and nuanced. Their attention is directed more toward immediate current events than toward future eschatological ones; as such, they are focusing instead on issues such as social justice, climate change, homelessness, and sex trafficking. Moreover, evangelical churches aiming to reach a more ethnically and politically diverse younger generation have increasingly tailored their services to be more seeker-friendly and culturally relevant.

An additional development worth noting is the revival of an older anti-Judaic Christian trend that is gaining traction among influential voices in the current evangelical

world. A historical precedent for this trend can be found in Marcion, a second-century anti-Judaic heretic whose teachings contributed significantly to the notion that Christianity had superseded Israel. Marcion's doctrine consisted of three key elements: 1) the belief that Christianity must sever ties with the Jewish Torah, which he regarded not only as lacking authority but as being culturally offensive; 2) the notion that the God depicted in the Torah was different from the God of Christianity; and 3) a jealous attitude toward the Jewish founders of the faith. As a result, Marcion was determined to erase all Jewish values and ethics from Christianity. Influenced by Marcion, several early Church Fathers absorbed Marcion's anti-Judaic posture.

Today, some of Marcion's core beliefs are championed by the popular US Christian leader Andy Stanley, lead evangelical pastor of North Point Community Church in Atlanta. North Point has 25,000 members and is especially popular among Gen Z and millennial Evangelicals. Stanley has encouraged his followers to "unhitch" their faith from the "Jewish scriptures" and a scripturally Jewish "worldview and value system."⁶ Stanley believes that the Ten Commandments should not be practiced by Christians and writes in *Relevant Magazine*: "Participants in the new covenant (that's Christians) are not required to obey any of the commandments found in the first part of their Bibles."⁷

The Growth of "Woke Ideology" Among Young Evangelicals

As young Evangelicals increasingly deconstruct their faith, they are drawn to themes of social justice and to a theology focused on the liberation of peoples perceived as oppressed. Within this framework, Israel is depicted as the

victimizer, Palestinians as the victims, and Israel itself as an apartheid and racist settler colonial state.

David Bernstein, a researcher at the Institute for the Study of Global Antisemitism and Policy (ISGAP), defines woke ideology in his book *Woke Antisemitism: How a Progressive Ideology Hams Jews* as follows: "By 'Woke Ideology,' I mean the outgrowth of postmodernist thought that holds two core tenets: that bias and oppression are not just matters of individual attitude but are embedded in the very structures and systems of society and that only those with lived experience of oppression have the insight to define oppression for the rest of society . . . woke ideology inflames both anti-Israelism and antisemitism by spreading dogma that empowers extremists and antisemites."⁸

In the foreword to Bernstein's book *Woke Antisemitism*, former Soviet Jewish refusenik and human rights activist Natan Sharansky observes:

Growing up in the Soviet Union, there was an ideology that we had to learn in grade school and in the university and were forced to repeat at every opportunity. This ideology stated that the entire history of the world is a fight between the privileged and unprivileged, between those who have and those who have not. The ideology held that people of goodwill must join in a fight by the proletariat against the capitalists. And the proletariat is always right because they are the victims. The ideology held that capitalists should be deprived of their right to speak because when they speak, they merely justify thousands of years of exploitation. That very ideology was used as a pretext to kill tens of

millions of people for belonging to the ‘wrong’ class, to the ‘wrong’ nation, or to the ‘wrong’ political views . . . In woke ideology, there are good identities and bad identities. In this worldview, the most victimized identity is Palestinian, and the worst identity is Israeli, which represents the last colonial project. Intersectionality unites woke progressive theory with the most primitive forms of antisemitism.⁹

Soon after Hamas's October 7 attack on Israel, the world witnessed the increased visibility and influence of a cross-pollination between radical leftism and Palestinian nationalism and Islamism. This dynamic was vividly showcased in encampments and rallies across US college campuses, such as those at Columbia University. The term often used to describe the intersectional relationship between Marxism, on the one hand, and Islamism and Palestinian nationalism, on the other, is the "red-green alliance," with red representing Marxism and green, Islamism and Palestinian nationalism. Within the red-green alliance—and often far removed from the public eye—a vehemently anti-Zionist “woke” movement has emerged on evangelical college campuses and within churches seeking to merge Christianity with both Palestinian nationalism and Marxism.

One of the principal purveyors of this ideology is the organization Christ at the Checkpoint (CATC),¹⁰ an evangelical anti-Zionist organization that convenes biannually in Bethlehem, in the West Bank. Observing the organization’s behavior and statements sheds insight into the themes underlying broader efforts to turn young Evangelicals away from supporting Israel. Even the name Christ at the Checkpoint itself implies that Israel is oppressing Palestinian Christians, evoking imagery of Christ as a

Palestinian oppressed by Jewish soldiers at an Israeli border checkpoint.

Mark Tooley, president of the Institute of Religion and Democracy, wrote in *Frontpage Magazine*: “Christ at the Checkpoint is primarily a public relations scheme to dissuade American evangelicals from pro-Israel views. To succeed, they (CATC) will have to put blinders on cooperatively gullible evangelicals, guiding their eyes towards disruptive Israeli checkpoints while hiding the rest of the surrounding reality.”¹¹ The surrounding reality to which Tooley refers is the harsh oppression of Palestinian Christians not by Israel, but by militant Islamists.

The most recent CATC conference was held in May 2024 at Bethlehem Bible College in the West Bank. According to a report by NGO Monitor, “Christ at the Checkpoint seeks to advance the Palestinian nationalist agenda within evangelical Christian churches while simultaneously reviving theological antisemitic themes such as replacement theology. Other anti-Jewish themes promoted at CATC include the de-Judaizing of Jesus.”¹² The theme of the 2024 CATC conference pivoted noticeably away from its traditional theological foundation of supersessionism—the narrative that the Church has replaced Israel. Absent were the old guard veterans of supersessionism, such as the former Wheaton College evangelical and New Testament theologian Gary Burge. In his book *Whose Land, Whose Promise* (2013), Burge denied Jewish national claims to the land of Israel. He specifically demanded that Israeli Jews who do not convert to Christianity should be cast out and burned: “The people of Israel cannot claim to be planted as vines in the land, they cannot be rooted in the vineyard unless first they are grafted into Jesus. Branches that attempt living in the land, the vineyard,

which refuse to be attached to Jesus, will be cast out and burned.”¹³

Rather than repeating the old supersessionist line, the CATC has made a radical shift toward woke ideology. This was reflected in the presentations at the CATC’s 2024 conference. Most of the conference’s speakers were not theologians but community organizers, peace activists, and thought leaders. One representative example was Reverend Renee August from Cape Town, South Africa, who delivered a presentation titled “How Genocide Can Be Normalized?” Remarkably, August accused the biblical Joseph from Genesis, Jacob’s son, of committing “a crime against humanity”:

Joseph commodifies what God had given freely. This is a crime against humanity. Joseph gathers all the money in Egypt for Pharaoh. Notice the movement of economic power toward the empire. The movement of spatial power now rests with the empire. The work of decolonization must include a redistribution of power—of economic power, social power, political power, religious power, and spatial power. How do we normalize genocide? Easy: if Joseph remains the hero, and if there is only one way to think about him, there is no problem. But when we acknowledge that Joseph is not good or evil—he’s both! We can reorganize God’s power for the world.¹⁴

In the Q&A following the talk, Reverend August elaborated on her interpretation of the New Testament’s Parable of the Talents, found in Matthew 25. The parable tells of a master who, before leaving on a journey, entrusts his three servants with varying

amounts of money, according to their abilities. Upon his return, he discovers that two of his servants invested his money wisely and were rewarded for their diligence. However, the third servant buried the money instead of putting it to use. The master subsequently took the money from the third servant and gave it to the first servant. Reverend August then proceeded to say that “the person handing out talents cannot be God because if we accept this, we must be okay with God sanctioning inequality. That is a text of terror. The hero of the text is the one who buries the talent because it is an act of boycott, divestment, and sanctions . . . I will not participate in an unjust economic system.” August concluded by summarizing the parable’s lesson: “If you are Jewish, you are not allowed to make money with money. If you have five talents and you come back with ten, I must ask, who got screwed?”¹⁵

Also present at the 2024 Christ at the Checkpoint conference in Bethlehem was Lisa Sharon Harper, a former chief engagement officer for the progressive Christian magazine *Sojourners*, who asserted in her speech at the Christ at the Checkpoint conference: “What needs to happen is the decentering of whiteness. The brown colonized Jesus is in solidarity with Palestinians. We need Palestinians to do their decolonizing work.”¹⁶

In his presentation at the 2024 Christ at the Checkpoint conference in Bethlehem, Daniel Bannoura, a young Evangelical PhD candidate in Quranic studies and a recent speaker at the American evangelical flagship school Wheaton College, argued that he wanted to “remind Christians of the context of 75 years of [Israeli] Apartheid and oppression and settler colonialism.” He further claimed that when Palestinians chant slogans such as “from the river to the sea, Palestine will be free,” they are calling not

only for the eradication of the state of Israel but also the “annihilation of a racist ideology of one people [Jews] over another [Palestinians].” Bannoura characterized “the idea of Israel” as “an ethnic and racist supremacist state,” asserting that “the Palestinian has become the Jew, and the Jew has become the new white man.” Accusing Israel of white supremacy, he said, “I think Palestine is a theological crisis. If you are an American evangelical and you are having conversations about white supremacy and about patriarchy, you have to have conversations about Palestine—these go hand in hand. Palestine is an American Christian issue, just like white nationalism is an American Christian issue. Palestine, by extension, is a theological crisis for the West, just like white supremacy is. Just like racism is. Just like patriarchy is.”¹⁷

On evangelical college campuses across the United States, such views are growing in popularity. On March 25, 2025, Munther Isaac, pastor of the West Bank’s Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Christmas Church and director of CATC, was invited to Wheaton College to promote his new book *Christ in the Rubble: Faith, the Bible, and the Genocide in Gaza*.¹⁸ Located near Chicago, Wheaton College has long been recognized as the beacon of higher evangelical education in the United States. At the conclusion of his speech—delivered at the Cliff Barrows Auditorium in the school’s Billy Graham Center—Isaac was met with a standing ovation in a packed hall of more than 500 students and faculty. Isaac, whom *The Pittsburgh Jewish Chronicle* described as the “high priest of antisemitic Christianity,”¹⁹ commands a significant following among young Evangelicals. Wheaton’s role is particularly notable because it serves as the training ground for the next generation of US evangelical educators.

On October 8, 2023, the day after the October 7 massacre in southern Israel, Pastor Munther Isaac said in his sermon at the Evangelical Bethlehem Lutheran Christmas Church: “We were all shocked by what happened yesterday . . . We were glued to our phones and televisions, following the events firsthand . . . We were shocked by the strength of the Palestinian man who defied his siege . . . Frankly, anyone following the events was not surprised by what happened yesterday.”²⁰ Isaac’s praise of the Palestinian attackers attracted the attention of Husam Zomlot, head of the Palestinian Mission to the United Kingdom and a former Palestinian PLO General Delegation ambassador to the United States in Washington, D.C. Isaac subsequently invited Zomlot to speak at the 2024 CATC conference in Bethlehem. Zomlot, who refused to condemn Hamas’s October 7 murder when he was interviewed by CBS’s Margaret Brennan, praised Munther Isaac when he greeted the CATC attendees and welcomed them to “this very important conference organized by the Right Reverend Munther Isaac, pastor of the Lutheran Church in Bethlehem. Munther is a dear friend and a powerful voice for justice.”²¹

In his review of *Christ in the Rubble*, theologian and church historian Gerald McDermot describes how:

Isaac has just completed a triumphant tour of elite Ivy, Catholic, and evangelical universities, telling the story he relates in *Christ in the Rubble*. He received standing ovations from standing-room-only crowds. As in the book, his speeches exploit genuine suffering that tugs on the heartstrings of naive listeners and demonizes Israel. Tragically, his invented history and distorted exegesis will be used by cynical

Palestinian leadership to prolong Palestinian suffering. As Abba Eban observed decades ago, the Palestinians never miss an opportunity to miss an opportunity.²²

Isaac's message resonates with a vast segment of young Evangelicals who feel increasingly disconnected from the old-line trappings of evangelical dispensationalism, particularly its emphasis on the chosenness of the Jewish people and the rebirth of the state of Israel. Isaac's brand of leftist politics, in which the designated victim is always assumed to be in the right, strongly appeals to young Evangelicals motivated by social justice concerns. Equally concerning is the woke ideology that is gaining traction within the American political right. This movement is winning young evangelical followers, turning them not only against the Jewish state but also against American Jews.²³

Social media influencers like Tucker Carlson and Candace Owens have played a major role in fueling this shift. Tucker Carlson's show, *Tucker Carlson Uncensored*, draws an average of 50 to 260 million views. Candace Owens, meanwhile, has amassed over five million followers across her social media platforms. Tucker Carlson's March 31, 2025, interview with the evangelical Christian nationalist Andrew Isker is a prime example of the language increasingly used to frame discussions on Israel and the Jews.²⁴ Isker, a former pastor of Fourth Street Evangelical Church in Waseca, Minnesota, is a graduate of Minnesota State University (Mankato) and Greyfriars Hall Ministerial Training School in Moscow, Idaho. Currently, Isker is also the founder of an escapist utopian farming community for Christian nationalist young families in the hills of Tennessee. In their conversation, Carlson and Isker framed their views on Jews and Israel in the following terms:

ANDREW ISKER: And that old covenant, it's done, it's over. Those distinctions between Jew and Gentile, they're gone.

TUCKER CARLSON: It says that only about a thousand times in every book of the New Testament. So, to come to the opposite conclusion does make you sort of wonder. Like, have you read it?

ANDREW ISKER: And the interesting thing about that, too, is there's this misconception that the only people in the Old Testament who believed in God were Jews.

TUCKER CARLSON: Well, it's all through the New Testament, and in fact, Jesus calls out repeatedly Gentiles as the most faithful. Repeatedly.

ANDREW ISKER: Yes . . . he [Jesus] is talking about the faithless and adulterous generation. He's talking about Israel.²⁵

Isker embraces replacement theology and supersessionism.²⁶ In *Christian Nationalism: A Biblical Guide to Taking Dominion*, a book he coauthored with Andrew Torba, Isker observes:

It is common within conservative circles to hear the phrase 'Judeo-Christian.' Modern Judaism is a new religion created after the Old Covenant was destroyed. If the church were to understand that modern Ashkenazis and Sephardis are not 'the special people,' we may actually be able to evangelize them effectively. They are not the special people. True Antisemitism is

overlooking Jews or failing to evangelize them because you believe they are ‘Chosen’ by God. This is why ‘Judeo-Christian’ is such a problem. Talmudic Judaism is a new religion. The very best thing the church can do for modern Jews is to heighten the distinction between Christianity and their false religion.²⁷

By interviewing Andrew Isker and expressing sympathy for his views, Carlson has aligned himself with the identity politics of Christian nationalism: specifically, the belief that American national identity and destiny must be exclusively Christian. This belief includes the conviction that Christians have a duty to persuade their government, by force or fiat, if necessary, to restore the country to its Christian heritage. In Andrew Isker’s *Contra Mundum* (Latin for “Against the World”) podcast, posted June 14, 2024, Isker and his young evangelical co-host, C. J. Engle, promote returning America to “heritage Americans.”²⁸ In their view, heritage Americans are white Protestant Europeans whose families immigrated to America before 1940.

Tucker Carlson has used antisemitic tropes to describe Jews, including Ukraine’s Jewish President Volodymyr Zelensky, whom he described as “rat-like,” a “persecutor of Christians,” and “shifty and dead-eyed.”²⁹ Carlson’s influence on young conservative Evangelicals was further evident when he was invited to speak recently at Charlie Kirk’s funeral. Instead of memorializing Kirk, Carlson used the occasion to disparage Jews and to accuse them of murdering Christ:

Whatever happens next in America, I hope it’s in this direction, because God is here, and you can feel it . . . And it actually reminds me of my

favorite story ever. So it’s about 2,000 years ago in Jerusalem, and Jesus shows up, and he starts talking about the people in power, and he starts doing the worst thing that you can do, which is telling the truth about people, and they hate it. And they just go bonkers. They hate it. And they become obsessed with making him stop. ‘This guy’s got to stop talking. We’ve got to shut this guy up.’ And I can just sort of picture the scene in a lamplit room with a bunch of guys sitting around eating hummus, thinking about what do we do about this guy telling the truth about us? ‘We must make him stop talking.’ And there’s always one guy with a bright idea, and I can just hear him say, ‘I’ve got an idea. Why don’t we just kill him? That’ll shut him up. That’ll fix the problem.’³⁰

In an interview with Isaac, Carlson has delegitimized the Jewish state and has accused Jews of targeting Palestinian Christians with the aim of annihilating them. He has also argued that “if you wake up in the morning and decide that your Christian faith requires you to support a foreign government blowing up Churches and killing Christians, I think you’ve lost the thread.”³¹

Another major woke right-wing media influencer with millions of followers is Candace Owens. Her preferred slogan, “Christ is King,” has gained popularity among young American Christians. The phrase is used to assert that the United States is exclusively a Christian nation. But Owens’s history of disparaging Jews and Israel goes far beyond the use of this slogan. She has accused Israel of taking control of the United States and, even, of assassinating President John F. Kennedy. Owens has also

promoted Holocaust denial and has accused Jews of attempting to destabilize America.³²

The rise of woke ideology among young Evangelicals across the political spectrum, both left and right, is a significant development. A form of intersectionality is emerging in which for many young Evangelicals, both liberal and conservative, victimhood has become the primary issue.

On the question of Israel and the Jewish people, left-leaning young Evangelicals view Palestinians as victims and Israel as the oppressor. Increasingly, right-leaning young Evangelicals view white American Christians as victims and the conspiratorial “globalist Jew” as the oppressor.

Biblical Illiteracy

The rise of deconstructionism and woke ideology is, in part, the product of a third phenomenon: the decline of biblical study and knowledge among young Evangelicals, a trend I refer to as biblical illiteracy. As Hosea warns, “my people perish for lack of knowledge” (Hosea 4:6). *The Jerusalem Post*, tracking this trend, recently reviewed the American Bible Society’s April 2024 survey *State of the Bible USA, 2024*. One of its reported findings is a sharp decline in Bible knowledge among Gen Z Americans, both religious and non-religious: “Generational trends explain the phenomenon. This spiritual decline is most pronounced among younger generations, with only 11% of Generation Z adults (people born between 1997 and 2012) considered scripture-engaged, the lowest among all age

groups surveyed. This demographic is also the least likely to view the Bible as a significant influence in their lives.”³³

This general trend is apparent among Evangelicals. In a recent survey measuring Bible reading among young Evangelicals, 89 percent of respondents reported that they gain their biblical understanding primarily from hearing sermons rather than from reading the Bible on their own.³⁴ Many evangelical pastors, striving to remain culturally relevant, craft their sermons to be more motivational and less rooted in biblical teaching. The Old Testament repeatedly emphasizes a core tenet of the faith: God’s eternal and unconditional love for the Jewish people, including his enduring plan to restore them to the land he promised to Abraham and his son Isaac’s descendants—a land given to them as an everlasting possession. But if young Evangelicals neither read the Old Testament nor listen to sermons inspired by it, they will lack the biblical teachings necessary to support Israel. The evidence suggests that this lack of serious engagement with biblical texts is contributing to declining support for Israel.

Conclusion

Due to the three factors discussed above, and the way they mutually reinforce and amplify one another, support for Israel among American Evangelicals is currently in sharp decline. If this downward trend is ignored, it could result in an American evangelical movement that, within a decade or two, is largely opposed to Israel.

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⁴ Adam Volle, “Left Behind Series,” Encyclopædia Britannica, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Left-Behind-book-series-by-Lahaye-and-Jenkins>

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⁹ Bernstein, *Woke Antisemitism*, 5–7.

¹⁰ Mark D. Tooley, “Christ at an Israeli Checkpoint,” FrontPage Magazine, Feb. 19, 2012, <https://www.frontpagemag.com/christ-israeli-checkpoint-mark-d-tooley/>

¹¹ Tooley, “Christ at an Israeli Checkpoint.”

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¹⁴ Christ at the Checkpoint, “CATC2024 Day 3: A Genocide Normalized—Rev. Rene August,” June 5, 2024, video posted by the Bethlehem Institute for Peace and Justice, YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=91W5-F9wnQ0>

¹⁵ Christ at the Checkpoint, “CATC2024 Day 3: Rev. Rene August.

¹⁶ Christ at the Checkpoint, “CATC2024 Day 2: A Call for Repentance—Lisa Sharon Harper,” June 5, 2024, video posted by the Bethlehem Institute for Peace and Justice, YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GoraiOWCwvo>

¹⁷ All the quotations in this paragraph are from Christ at the Checkpoint, “CATC2024 Day 2: A Call for Repentance—Daniel Bannoura,” June 5, 2024, video posted by the Bethlehem Institute for Peace and Justice, YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cfZkDKmWsrM>

¹⁸ Munter Isaac, *Christ in the Rubble: Faith, Bible, and the Genocide in Gaza* (Eerdmans, 2025).

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