

The Trouble with Southern Baptists

By Norm R. Allen Jr.

Southern Baptists have always been reactionary. Indeed, they were founded primarily to defend slavery. They have always been staunchly patriarchal and insistent that only certain Protestants can get into Heaven. Many of them have been anti-Jewish.

This last flaw has not turned off many Israelis. Southern Baptists were on hand to celebrate President Trump's provocative move of the US embassy to Jerusalem. Southern Baptist preachers even delivered sectarian prayers for the occasion.

Southern Baptists believe that the U.S. has a central role in biblical prophecy, even though the name "America" appears nowhere in the so-called good book. Many Christians simply use highly imaginative "thinking" and retrofitting to come to the conclusion that the U.S. is highly favored by God. These religious fanatics believe that the modern state of Israel will figure prominently in Christian eschatology. They believe that Israel will be at the center of the "war to end all wars," and that certain Christians will be raptured to Heaven. (Pat Robertson once even reportedly planned to film the Rapture!)

Israeli leaders seem to know that these Christian bigots do not like them or trust them. However, many Israelis seem to believe they simply have differences in theology. Many Israelis believe that reactionary Christians in the U.S. are among their best allies, and that dangerous anti-Semitism among reactionary Christians is a thing of the past.

The problem with the religious insanity of Southern Baptists is that it is *dangerous*! They are actually looking forward to World War III and they will do whatever they can to accelerate it. And in Trump they have the perfect dupe to do their bidding. Who cares how many porn stars he sleeps with as long as he can help usher in the Second Coming of Jesus Christ?

Pastor Rick Wiles is especially off-the-wall. He is constantly featured on Right Wing Watch. He has stated that Muslims must be "stomped out like cockroaches." He believes Obama is truly a demon from the pits of Hell.

(However, the pastor has reportedly fallen out with Trump, and in 2017, he said that Ivanka Trump is an evil woman that practices Kabbala.)

Recently, Wiles said that antichrist refers to behavior and beliefs. He said that anyone who disbelieves that Jesus was God in human form “is antichrist.” He included Jews, Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims and others.

Israelis might also be interested to know that Wiles condemns homosexuality and Zionism and says that “They’re driven by the same spirit.” He believes that homosexuality and Zionism will rule the world simultaneously through Artificial Intelligence and high-tech surveillance of the people. This paranoid conspiracy theorist further believes that the evil figure of the Antichrist will be a homosexual Jew. (Homosexuals and Jews are, not coincidentally, despised by many Southern Baptists.)

Many Southern Baptists believe that the Antichrist will be a Jew. There is no telling how geopolitics will play out. But how could such a belief possibly bode well for Jews, especially Israelis?

White Baptist leaders are not the only ones with controversial religious beliefs. The Reverend Michael R. Jordan, pastor of the New Era Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, recently put up a sign saying “Black Folks Need to Stay Out of White Churches.” This was in reaction to a White church, the Church of the Highlands, opening a new branch, headed by a Black pastor, in Jordan’s Black community. Jordan has had other provocative signs with messages such as “AIDS is God’s Curse on a Homosexual Lifestyle” and “White Folks Refused to Be Our Neighbors.”

In 2017, a White Reverend, Chris Ashley, put up a sign at his Cowan Road Baptist Church in Gulfport Mississippi that said “Allah is Satan.” He has refused to back down. And so it goes.

Despite all of this bigoted nonsense, the main stimulus for this article is the latest Southern Baptist outrage. The Reverend Grady Arnold of Cuero, Texas has stated that social justice, racial justice and global justice are evil. He has sided with Southern Baptist leader Paige Patterson, who has angered many by apparently viewing women as sex objects and implying that women in abusive relationships

should stay and try to work it out. Ashley grumbled, “This social justice is creeping down into local churches. If we start down this road, where will it end?”

White Southern Baptists here are speaking the same language as White non-theists that constantly bash Social Justice Warriors (SJWs). It is this kind of bigoted mindset that demonstrates how race trumps everything. White non-theists that oppose social justice are much more likely to join forces with religious Whites of a like mind, than they are to join forces with Black non-theists, most of whom believe in social justice.

Once again, Southern Baptists are taking a lead in defense of reactionary ideas. Anyone who gives aid and comfort to such religionists is no friend of genuine progress.