Apocalyptic Abomination:

Sacrificing Peace for a Temple through Interpretation of Scripture

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I remember the day I picked up the first book in the *Left Behind* *the Kids* series. I became enthralled in the story of four kids who struggled to survive after being left behind. A fictionalized version of events from the book of Revelation captured my curiosity and imagination. I finished the entire series in a matter of months. Additionally, I was intrigued about how Israel played into this eschatological narrative. I remember watching John Hagee on TV preaching about what events to look for within Israel that would signal the end times. Once I got to college, I took a class on the Middle East. I was astonished to learn there were multiple views on eschatology and Israel’s role. Not all Christians agreed about a rapture, and not all Christians believed a Third Temple should be built. Furthermore, I learned there were Christian and Muslim Palestinians who also value Jerusalem. I began to wrestle with the dispensationalist views of my childhood and these newfound facts from college.

My first trip to Israel sparked an intense desire to understand these issues on a deeper level. I was able to witness the conflict up close and in person. I saw Jews, Muslims, and Christians all residing in one place. I began to connect abstract beliefs with real people who had real stories. On this trip, I made connections with the people such as a Christian Palestinian, and I began asking more questions. I wrestled with the teachings I had learned growing up and my new found understanding from actually being in the place of the conflict. This generated my initial curiosity about whether or not Christians’ views of the end times were contributing to this tension between Israelis and Palestinians, and whether or not there might be a link between interpretation of scripture and action.

My second trip to Israel this past summer was the final piece of the puzzle. As I went through airport-level security and walked up the ramp to the Temple Mount for a second time, I found this experience to be strikingly different than my first visit two years ago. The first thing I saw as I entered the Mount was the riot gear prominently displayed by the entrance and the increased presence of Muslim security officers. Just days before, the entire Temple Mount had been closed to non-Muslim visitors due to tension from Jewish visitors during the Muslim festivities of Ramadan. Despite the memory of unrest, the overall mood that morning was calm and peaceful. Groups of Muslim men were sitting around reading the Qur’an while non-Muslims wandered past. Some Muslim men were passing out tracts. One in particular struck up a conversation with our group. As he was talking to us, a few Conservative Jews came onto the Temple Mount. In an instant, the entire atmosphere on the Temple Mount shifted. The tension in the air was palpable. There were no violent outbursts; instead, it was more of a feeling of disturbance and distress. The Muslim man who had been talking to us said that what we were witnessing was becoming more common. He said that Muslims are worried because they know the Jews want to get rid of the Dome of the Rock.

To hear a religious Israeli perspective, I also visited the Temple Institute, a place devoted to the creation of a Third Temple. In fact, the Temple Mount and the Dome of the Rock were visible from the front steps of the Institute. Inside their exhibit, I saw everything they have created in preparation for a Third Temple: almost every element needed to restore temple rituals and priestly rites has been made. Visiting both the Temple Mount and the Temple Institute provided me with valuable insight into the thoughts and feelings of both sides and their passionate perspectives.

The Jews are ready; the Muslims are worried. This subject matter is no longer an abstract concept but rather something grounded in real people with real desires. Now more than ever, I began to ponder how Christians should respond to this idea of a Third Temple and the implications of peace between Israelis and Palestinians. And how does scripture play into this Christian understanding of Israel and a Third Temple? Inspired by a renewed curiosity and personal interest, my research question became clear. To what extent are the ways Jews and American Christians are interpreting scripture hindering them from seeking peace and reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians?

The evidence presented here seeks to demonstrate that dispensationalist and Jewish interpretations of scripture are indeed hindering peace between Israelis and Palestinians. This paper explores potential links between interpretation of scripture and actions towards Israelis and Palestinians, with a particular focus on the interpretations associated with the Antichrist and the Third Temple. My evidence comes from three different sources. First, I performed a content analysis of four relevant books written by John Hagee. The goal was to see what scriptures passages he discussed and emphasized. What role does the Antichrist play and is the Third Temple important to Hagee’s view? Second, I performed a content analysis on the Temple Institute’s website to gain understanding of how Jews interpret scripture related to the temple.[[1]](#footnote-1) The goal here was to see not only what scripture they use but how far they have come in preparing for a Third Temple. Third, I performed a content analysis on stories from two newspapers located within Israel. This would provide insight into the public’s opinion within Israel in regards to building a Third Temple. Lastly, I performed another content analysis on two newspapers but looking specifically at instances of violence on the Temple Mount. Is the view of scripture on the temple motivating action among the public in Israel?

**To What Extent Does Interpretation of Scripture Influence or Hinder Peacemaking?**

**Three Perspectives:**

When it comes to interpretation of scripture and the role of Israel, three main perspectives dominate the literature. This section will examine each perspective’s interpretation of scripture and how their interpretation influences the way they approach the peacemaking process between Israelis and Palestinians. First, there are dispensational Christian Zionists who consider Israel to play a crucial role in their eschatology. Events such as the peace agreement, Antichrist, temple, and battle of Armageddon all place Israel at the center. A second perspective is the Israeli Radical Right which focuses on a Jewish perspective on this question. They too use Old Testament scripture to show their claim to the land and to justify their actions against Palestinians. Lastly, the third perspective provides critiques of Christian Zionism and dispensationalism. Writers in this school see a danger in the way dispensationalists interpret scripture and the actions that follow. My arguments will build off of the criticisms given in this section. In the end, I will argue that interpretation of scripture does influence the way we view the peace process between Israelis and Palestinians. Specifically, dispensationalist views of the Antichrist and the Third Temple and the Jewish interpretation for a Third Temple are hindering peace efforts between Israelis and Palestinians.

*Dispensational Christian Zionist:*

Before examining the specific views of a dispensational Christian Zionist, it is important to understand the historical context. Dispensationalism originated in Britain in the 1870’s with the famous John Darby and his Scofield Bible. While some Evangelicals held dispensational views, it was not until the creation of Israel in 1948 that those views became widespread. In the 1970’s, dispensationalism became a part of the mainstream Evangelical culture. Several years later, books such as Hal Lindsey’s *Late Great Planet Earth* and the *Left Behind Series* increased in popularity.[[2]](#footnote-2) People such as John Hagee, Tim LaHaye, and John Walvoord are popular Dispensational Christian Zionists today. As defined by Stephen Sizer, Christian Zionists believe it is the “moral responsibility of evangelical, Bible-believing Christians...to stand with God’s chosen people, because God was on the side of those who blessed Israel.”[[3]](#footnote-3) In other words, they wholeheartedly support and stand with Israel. To not do this, would disobey God. The rest of this section will examine various beliefs held by three Christian Zionists with dispensational eschatology.

John Hagee is an avid Christian Zionist who takes a dispensationalist perspective. Hagee has written various books that discuss passages of scripture through a dispensationalist lens. For example, he frequently refers to Ezekiel 38-39. Those chapters describe a battle between Israel and distant nations of the North. Ezekiel chapter 38:1-2 uses the terms Gog and Magog to refer to these distant nations. From the Hebrew translation, Hagee takes this to symbolize modern day Russia. Hagee quotes a Hebrew scholar who also came to these same conclusions about the origin of the words.[[4]](#footnote-4) Now, how could Ezekiel prophesy about a nation that was not in existence yet? Hagee says the answer to this is found in the text. Hagee argues that these chapters are prophetic, and so Ezekiel was referring to a nation that would one day be established. It would be a nation against biblical principles and against the state of Israel. Hagee has connected the pieces Ezekiel described to fit modern day Russia. Hagee also argues that Russia will not be alone. Arab nations will join with Russia to fight together against Israel.

He says this is the battle explained in these biblical passages. This will lead to the final battle of Armageddon.[[5]](#footnote-5)

Hagee also supports the movement to build a Third Temple on the Temple Mount. He claims all Jews want a Third Temple to be built. The difficulty is that the Dome of the Rock currently stands on the Temple Mount. He acknowledges there is some debate over where exactly the temple used to stand. There is also debate over where to build it and how to build it, but Hagee says it will be built because it is crucial to the second coming of Christ. Hagee suggests that perhaps the temple will be allowed to be built due to the work of the Antichrist. He says, “It is entirely possible that the coming ‘man of peace,’ the false Christ, will be able to work such a miracle of diplomacy.”[[6]](#footnote-6) It is here that a potential answer to the overall research question is addressed. To Hagee, peace and stability in Israel can only be accomplished through a false peace in the Antichrist. A true lasting peace is not possible. Therefore, what is the point in trying? Hagee may not specifically claim he is against the peace process. However, he would consider the efforts to be futile. On the other hand, Hagee has expressed ambiguous views. A 2010 article raises speculation about the relationship between Netanyahu and Hagee. The author says, “In 2010, Hagee and Netanyahu appeared together at a Jerusalem rally which showcased donations from Hagee’s ministry to Jewish settlements on the West Bank that are helping to undermine any possibility of peace.”[[7]](#footnote-7) From this, it appears as though Hagee thinks peace is unattainable, and he is more concerned to protect Israeli’s right to the land than to hear the concerns of the Palestinians.

Lastly, Hagee’s view about Muslims also fits into this discussion. He views Arabs, Muslims, and Palestinians as all being the same. Nor does he acknowledge the existence of Christian Palestinians and Arabs in his writings. Hagee argues the sole goal of Islam is to destroy Israel.[[8]](#footnote-8) As a result, he does not see peace as an attainable goal when that deal would be made with someone whose sole purpose was the destruction of Israel. This is a logical conclusion assuming his facts are true about Islam. It is easy to look simply at radical Muslims and believe this is true. It can appear as though Muslims are intent on killing all Jews, and American Christians. As a result, he does think it is possible to negotiate peace with them because they are focused on world domination.[[9]](#footnote-9)

LaHaye also presents a literal reading of prophecy and other biblical scriptures. He takes passages in Daniel, especially chapter nine, and argues that they deal specifically with the temple and the Antichrist. For example, Daniel 9:27 says a prince will come and establish a one week covenant that will be broken halfway through.[[10]](#footnote-10) To LaHaye, this means that the Antichrist will come and make a seven-year treaty with Israel which will be broken after three and a half years. Additionally, in later verses, the Antichrist desolates the temple after breaking this agreement. LaHaye’s argument which is similar to Hagee’s is that in order for these events to occur, a temple has to be built. [[11]](#footnote-11) The Antichrist cannot come and desolate the temple if there is no temple in Jerusalem. Therefore, Dispensationalists argue that the creation of a Third Temple must happen before these end time events occur. When the Antichrist does come, LaHaye says that he will be a false proclaimer of peace and stability. He will also be a leader who unites the world into a single government and economy. While this may seem good, it will all be under the guise of Satan’s authority (according to LaHaye). It is unclear from this writing whether or not he would support violent action in order to build a Third Temple. Like Hagee, he may see peace as simply a waste of time when destruction and violence are inevitable.

Lastly, John Walvoord also writes about the significance of Israel in Christian eschatology. Like LaHaye and Hagee, he takes a literal interpretation of scripture, and he examines how modern day events correlate to biblical passages. In his book, he gave several prophetic timelines and checklists for Christians anxiously awaiting the end. Some of these events include a world religion and economy, a Third Temple, a peace treaty between the Antichrist and Israel, and many others.[[12]](#footnote-12) Walvoord also looks specifically at the question of peace between Israelis and Palestinians. According to Walvoord, the temple, Antichrist, and peace process are all interconnected. First, events need to become so desperate and chaotic that the world looks for a leader to bring peace. This figure will somehow be able to arrange a peace agreement which Walvoord believes will finally allow Jews to build the Third Temple. However, after three and a half years, the peace agreement will be broken. Walvoord describes these events in the following way, “A peace settlement in the Middle East is one of the most important events predicted for the end time. The signing of this peace treaty will start the final countdown leading to Armageddon and then introduce the new world leader...the infamous Antichrist.”[[13]](#footnote-13) As each of these events unfolds, the second coming of Christ will draw nearer and nearer.

Walvoord’s view in relation to the peacemaking progress is once again ambiguous. On one hand, a peace agreement signals the end time events are beginning to unfold. Walvoord could then support various peace initiatives in hopes of speeding up the events. However, a troubling consequence is the correlation between peace and evil. Someone who works towards peace could be accused of being the Antichrist or working with the Antichrist. Instead of relating peace with the teachings of Jesus, it becomes connected to a false hope of Satan. Each of these thinkers views prophecy as playing a vital role in Israel and the Second Coming of Christ. All of them have perspectives of scripture that influences the way they see Israel and the surrounding nations. Additionally, they are wary of lasting peace in the region because it is associated with the coming of the Antichrist.

*Israeli Radical Right:*

The Israeli radical right movement contributes a second perspective to the overall research question. Even though these are Jewish groups in Israel, interpretation of the Old Testament does play a role in their overall views. Ehud Sprinzak examines how the radical right began. He argues that as soon as Israeli leaders agreed to give the Sinai Peninsula back to Egypt, the radical right movement was born.[[14]](#footnote-14) This action was seen as a threat to the livelihood of the state of Israel. To Jews who viewed Israel as their Promised Land, giving land back to an Arab nation went completely against everything they believed in. After this event, it became common for Jews associated with radical right groups to target Arabs. There was even a plot in 1984 to blow up the Dome of the Rock.[[15]](#footnote-15) Groups such as the Land of Israel Movement, Gush Emunim, and Kach, were all attempting to protect their national identity of a Jewish state. While many in these movements are secular Jews, Sprinzak notes that some were also motivated to act based on their interpretation of the Promised Land. Sprinzak says that these Israeli radical groups are motivated to take over all of the land because they see it as “not only a political act, but a religious and metaphysical commandment.”[[16]](#footnote-16) Scripture tells them that God gave Abraham this land which would be promised to his descendants. Being those descendants, they will oppose anything that stands in the way of them achieving their goals. As a result, they take a clear stance on issues with Palestinians and the land disputes. They would not support a peace agreement which gave Palestinians land. Sprinzak sums up their view in this way, “their confidence in Israel’s might and a total suspicion of the Arabs...’Peace for peace’ was their political slogan...under no condition should Israel respond to an Arab proposal for peace by territorial concessions.”[[17]](#footnote-17) If peace is defined as succeeding land to Arabs, then they will do all they can to undermine this process.

Ami Pedahzur builds upon the arguments of Sprinzak. He too has observed the growing influence of the Israeli radical right in culture and politics within Israel. People in this movement are participating in politics to make their views heard and to inspire action. He argues that the Israeli radical right movement is no longer a view held among a minority of people in Israel. Rather, it has grown in power, strength, and popularity.[[18]](#footnote-18) To understand the ideology behind the radical right movement in Israel, he turns to three core elements the group possesses. The first element is nativism. Essentially, this means that members of the radical right believe that non-Jews pose a threat to the state of Israel. For example, this group would deny the right for Palestinians or other Arabs to be eligible for Israeli citizenship. Additionally, they believe the state of Israel should have full control of all the territory. This would include areas such as the West Bank and Gaza.[[19]](#footnote-19) Next is authoritarianism which seeks to combine politics and religious fundamentalism. Pedahzur believes the Israeli radical right displays these elements as well. Lastly is populism. In Israel, this means that the radical right wants to get rid of any entity or institution that is contrary to their agenda. They believe outlets such as the media or universities are controlled by people who do not adamantly support and desire to protect a truly Jewish state.[[20]](#footnote-20) To summarize the views of both Sprinzak and Pedahzur, the Israeli radical right has continued to develop into mainstream culture in Israel. The desire for a truly Jewish State combined with the ideal of the Promised Land has led them to fiercely oppose peace movements. A group who feels threatened by Palestinians will not be in favor of them receiving land that the radicals claim belongs to a Jewish State. For Jews in the radical right, there is no room for peace with people they consider to be outsiders.

*Critiques of Dispensational Christian Zionism:*

Lastly, this paper will turn to examine the critiques of Christian Zionism and dispensationalism as the third perspective. Stephen Sizer is a well-known critic on this subject. Sizer responds to the eschatology of dispensational Christian Zionism and Israel’s involvement. One area he focuses on is in regards to the dispensational Christian Zionists (DCZs)[[21]](#footnote-21) claim for a Third Temple. Sizer argues this is no longer an obscure view but rather one growing in size and significance among DCZs and Israelis.[[22]](#footnote-22) Sizer acknowledges that a literal reading of the passages LaHaye and Hagee refer to such as Daniel 9 and Matthew 24 do speak of a temple. Sizer looks at why they began to focus on this need for a temple. It was not until dispensationalism began that the idea of a Third Temple began to arise. In fact, Sizer says the idea originated back with Darby and the Scofield Bible.[[23]](#footnote-23) However, this was support for Jews to build a temple. It was not supposed to have significance for Christians. Now, DCZs have latched on to this idea that a temple must be built, not just for Jews but for them as well. Sizer explains their rationale. The DCZ perspective is “based both on the assumption that certain Old Testament prophecies...have not been fulfilled and New Testament references...imply the existence of a Jewish temple immediately prior to the return of Christ.”[[24]](#footnote-24) Many more arguments can be given as well to show why DCZs want a temple built.

But Sizer argues a need for a Third Temple is contradictory to current Christian doctrine. For Christians, the temple is obsolete in light of Jesus’ death on the cross. He argues that a new temple undermines the need for Jesus and the fact that Jesus has already won the victory over sin and death. Jesus no longer needs a temple when he returns again. The curtain was broken.[[25]](#footnote-25) Sizer’s argument is built more on showing why dispensationalist’s ideas must be false. He does not think any Christian should support a Third Temple movement. In the end he says, “Christian support for the rebuilding of the Jewish temple is...linked to a belief in an imminent apocalyptic war, unparalleled in human history.”[[26]](#footnote-26) From his argument, Sizer would be in favor of finding a peaceful situation on the Temple Mount because he does not think a Third Temple is necessary. However, he does think a DCZ would be opposed to peace because they are waiting for the final destruction of the end of the world. Sizer offers an excellent critique of the DCZ; however, he only provides criticism. He never offers a more balanced approach to the way Christians could view the situation.

Donald Wagner’s entire book is critiquing the DCZ “anxious for Armageddon” views and why they are contrary to scripture. He does not think end time prophecy and scripture should be read literally. According to Wagner, that is one of the major flaws of dispensationalism. DCZ read too much into the text which begins to distort the original meaning. While he does not spend much time addressing the temple, he thinks a literal view on this would have to be wrong. It is possible that the temple was already fulfilled in the time of the Romans. Additionally, their interpretations of scripture place the role of Israel and eschatology above the atoning work of Christ and the message of peace he brought to the world.[[27]](#footnote-27) Additionally, Wagner reminds readers that Jesus told his disciples that no one will know the exact hour he will return. While Hagee agrees with this claim, Wagner goes one step further. He argues that this verse also shows that Jesus did not intend the Bible to be used as a prophetic time chart of end time events. It will not lead anyone closer to understanding when and how events will unfold. For Wagner, it seems as though he wants to diminish the importance of eschatology. It is more important to focus on getting our life and heart in line with God’s.

Wagner adamantly believes this group of Christians is hindering peace in Israel because of their views. He goes so far as to call Christian Zionism itself a false teaching that is standing in the way of attaining peace.[[28]](#footnote-28) Christians have been deceived. DCZs are not living in ways that are Christ like. The reasoning he gives for this is their treatment of Arab Christians. He argues their views for everything that has to happen in Israel has left no room for their brothers and sisters in Christ living there. Additionally, some of their attitudes and policies actually target Palestinian Christians and any other Arab Christian in the area as well. Not all the Palestinians are Muslim.

So far, both critiques have come from Christians who do not hold a Zionist or Dispensationalist view. However, it is interesting to note that Jews have also written critiques on this subject. Stephen Spector is one example. He makes it clear he does not agree with Evangelical views. Instead, he tries to show the relationship between Evangelicals and Jews from a Jewish perspective. He argues Christian Zionism has a negative impact on the relationship between Christians and Jews. Many Christian Zionists consider themselves allies of the Jews. However, Spector notes that many Jews are skeptical about their motive. Jews are aware that Christian eschatological beliefs do not benefit them in the end. For example, the Jews that the only reason the Christians want a temple is so it can be defiled. Additionally, Jews are surprised that Christians are the ones supporting and defending them.[[29]](#footnote-29) This is especially true of DCZs who will support Israel and Jews no matter what they do such as John Hagee who Spector discusses in some detail. Spector found that in 2007, John Hagee‘s Christians United For Israel gave $8 million to Israel.[[30]](#footnote-30) For much of history, Christians have persecuted Jews because they blamed them for killing Christ. Yet here is a Christian group supporting Jewish Israel. This drastic shift in attitudes leaves many Jews and Israelis wary of the DCZ intent.

Spector also gives an interesting critique of Christian Zionism using various references to comments Muslims have made about it. Spector details the views of Christian Zionism and the relation to biblical prophecy. He quotes from comments in the *American Muslim Journal* which related Christian fundamentalism to Islamic fundamentalists. Essentially, it compared Christian Zionist actions to a form of jihad. Lastly, another quote noted the similarities between Christian Zionists and Shi’a fundamentalists.[[31]](#footnote-31) Both are looking for a final apocalyptic event to bring the end of the world. When viewed in this light, it is a disturbing claim to think about. But if there is some truth in this comparison, then how can peace be achieved if the goal is destruction? Overall, he is critical of the relationship between Jews and Christians and what motivates Christian’s support of Jews.

So far, the critiques to Christian Zionism and dispensationalism have focused on interpretation of scripture and the actions that follow. But a fair question to ask is if there are any other larger factors at work here? Is scripture truly what is motivating this support for Israel in end time events? Jonathan Rynhold takes a different approach to answering my question. He does not think scripture or a lobby movement is at the core of America’s support for Israel. Rynhold says, “It is often claimed that Americans’ sympathy for Israel is primarily due to two factors: apocalyptic evangelicals trying to bring about Armageddon, or the power of ‘Jewish’ lobby.”[[32]](#footnote-32) While there is some influence from this, he thinks this alone is too simple of an explanation for what is going on in America. Ultimately, his argument is it is the political culture of America that influences this drive.[[33]](#footnote-33)

The last view in this school of thought is the one I will draw my argument from. Barbara Rossing offers one more relevant critique of dispensationalism. She specifically targets the dispensationalism seen in the popular *Left Behind* series. It is a fictionalized version of how dispensationalists view the events of the final days. She argues that dispensationalist views such as the rapture glorify war and violence to the point that those become the overriding themes of Revelation.[[34]](#footnote-34) In addition to the violent mentality, she argues that dispensationalism leads to an “us vs. them” mentality among Christians. While she is critical of the interpretation of scripture and the consequences, she concludes with a message of hope. She tries to show through her arguments that love and healing are the messages in the Bible, not hate and war. Furthermore, her argument is that Revelation does not bring us a message of death and violence but rather of hope and deliverance. She says, “Revelation’s primary purpose is to tell us the story of Jesus not to predict end-times events in Europe or the Middle East.”[[35]](#footnote-35) Her view explains why peace is possible in the Middle East because she interprets Revelation in a different way. The way she interprets scripture leads to peace and hope. It is not focused on a cataclysmic destruction while blood flows through the streets of Jerusalem.

In regards to interpretation and actions, she also responds to the DCZ argument for a Third Temple. She says that most scholars believe the passages DCZ refer to as proof for a Third Temple have already been fulfilled. For the people living in the early Christian period, they would have seen the Roman desecration of the temple in 70 AD as a fulfillment of Daniel’s prophecy.[[36]](#footnote-36) For DCZ to adamantly support a Third Temple is completely against what the New Testament reveals to us as Christians. She shifts her focus to the current problem for rebuilding the temple, the Dome of the Rock. Because of the necessity for a Third Temple to be built, various attempts have been made on this site. More terrorist attacks are possible in the future. Rossing sees this volatile situation as having a negative impact on the peace process. Again, she points to how the temple events played out in the fictional *Left Behind* series. She says, “Left Behind portrays Muslims as voluntarily agreeing with the Antichrist’s proposal to move the Dome of the Rock...but such a scenario is sheer dispensationalist fantasy.”[[37]](#footnote-37) While this may appear as fantasy to those with an understanding of Islam, dispensationalists remain blinded by their ultimate goal. In order for Jesus to return, they must build the temple no matter whom or what stands in their way. To conclude, the support for the temple has typically been small among Jews in Israel. It has previously been fringe groups of Orthodox Jews, but these groups are joining with dispensationalist groups to prepare garments and vessels to be used in the coming temple.[[38]](#footnote-38) This view leaves no room for compromising, no room for love and peace.

In conclusion, many of my arguments will build off of Rossing’s points in regards to dispensationalism and the temple. She helps to show exactly how dispensationalists view scripture and how that influences their actions. Dispensationalists interpret scripture in a way that is contrary to other biblical principles. How can we be peacemakers if we view violence and destruction as inevitable? This part of the paper has discussed ideology and thoughts but the next section will turn to how we specifically measure actions that come from those beliefs. I will specifically focus on the temple movement and the impact that has on relations with Muslims in general, Muslim Palestinians, and Palestinian Christians. We have evidence that a dispensationalist reading of scripture, specifically focused on the Antichrist and the Third Temple, is hindering the peacemaking process between Israelis and Palestinians.

**Linking Interpretation of Scripture with Actions**

As concluded in the previous section, a dispensationalist view of scripture takes a supposedly literal approach on the end times and how to interpret prophecy. This literal interpretation of scripture gives Israel a vital role on the timeline of events that must unfold before Christ’s second coming. The role of the Antichrist and the necessity of the Third Temple is just one way we can begin to see actions influenced by beliefs. As a result, a dispensationalist reading of scripture, specifically the Antichrist and Third Temple views, is hindering the peacemaking process between Israelis and Palestinians. At the same time, Jewish interpretation of Old Testament passages in favor of a Third Temple may also play a role in influencing actions between Israelis and Palestinians. In simpler terms in can be understood by the following model:

Interpretation of Scripture Actions towards Israelis

(Christian & Jewish on the Third Temple) and Palestinians

Dispensationalists believe the Antichrist will come into power and attempt to make a peace treaty with Israel. While views vary on how this will specifically be accomplished, some believe this peace treaty will allow Jews to rebuild their temple on the Temple Mount. Currently, the glaring problem standing in their way is the Dome of the Rock. How can a critical piece of the end time checklist be accomplished when the Dome of the Rock stands in the way? There have been several responses to this problem. The attempt here will be to show a connection between the views of the Antichrist and the temple and a lack of peacemaking. If the temple is an absolute necessity for Jews and Christian Zionists alike, how far will they go to make sure this is accomplished?

I have defined a dispensationalist view of scripture, but I need to address what hindering or preventing peacemaking looks like in practical terms. Violent, hateful, or antagonistic actions or behaviors towards either side would be contrary to peace. Has there been an increase in violence on the Temple Mount? Are violent encounters taking place between Jews supporting a Third Temple and Muslims? At the same time, are Christian Zionists getting involved in these exchanges? Are they supporting the Jewish or Muslim perspective? These questions will help to determine whether these actions are hindering peace.

The question becomes is there a way to link interpretation of scripture and actions? To answer that question we have to take a closer look at the movement towards a temple and any responses to those actions. How widespread is the belief? Is this something Jews within Israel are truly working towards, or is it still a project among fringe groups? These are all questions that can help bridge a connection between a dispensationalist interpretation of scripture and whether or not this hinders or prevents peacemaking altogether. Our evidence connects a dispensationalist view of the need for a Third Temple to a lack of peacemaking between Israelis and Palestinians.

**Linking Interpretation of Scripture to Action**

The literature suggests there is a link between interpreting scripture and action. An important article by Daniel Philpott at Notre Dame, contends that political theology, institutional positions, and religious actors affect political outcomes.[[39]](#footnote-39) While this article discusses beliefs and institutions, I will focus solely on the impact of beliefs within politics. However, several questions emerge from these findings. The issue is whether or not that interpretation is hindering peace between Israelis and Palestinians and if so, to what extent? How could a link even be measured? Furthermore, is there a link between a dispensationalist Christian Zionist approach to scripture and the actions that follow, and is there a connection to how Jews interpret scripture? At an initial glance, it may seem like a hard task to show a connection between interpretation of scripture and action. To answer these questions, I used a content analysis of four different sets of writings to link interpretation of scripture with actions. I focused specifically on references made to the temple, the Antichrist, and how those two together impact an understanding of peace.

First, I performed a content analysis of four books by John Hagee focusing on how he describes the temple and the Antichrist in the end times. In addition, does he urge Christians to support the reconstruction of the Jewish temple? Does he mention peace or ways Christians could be working towards a peaceful solution in the land? While there are many others who have publically spoken on this topic, John Hagee is important for several reasons.[[40]](#footnote-40) Hagee is the founder of Christians United For Israel, the largest Pro-Israel group in America[[41]](#footnote-41). He has become the face and voice of Christian Zionism within America. Furthermore, Hagee is a pastor and a well-known and outspoken advocator of Israel. Each year CUFI holds a rally in Washington D.C. specifically to gain support for Israel and influence in Washington. Analyzing his statements is vital to the research of this project.

I performed a content analysis on Hagee’s most recent books regarding the temple and the Antichrist. I focused on the years 1995 to the present in order to analyze the most recent and up to date information. This time frame is appropriate because it draws from his most recent writing on these specific topics. These four books are: *Final Dawn over Jerusalem*, *Beginning of the End*, *Jerusalem Countdown*, and *The Battle for Jerusalem*. Each of these fit within this time frame, and they are specifically related to how Israel fits in with his eschatology. In his books, I focused on the scripture he quotes. I limited my research to the chapters that focus specifically on the Antichrist, temple, and violence/peace. The following chart reveals my initial findings.

Table 1: Hagee’s Scripture References

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Scripture Quotations** | **Brief Description** |
| Numbers 19 | Red Heifer |
| Ezekiel 38-39 | Battle/Armageddon |
| Daniel 7:25 | Antichrist |
| Daniel 8:23 | Antichrist |
| Daniel 9:27 | Antichrist |
| Daniel 11:37 | Antichrist |
| Matthew 24: 15, 22 | Antichrist/Temple |
| 2 Thessalonians 2:4 | Temple |
| Revelation 13:15-17 | Antichrist |

From this chart, we can compare and contrast Hagee’s views and Jewish views, seeking to understand the specific scriptures that Hagee uses to support his teaching about a temple and the Antichrist. We can then compare Hagee’s approach to scripture with the approach of a few Jewish rabbis. The goal is to look specifically at the scripture and the rationale Hagee gives for rebuilding a Third Temple and the role of the Antichrist. These serve as indicators for the greater question of whether these interpretations of scripture hinder peace. I expect to find that out of every passage Hagee sites, over half would be focused specifically on the Antichrist and his role in building the temple. Additionally, I recorded how many times each passage is referenced in order to determine how much significance he places on those events. The more times he mentions particular passages indicates the passages he is emphasizing.

Secondly, I looked at a Jewish perspective on the Third Temple focusing specifically on the scripture and rationale given for building a Third Temple. To start, I performed a content analysis on the website of the Temple Research Institute in Jerusalem. This research institute was founded in 1987 by Rabbi Yisrael Ariel for the purpose of working towards the creation of a Third Temple in Jerusalem and to increase public awareness for a temple.[[42]](#footnote-42) Anything that has been accomplished so far in regards to a Third Temple was noted. Have they made any specific progress in building items for a Third Temple? From this, I also analyzed how widespread the support is for the temple. How far are they in their plans, and how many people are on board with this project? Is this a fringe project, or is it becoming a reality?

Next, I performed a content analysis of two newspapers within Israel to gauge popular support and opinion for the Third Temple. Both are popular news sources within the country, but *The Jerusalem Post* trends towards a more conservative approach while the *Haaretz* newspaper is based in Tel Aviv and provides a more secular view.[[43]](#footnote-43) This cross-section of Israeli media helps to track common perceptions in Israel about the Third Temple. What are Israelis saying about the Third Temple? Is there government support, or is this a movement separate from the government? Looking at these newspapers will begin to answer some of these questions while also examining how widespread the support is for the creation of a Third Temple.

For both papers, the search was limited to the English language articles in the period between 2007 and September 2016. That range was chosen because it provided a manageable amount of articles, and it keeps the focus on the most recent developments within Israel. Limiting the domain to search Google only for articles on the *Jerusalem Post* website or *Haaretz’s* website, the search terms were the phrases “Third Temple and “Building the Third Temple.” Using these parameters, I found 30 articles in the *Jerusalem Post* and 36 articles from *Haaretz*, 66 articles in total to analyze (See Table 2).

Table 2: STORIES USING THE SEARCH TERMS

“Third Temple” and “Building the Third Temple.”

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Jerusalem Post | 30 articles (2007-September 2016) |
| Haaretz | 36 articles (2007-September 2016)  Total: 66 Articles |

There are many articles that discuss the Temple Mount, but I am limiting my analysis on articles dealing specifically to the discussion of a future temple and its implications. I want to know how widespread the support for the temple is. Are people donating to the Temple Institute in support of a temple? Who are the people advocating for the temple? Is it the government, Orthodox Jews, and/or secular Jews? In addition, have there been articles on radical opinions for how to solve the tension between a Third Temple and the Dome of the Rock? Are there articles encouraging violent action, or do they want a peaceful transition? My next step was to perform a content analysis on these articles to answer these questions.

Lastly, I performed one more content analysis look specifically for references to violence. I once again limited the domain in my Google search, and used the phrase “Violence on the Temple Mount” and “Riots on the Temple Mount,” limiting results to English language stories from the years 2010 to September 2016 and continued to use both the *Jerusalem Post* and *Haaretz*. This provided a manageable amount of articles while also showing the most recent violent encounters on the Temple Mount. The analysis was limited to news articles specifically dealing with violent events or riots that took place on the Temple Mount and excluded stories on violent outbursts in Jerusalem or surrounding areas and any opinion pieces. I did this in order to gain an accurate depiction of how many violent events have occurred on the Temple Mount over the past six years. Based on these parameters, I found 51 articles alone from the *Jerusalem Post* and 39 articles from *Haaretz*. This gave me 90 total to analyze (See Table 3).

Table 3: Newspaper Data: Violence on the Temple Mount

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Jerusalem Post | 51 articles (2010-September 2016) |
| Haaretz | 39 articles (2010-September 2016)  Total: 90 articles |

The goal of this section was to analyze whether or not there has been an increase of violence on the Temple Mount. And if so, could this have any correlation to the work towards a Third Temple? Is the work towards a Third Temple encouraging more violent behavior? A close reading of newspaper articles suggests some answers.

**Scripture Influences Action: A Gradual Shift**

As described in the research design, I explored three different areas to find data. The following section summarizes the results in each of the three areas. In each area, my hunch was that interpretations of scripture influenced actions towards Israelis and Palestinians. The data I found corroborates my initial expectations. The first part of my research focuses on the interpretation of scripture by John Hagee. The second section will look at the Jewish interpretation of scripture. Then, I will conclude with the newspaper data which provides a connection between scripture and action.

*Hagee’s Scripture***:**

As a dispensationalist, John Hagee offers a so-called literal interpretation of scripture passages. He places Israel at the center of end times events. My content analysis focused on passages referring to the Antichrist, temple, and peace. Would he focus on the temple, and would he adamantly support it? After performing a content analysis, I found mixed results. Throughout the various chapters in the four books, Hagee quoted many scripture passages. Table three provides a breakdown of the passages he listed and how many times he referenced each throughout the four books. As table three details, they came primarily from the Old Testament such as Ezekiel and Daniel. However, he also drew from New Testament texts such as Matthew and Revelation. He emphasized the looming battle and conflicts that Israel and Christians will face in the end times. In every passage he quoted, Israel was at the center of his interpretation.

Table 3: Hagee’s Scripture Quotations:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Scripture Quotations** | **Brief Description** | **Number of References** |
| Numbers 19 | Red Heifer | 1 |
| Ezekiel 38-39 | Battle/Armageddon | 9 |
| Daniel 7:25 | Antichrist | 2 |
| Daniel 8:23 | Antichrist | 4 |
| Daniel 9:27 | Antichrist/Temple | 2 |
| Daniel 11:36-37 | Antichrist | 2 |
| Matthew 24: 15,22 | Antichrist/Temple | 9 |
| 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 | Temple | 3 |
| Revelation 13: 15-17 | Antichrist | 10 |

On the other hand, I was surprised to see how little he discussed the creation of a Third Temple. Again as table three illustrates, the majority of the passages were focused on the Antichrist and not on the temple. Hagee had long chapters in each of the books that detailed what the Antichrist would be like and what he would do. Each of these descriptions was based on the passages listed in table three. Initially, I was surprised by the amount of time he spent detailing the Antichrist, but then his intentions became clear. By focusing so much on the Antichrist, he was in essence, emphasizing the necessity of a Third Temple. There are two main reasons for this. First, Hagee may recognize there is a major obstacle preventing the Jews from building a Third Temple, namely the Dome of the Rock. In his books, Hagee suggests that the Antichrist may the one who paves the way for Jews to rebuild a temple. He envisions the peace treaty that the Antichrist makes with Israel to be the opportunity Jews are waiting for to build the temple. Peace in Hagee’s view is associated with a false peace from the Antichrist and the ability to establish a Third Temple. Somehow, this would eliminate the Dome of the Rock obstacle although he gave no specific thoughts on this matter. After these events take place, a Third Temple would stand on the Temple Mount. This leads to the second major role of the Antichrist. Hagee believes that the Antichrist must defile the temple as described in Daniel 9. However, in order for the Antichrist to do this, a temple must be rebuilt first. Essentially this all relates back to each other. The Antichrist is needed for a Third Temple, a temple is needed for the Antichrist to defile it, and both are needed for Jesus to return. What does this mean for peace? The implications are staggering.[[44]](#footnote-44)

*Temple Institute Data***:**

After looking at a Christian dispensationalist viewpoint, I turned my focus to the Jewish interpretation of scripture. To do this, I focused solely on the Temple Institute’s website and what scripture they used to support a Third Temple. I also had the opportunity to visit the Temple Institute in person and to go through their exhibition. The Institute’s goal is to rebuild the temple, and they used scripture to back up their mission.[[45]](#footnote-45) Everything quoted both on the website and in their displays, came from what Christians refer to as the Old Testament (or Hebrew Bible). However, most of the biblical support was based solely in the Torah, the first five books of the Old Testament. The Temple Institute pointed to the necessity for a temple to the people living in those days. It was how God dwelt among his people, and it was how they were redeemed from their sins. A great emphasis was placed on this longing for redemption. The Institute also emphasized the Jews’ desire to be able to follow all 613 commandments laid out by the Torah. As stated by the Institute, one-third of those commandments are unable to be completed because they depend upon the temple.[[46]](#footnote-46) They need the temple in order to fully follow the laws given to them by God. The content analysis showed this deep desire to re-dedicate their lives and practices to God. To them, the temple is necessary for this to take place.

Table 4: Temple Institute Data: (Completed & Remaining Elements:

as of September 2016)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Completed Elements | 31 |
| Remaining Elements | **2** |

In addition to the scripture they quoted, the Temple Institute has researched and built many of the items in anticipation for the temple. Throughout the entire website, they never used the phrase “If.” Instead, they always referred to it as “when” the temple is built. I was surprised to discover how much progress they have already made in preparing for this future temple. I thought this was a project with a long ways yet to go. However, I found just the opposite. Table 4 shows that the Temple Institute has successfully completed thirty-one elements needed for the temple. Some of these include the items needed for rituals. Additionally, they have already completed the priestly garments as described in the Torah. The only items they have not completed are the Ark of the Covenant and the external altar where sacrifices took place.[[47]](#footnote-47)

I saw each of the completed elements on display in the Temple Institute. From the garments, to the altars, to the table of the showbreads, it was evident they were serious in their mission to use these someday in a future temple. One crucial item that is missing however is the Ark of the Covenant. In their museum, they had a model of the Ark of the Covenant which visitors see after they dramatically pull back the veil which would conceal the Holy of Holies. According to the Temple Institute, they believe the Israelites hid the Ark to avoid capture, and that it currently is buried underneath the Dome of the Rock.[[48]](#footnote-48) While there are varying opinions on this, temple activists agree with the Temple Institute’s claim about the ark. As a result, they would not be able to recover the Ark of the Covenant until the Dome of the Rock was no longer in the way

The tour of the Temple Institute concluded with a 3D video of the Third Temple design and layout. It will have all the features of the Ancient Temples but with modern day amenities. They will also re-institute the Sanhedrin which will be housed in the temple as well. They also showed two promotional videos about the temple. The first video showed children building a temple out of the sand on the beach.[[49]](#footnote-49) In the second video, the Third Temple was actually being constructed in Jerusalem. It begins with an elderly Jewish man opening up the Hebrew Scriptures on a bench overlooking Jerusalem. Children nearby are singing together. The man is engrossed in the scriptures when he suddenly looks up, and he notices the children have gathered around him. One holds out his hand to the man and motions him to come look. This boy seems to symbolize a Muslim Palestinian as if they are handing the Temple Mount to the Jews. The man looks out over the city of Jerusalem and sees the temple gleaming in the evening sun. The Dome of the Rock is noticeably absent from this new landscape. Both videos ended with the same statement: "This is the generation, the children are ready."[[50]](#footnote-50)

The Temple Institute is ready for a Third Temple. The only obstacle that remains is gaining control of the Temple Mount in order to start building.

*Newspaper Data*: Third Temple

The first two areas of my research focused on scripture and how Christians and Jews interpret temple or end time passages. This next section of data examines how this interpretation is influencing actions within Israel. After performing a content analysis on articles from *The Jerusalem Post* and *Haaretz*, I was surprised by what I found. The following section will analyze my findings from these papers. I began my analysis expecting to find that *The Jerusalem Post* would talk a lot more about the temple in general. Based off of the conservative nature of Jerusalem and the fact the Temple Mount is located there, it seemed like a logical conclusion. However, it was *Haaretz* that talked about the temple more and in greater detail. The more I read the more I saw a gradual pattern taking shape. As I will discuss throughout this section, a shift of public opinion appears to be taking place in Israel.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Topics | Jerusalem Post | Haaretz |
| Normative Claims  (Should the Temple be built?) | **7** | **9** |
| Information about Temple | **10** | **13** |
| Funding for Temple | **2** | **2** |
| Government Involvement | **1** | **6** |
| Violence on Temple Mount | **9** | **6** |

Table 5: Newspaper Results: 2007 – Sep.2016

Table 5 breaks down the newspaper findings in greater detail. *Haaretz* had more articles about the temple in general, but it also had more articles discussing whether or not the temple should exist in the first place. *The Jerusalem Post* also had many articles debating whether or not a Third Temple should be built. There were articles on both side of the spectrum. However, *The Jerusalem Post* had the most articles focused on the violence that has occurred on the Temple Mount. Neither papers spent much time discussing the funding; however, *Haaretz* published a few articles discussing the government involvement in the Third Temple. Each of the articles dealing with government involvement was written in 2015 and/or 2016. Both papers focused primarily on raising public awareness.

After analyzing the papers by category, I looked more closely at the years they were written. In both papers, there were some articles scattered between 2007 and 2009. In 2012, some of the detailed informational articles were written, and a gradual increase could be seen. But then, there was a huge spike in articles in 2015. Additionally, this increase seems to be continuing into 2016. Despite the fact 2016 is not yet over, the number of articles on the temple already surpasses the numbers from 2014. Furthermore, there was an increase simply from March to September. In March, there were only three articles on the temple, but by September there were twelve articles. So, it appears this is something continuing to be discussed in Israel. Figure 1 demonstrates these findings visually. The temple is attracting the attention and gaining support in the mainstream Israeli newspapers.

Figure 1: Total Newspaper Articles on the Temple By Year (Jerusalem Post & Haaretz)

As I began diving deeper into the articles, I noticed a shift that seemed to be taking place. Previously, temple activists were known as small fringe groups, typically from ultra-Orthodox backgrounds. Very few mainstream Israeli commentators thought that modern day Jews would actually want a Third Temple with a reinstitution of temple rituals and animal sacrifices. But the more I read, the more I realized that this is changing within Israel. As one article stated in 2012, “Just last year, their activists were firmly planted in the far-right messianic fringes of Orthodox Judaism and were shunned by most religious Jews. This has ceased to be the case.”[[51]](#footnote-51) The article continues by saying that what has in the past been a fringe movement is becoming a part of the mainline Orthodox establishment. These are no longer radical opinions. Now, they are becoming mainstream opinions. This became clear even in the way the articles were written. Instead of writing “if the temple is built” the authors and people they quoted about the temple always used the phrase “when the temple is built.” It is not longer if but when. In a 2016 *Haaretz* article, the title reads, “No joke: Many religious Zionists strive to rebuild Jerusalem’s Temple.” The writer goes on to explain how the goal of rebuilding the temple is a real goal within the Jewish community; they are not joking.[[52]](#footnote-52)

Along with this, Rabbis have encouraged their congregations to visit the Temple Mount regularly. This used to be strictly forbidden because they do not know where the holy of holies used to be. But now, the Rabbis are encouraging Jews to visit.[[53]](#footnote-53) Among Orthodox Jews, this signals a drastic change in public opinion. A 2015 article in the *Jerusalem Post* provided some statistics on the number of Jews visiting the Temple Mount. The article states that since 2009, Jewish visits to the Temple Mount have increased by 92 percent.[[54]](#footnote-54) According to the article, 5, 792 Jews visited the Temple Mount in 2010. But in 2014, that number had increased to 10,906 Jews who had visited the Temple Mount.[[55]](#footnote-55) There is a growing awareness of the Temple Mount and the Jewish history connected to that site. As articles will show later in this section, the increase of Jewish visits have stirred up tension within the Muslim community.

However, this awareness of the temple is not limited to Orthodox Judaism. The evidence shows that religious Jews are the primary motivators for the Third Temple movement within Israel. However, even the secular Jewish community is discussing this issue of a potential Third Temple. It does not mean all readers support the creation of a Third Temple, but it does show an increasing awareness about the temple even among secular Jews. *Haaretz* provides this secular view since they are based in the more secular city of Tel Aviv. The articles from *Haaretz* were written in ways that explained why Orthodox Jews want a temple. *Haaretz* also had more articles discussing the temple in general. One article in particular was written by a secular journalist who was allowed to follow an Orthodox family around. The Orthodox Jews she interviewed were adamant in explaining to her why the temple was critical for Jews and for Israel as a nation. The temple would solve all of their problems and restore unity among the Jews in Israel. The author explains her experience in great detail. However, the goal of her article was to introduce the idea of a Third Temple to a secular audience. The Orthodox Jews she followed were pleased that secular Jews were expressing interest in this project. Articles like this have helped to spread the idea of a Third Temple to those outside of the Orthodox community.

Lastly, while the Israeli government has remained adamant in their support of the status quo on the Temple Mount (or *haram al-sharif*, for Muslims), this too is beginning to shift gradually. Up until this point, the Israeli government has allowed the Temple Mount to remain under the control of the Muslim Waqf (the religious endowment that controls religious activity on the site). If Jews wanted to try and change this (for example, by trying to build a temple on the site), they would have been met with resistance in the government. But this is slowly beginning to change. The Department of Education currently gives monetary support to the Temple Institute. Additionally, the government sends girls to work at the Institute as a substitute for military service.[[56]](#footnote-56) Furthermore, curriculum that teaches about the temple and encourages children to support it is being included in the official state curriculum for their religious and public school system. One part of the curriculum called the “Love of the Land and the Temple” is required in the social studies curriculum.[[57]](#footnote-57) So while the government may not directly support plans for a temple, they are indirectly helping the Institute’s research and creation of elements for the Third Temple.

But perhaps the most startling change of all is the newest member of the Knesset, Yehuda Glick. In a 2015 *Haaretz* article, Glick was described in this way: “A regular guest at the weekly meeting of the Likud Knesset faction is Yehuda Glick, the personification of the movement calling for Jews to be allowed to pray on the Temple Mount and to rebuild the temple there.”[[58]](#footnote-58) Glick is a well-known Temple Mount activist that has previously been banned from visiting the Temple Mount because of his provocative statements and actions. He also served as the executive director of the Temple Institute, but now he is the chairman of the Temple Mount Heritage Foundation which is also working towards the creation of a Third Temple.[[59]](#footnote-59) In May of 2016, Glick officially became a member of the Israeli Knesset.[[60]](#footnote-60) The personification of Israel’s Third Temple Movement is now a part of the government. While it seems as though his primary goal is to allow Jews to have greater access to the Temple Mount, the creation of a Third Temple is certainly in the back of his mind as well. What started as a fringe movement, is slowly gaining ground in the both the religious communities and the Israeli government.

*Newspaper Data: Violence*

This last section of my research focused specifically on violent events that are occurring on the Temple Mount. These results seem to provide one final piece to the puzzle in connecting interpretation and action, specifically in regards to the Third Temple. Out of the two newspapers, the *Jerusalem Post* spent the most time discussing the specific violent events that were taking place. This makes sense because both the Temple Mount and the newspaper are based in Jerusalem. Riots and violent outbursts are more relevant to those living nearby. *Haaretz* had numerous opinion articles on the violence in Jerusalem. They focused more on analyzing the violence, and so I only included *Haaretz* articles that described the specific event and not the analysis of it. During my analysis, I focused on two specific areas. First, when were the articles written? Secondly, who were the perpetrators of these violent events? My goal was to see whether or not there has been any increase in violent activity on the Temple Mount and if so, who are the perpetrators? The results were fascinating.

For both papers, the number of articles addressing violent events on the Temple Mount was relatively low from 2010 to 2013. However, in 2014 and 2015 there was a dramatic increase in the number of articles. The number of articles nearly doubled between those years. In 2014, there were 18 articles and in 2015 it jumped to 30 articles. Additionally, the number of articles for 2016 are already at 25, which surpasses the data from 2014 and the year is not yet over. These findings are demonstrated visually in Figure 2. This is the same observation that was found during the analysis of the articles discussing the Third Temple. Both sets of data spiked in 2015 and the 2016 data already surpasses that of previous years. It seems as though the Third Temple discussion has sparked a response. It is not a coincidence that there is a correlation between an increase of Third Temple discussion and a dramatic increase of violence on the Temple Mount. This data supports the difference in experiences between my visits on the Temple Mount in 2014 and my experience in 2016. There truly has been an increase in tensions on the Temple Mount. The question that follows is why?

Figure 2: Violence Newspaper Data By Year (Jerusalem Post & Haaretz)

The second thing I focused on was who were the perpetrators of this violence? It was here that I began to find some interesting observations. After breaking down the data in this way, Muslims were reported to be responsible for the majority of violent events on the Temple Mount. These findings are listed in Table 6. In the *Jerusalem Post* alone, 41 of the articles dealt with Muslim/Palestinian violence while only 10 were reportedly caused by Jews/Israelis.

Table 6: Violence Newspapers: Perpetrators of Violent Act: (2010- September 2016)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Perpetrator of Violent Act | Jerusalem Post | Haaretz |
| Jewish/Israeli | **10** | **9** |
| Muslim/Palestinian | **41** | **30** |

However, it is curious to note, that 13 of the Jewish incidents occurred within the past two years. So, I broke down the data even more to look at the total number of incidents between Jewish Israelis and Muslim Palestinians from 2014-2016. Two important observations can be made. Again, Muslim Palestinian violence increased in 2015 and the 2016 numbers are already almost to the point of the 2014 numbers and the year is not over. Secondly, the number of Jewish incidents from 2014 to 2016 has increased to more than half. Already the 2016 data exceeds 2015, and the year is not over yet. These findings are recorded in Table 7. Overall, since 2010, violence by Muslim Palestinians has increased, and while the numbers are still small Jews are becoming perpetrators as well. Once again the question becomes why?

Table 7: Violence Newspapers: Perpetrators of Violent Act Totals By Year:

(Jan 2014- September 2016)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Perpetrator of Violent Act | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 |
| Jewish/Israeli | **0** | **5** | **8** |
| Muslim/Palestinian | **18** | **25** | **15** |
| Percentage of Violent Acts Attributed to Israelis | **0%** | **20%** | **53%** |

At a first glance, it seems like the Muslims are simply committing these attacks for no reason. Many of these attacks occurred without any specific provocation from the Jews. However, there is something going on at a deeper level that is not initially obvious. The Muslim man I spoke to on the Temple Mount told to me that Muslims are worried because they know the Jews want to get rid of the Dome of the Rock for a temple. It used to be against the Jewish law for Jews, especially Orthodox Jews, to go onto the Temple Mount. But over the past several years, that has changed. As discussed in the previous set of articles, Orthodox Rabbis are now encouraging Jews to go up to the Temple Mount. And now, with an increasing regularity Jews have begun visiting the Temple Mount. They go up there to walk around or to commemorate a Jewish holiday such as Sukkot or Passover. Both of those holidays have strong ties to a temple. Palestinian Muslims are aware of this and worried.

Whether Israelis realize this or not, Muslims see Jewish visits to the Temple Mount as a threat. Simply a Jewish presence on the Temple Mount is enough to provoke a violent or unsettling response. That was evident by the dramatic shift in the Muslims’ demeanors while I was on the Temple Mount. As soon as the Jews were there, Muslim men began to speak in loud voices. Previously, there had been groups of Muslim men studying the Qur’an, but as soon as the Jews arrived, some Muslim men nervously paced back and forth. Their voices became louder but they did not shout, instead they seemed simply distraught and anxious. Others have noticed this same apprehension. One *Jerusalem Post* article argued that “Jews who ascend to the Temple Mount are instigating war.”[[61]](#footnote-61) By frequently visiting the Temple Mount, they are indirectly signaling their desire to re-gain control of the Temple Mount. The short term goal may be to simply pray on the Temple Mount, but their long term goal is to re-build the temple. As a result, Muslim rioting on the Temple Mount is becoming a commonplace occurrence. In 2014, there were no riot shields to be found. But this past summer, the riot gear was displayed prominently as you walked onto the Temple Mount. Just days before, the Temple Mount had been closed to non-Muslims because of days of rioting. Jews had come to the Temple Mount during the Muslim Ramadan. Again, this was seen as a threat. The *Jerusalem Post* said, “Following three consecutive days of rioting by Arab youths on the Temple Mount...police indicated it was not safe for Jewish visitors, who have been the target of numerous attacks there since Sunday, when the final 10 days of Ramadan commenced.”[[62]](#footnote-62) The Muslims are aware of religious Israelis’ goals. In essence, they feel an imminent threat to their beliefs and ultimately to their identity.

Each of these sections focused on aspects of my overall research question and hypothesis. Some of the results were expected but others were surprising. However, the newspapers and the Temple Institute noted a shift that is taking place among the Jews in Israel. Elements have been created, support is rising, and violence is increasing. The next step is to build the temple. How far will they go and at what cost? The next section will begin to discuss the conclusions that can be drawn collectively from this data and whether or not Christian dispensationalists and Jewish interpretation of scripture are hindering peace between Israelis and Palestinians.

**Drawing Conclusions: Implications for Peace**

This paper began with a desire to find a link between interpretation of scripture and actions between Israelis and Palestinians. Could these Christian and Jewish interpretations of the need for a temple hinder the peace process between these two groups of people? After researching and analyzing the data, it is time to draw some initial and final conclusions.

*Initial Conclusions:*

John Hagee offered an adamant and literal view of the end times and Israel’s involvement. His interpretation of Daniel 9 is a major proponent of this view. In Daniel 9, Hagee believes the Antichrist will establish a seven year peace treaty with Israel. It is this treaty which will finally give the Jews the opportunity to build a Third Temple because it will ensure peace between the Jews and Arabs. However, the Antichrist will later break the treaty. At that time, he will fulfil the abomination of the desolation prophecy in Daniel 9:27. But why does this matter? There are two main conclusions here. First, Hagee equates peace with the Antichrist. As a result, peace is viewed with suspicion and skepticism. True peace cannot truly be established they say. Yes, it is only through Jesus Christ that we can find true peace, but does this mean we are to simply give up on peace while we are on earth? Taking a hands-off approach to peace is contrary to the Bible. True peace comes from Christ, but that does not mean that we sit back and let people self-destruct. Likewise, associating peace with the devil is contrary to the way Jesus described peace in the New Testament. In Matthew 5, Jesus says “Blessed are the Peacemakers.”[[63]](#footnote-63) Those who seek peace, in Israel or throughout the world, are blessed. They are not the Antichrist. In essence, working towards peace is not Antichrist, rather it is pro-Christ. These should be the verses motivating our actions.

The second conclusion from Hagee also comes from his interpretation of Daniel 9:27. This is in regards to the temple. According to Hagee, these events are all necessary for the timeline of the second coming of Christ. He believes those passages have not been fulfilled yet, and so a temple must be re-built because that is what the Bible says. For Hagee and other dispensationalists, the temple is a non-negotiable element of their eschatological understanding of the Bible. This view has staggering implications, and these will be discussed in more detail in the final conclusions. However, if something is non-negotiable, does that leave any room for compromise?

Furthermore, it is not simply Christian interpretation of scripture that is motivating support for the temple. The data from the Temple Institute revealed that Jewish interpretation of scripture is also motivating actions towards building a Third Temple. Exodus 25:8 tells the Israelites to build a Sanctuary so God can dwell among his people. [[64]](#footnote-64) This verse was front and center in the Temple Institute’s guiding principles. They do believe it is necessary for another temple to be built. In addition, they have used the Hebrew Bible to build the elements required for the temple. God gave specific instructions about the temple and the garments in the Hebrew Bible, and the Temple Institute has done extensive research in order to ensure their elements were made properly. As the data showed, they have completed almost everything necessary for a functional temple. Even though they still have several practical issues to work through, the Temple Institute is ready for the day that Jews will regain control of the Temple Mount.[[65]](#footnote-65) As the Temple Institute video stated: "This is the generation, the children are ready.”[[66]](#footnote-66) At this point, Judaism has adapted to not having a temple. While some are happy to remain with these adaptations, more and more people have latched on to the idea of a temple. Now, there are Orthodox Jews who view the temple as a vital part of their faith and redemption. Once again, this is another group of people who view the temple as an essential and non-negotiable element to their faith. And, it has to be built on the Temple Mount which is also a non-negotiable fact.

The past two sections primarily discussed the interpretation of scripture, but it was in the newspapers that this began to translate over to actions. The Temple Institute has put so much effort in preparing for this future temple. However, they will not be successful in their goal to rebuild the temple if people do not support them. But as the newspapers indicated, a shift is taking place. Even though there are still Jews against this idea, more Jews are at least entertaining the idea of a Third Temple. Furthermore, while this data does not show whether or not secular Jews are fully embracing the idea of a Third Temple, there is at least a growing awareness that there is a desire for a Third Temple. The secular Jewish community certainly may not all agree with religious Jews, however, they are least being confronted by informational articles about the Third Temple in the *Haaretz* newspaper. They are at the very least cognizant of the desires the religious Jewish community has towards a Third Temple. The newspaper data shows that interpretation of scripture does influence action. But is it hindering the peace process between Israelis and Palestinians, and if so, to what extent? How can each of these pieces fit together to form a conclusion?

*Final Conclusions:*

This brings us to two final conclusions which relate back to the initial research question. Are the specific actions being taking towards building a Third Temple hindering peace? Yes. However, the full implications may not be fully realized at this time. The second set of newspapers began to shed some light on this influx of violence. It appears as though there is a correlation between the increased support of a Third Temple and the Muslim Palestinian violence on the Temple Mount. Additionally, there has been an increase of Jewish instigated incidents on the Temple Mount as well. Muslims are aware of this Jewish desire for a temple and are responding. But this response we see playing out currently is nothing compared to what would happen if both Dispensational Christian Zionists and Jews remain adamant in their demands to regain control of the Temple Mount for a Third Temple.

If the temple is a necessity to both dispensationalists and Jews, it means there will be a narrow window in which a compromise could possibly be made. Their arguments will be rooted in emotion and religious importance. They will not take no for an answer. When the Jews see the Third Temple as key to their redemption and religious practice, how can a compromise be reached? In the same way, when dispensationalists see a temple as the critical event which leads to the second coming of Christ, they too will not take no for answer. So, what would they do to ensure a Third Temple can be built? Because of the increase of support and the readiness of the Temple Institute, all that is left is to regain control of the Temple Mount. Rabbis are not encouraging or condoning violence. To this point, Jews simply pray daily for the reconstruction of the temple. But there are radical groups who are impatient. They are tired of standing idly by, and they want to do something. The terminology has changed from “if the temple is built” to “when it is built.” There is this anticipation and desire that is beginning to catch on amongst religious Jews, not just the fringe ultra-Orthodox groups. There have already been attempts to blow up the Dome of the Rock and to storm the Temple Mount by force. In 1984, Israeli police successfully foiled a plan to blow up the Dome of the Rock.[[67]](#footnote-67) It is important to remember though that this is not the opinion of the majority. But at the same time, there are groups who desire to regain the control by whatever means possible.

In the meantime, there are religious Jews who are sympathetic to the desire for a temple, however, they would likely shy away from violent acts such as bombing the Dome of the Rock. Instead, I think they will look for a temple imposed by the government. And now, this is already beginning to take place with Yehuda Glick, a temple activist, now taking a place in the Knesset. They may start with legislation that allows Jews to pray on the Temple Mount, but it would not stop there. Even if the government became involved, it would not be a peaceful situation. The only way to change the status quo on the Temple Mount would be through violence. Look at this from a Muslim’s perspective. The Dome of the Rock, which currently resides over the spot where the temple would be built, is Islam’s third holiest site. It commemorates the spot where Muhammad ascended into heaven. But in addition to that, the building also displays some of the earliest versions of the Qur’an. This means that moving the Dome of the Rock is simply not an option. And furthermore, destroying the Dome of the Rock would be equally as catastrophic to Muslims. That may not mean much to Christians or Jews, but it is vital to the Muslim’s faith. If Jews regained control of the Temple Mount, what happens to the Dome of the Rock and the Al Aqsa mosque? What authority or right do Jews have to this area? That area is sacred to Muslims as well. The tension here is palpable.

Already there has been increasing amount of violence on the Temple Mount and there has only been an expressed desire towards a Third Temple. But imagine the rage that would occur if the Israeli government or a radical Jewish group actually attempted to gain control of the Temple Mount once and for all to re-build the temple. This could easily turn into a full-fledged war. In Hagee’s understanding of scripture, those events would be exciting. The war would be the war Ezekiel 38-39 talks about. Then, it would give the perfect opportunity for the Antichrist to rise into power in order to establish a peace treaty. This would lead to a temple which would lead to the second coming. In essence, violence is also necessary in Hagee’s interpretation of scripture. Is this truly what Christians stand for? Is violence and destruction the sole purpose of Revelation?

This leads to the second conclusion and my overall argument. The purpose here is to provide an alternative perspective to this dilemma, and to think about a loving and peaceful alternative to Hagee’s interpretations. To support the creation of the Third Temple is simultaneously hindering peace between Israelis and Palestinians. Christians should not support the Third Temple. The temple is no longer needed. When Jesus died on the cross, the veil of the holy of holies in the temple was torn from top to bottom. This symbolized that Jesus’ death for our sins redeemed us. No longer did we need animal sacrifices to atone for our sins. No longer did we need a High Priest to approach God for us. Jesus eliminated all of this by his death. So many other theological elements could be discussed here. However, the point is that Christians do not need a temple. Christians advocating for a temple diminishes the significance of Jesus’ death on the cross. By supporting a temple, Christians are proclaiming that Jesus’ death was not enough.

This is a contested subject and one that does not have a neat conclusion. The movement for a Third Temple is growing. The Temple Institute almost has everything created for a temple. The Dome of the Rock and the Muslims are the only thing left standing in their way. Muslims are aware of this Jewish desire for a temple, and the violence is increasing in response. How do we as Christians respond to this tension? I think there are two crucial takeaways. First, Christians should not equate peace with evil. True and lasting peace comes from Jesus, but the world will never know this peace if Christians keep it to themselves. A part of our role as Christians is to be seekers of peace and reconciliation. Lastly, as Christians we are called to love both our neighbors and our enemies. How can we as Christians show love to the Muslims? Finally, I challenge readers to examine the ways they are interpreting scripture and how it is influencing their actions. Are we encouraging destruction and violence or love and peace? Which of these is more Christ-like?

I think the perspective of the new Christian Zionists can offer some hope in reconciling these two complicated scenarios. Scholars such as Gerald McDermott and Mark Harlan argue there is a middle way of interpretation here. A new Christian Zionist can believe that the nation of Israel was established by God, and they can take a pro-Israel stance on various issues. They would agree with Hagee that the promise God made to Abraham about the land still applies today. However, a new Christian Zionist should also recognize the need for accountability within the state of Israel. Just because it was established by God does not mean it gets a free pass. Essentially, this is offering an “option c” to the conflict. Based on the argument McDermott gives, a new Christian Zionist could support the existence of Israel but also work towards resolving the tension between Israelis and Palestinians.[[68]](#footnote-68) This view does not swing from one extreme to another. Instead, it seeks to find a middle way for Christians wanting to support Israel but wary of dispensationalism. There are ways to support the state of Israel while also loving the Palestinians. Harlan explains that there are two core pieces of evidence to this view. First, we should recognize that the covenant with Israel is conditional and unconditional, and second, there are rules Israel must follow.[[69]](#footnote-69) Harlan points to the verses in Exodus where God instructed the Israelites not to mistreat the aliens living in the land. In the same ways, Palestinians and other Arabs are not to be abused simply because they are not Jewish.

To close, peace is possible between Israelis and Palestinians, but it will take a balanced view of scripture. Harlan says, “Establishing peace...is not a hopeless cause...Christians cannot succeed in fulfilling our biblical mandate to be peacemakers, however, unless we take a more balanced theological and political position on this issue.”[[70]](#footnote-70) It is possible to be pro-Israel but also pro-Palestinian and pro-peace. Peace is attainable and worth working towards. In this last view, interpretation of scripture could help the peace making process between Israelis and Palestinians.

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1. The Temple Institute is devoted to researching and building elements necessary for the Third Temple.

   See Research Design section for a full explanation of the Temple Institute and what they do. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Timothy Weber, *On the Road to Armageddon:* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic Press, 2004), 13-14. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Stephen Sizer, *Christian Zionism*: (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Press, 2004), 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. John Hagee, *Jerusalem Countdown*: (Lake Mary, FL: Front Line Publishing, 2007), 138. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Ibid, 137-147. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. John Hagee, *The Battle for Jerusalem*: (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2001), 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Bruce Wilson. "Netanyahu Admits To Blocking Peace Process. Meet His Anti-Semitic American Ally." *Talk to Action*. August 25, 2010. Accessed March 02, 2016. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Hagee, *The Battle for Jerusalem,* 78-79. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Hagee, *Jerusalem Countdown*, 78-79. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. NASB translation. NIV translates this as “one seven” or “one week.” [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Tim LaHaye, *Understanding the Last Days*: (Eugene Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 2008) 48-49. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. John Walvoord, *Armageddon, Oil*: (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1990) 221-228. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Ibid,130. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Ehud Sprinzak, “Emergence of the Israeli Radical Right,*” Comparative Politics* 21 (Fall 1989): 172. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Ibid, 171. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Ibid, 173. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Sprinzak, “*Emergence of the Israeli Radical Right,”* 173. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Ami Pedahzur, *The Triumph of Israel’s Radical Right*: (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012) 15-16. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Ibid, 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Ibid, 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Hereafter, DCZ refers to Dispensational Christian Zionists. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Sizer, *Christian Zionism*, 171. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Ibid, 174. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Ibid, 175. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Ibid, 182. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Ibid, 183. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Donald Wagner, *Anxious for Armageddon*: (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1995) 83-84. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Ibid, 201. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Stephen Spector, *Evangelicals and Israel*: (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009) vii-viii. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Ibid, 167-8. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Ibid, 75. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Johnathan Rynhold, *The Arab-Israeli Conflict*: (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015) 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Ibid, 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Barbara Rossing, *The Rapture Exposed*: (New York: Basic Books, 2004) viii [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Ibid, 109. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Ibid, 57. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Ibid, *60.* [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Ibid, 60-61. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Daniel Philpott, “Explaining the Political Ambivalence of Religion,” *The American Political Science Review* 101 (2007): 505–25. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. John Hagee is widely known and outspoken, but there are others who speak adamantly on this topic as well. John MacArthur and Michael Evans are simply two more examples of people dedicated to this viewpoint of scripture. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. They are the largest pro-Israel group in the U.S. due to their 3 million members. http://www.cufi.org/site/PageServer [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Blau, Uri. "Netanyahu Allies Donated." *Haaretz*. December 9, 2015. Accessed April 05, 2016. http://www.haaretz.com/settlementdollars/1.690821. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. http://www.jpost.com/

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44. See Conclusion of this paper. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Temple Institute: https://www.templeinstitute.org/ [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. "Statement of Principles." *The Temple Institute*. Accessed April 14, 2016. https://www.templeinstitute.org/statement.htm. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. The Temple Institute noted that they cannot build a new Ark of the Covenant. Additionally, the large external altar cannot be made yet, so they have made a smaller and portable altar until they are able to build the altar for the Third Temple. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Temple Institute: https://www.templeinstitute.org/ [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Video 1 at the Temple Institute: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DmABPPbH4os [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Video 2 at the Temple Institute: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B6C\_zfpEwUI [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Nir, Hasson. "Temple Mount Faithful: From the Fringes to the Mainstream." *Haaretz.* October 04, 2012. Accessed April 02, 2016. http://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/temple-mount-faithful-from-the-fringes-to-the-mainstream-1.468234. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Tzvia Greenfield, “No joke: Many religious Zionists strive to rebuild Jerusalem Temple.” *Haaretz.* August 14, 2016. Accessed September 18, 2016. http://www.haaretz.com/opinion/.premium-1.736891 [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Nir, Hasson. "Temple Mount Faithful: From the Fringes to the Mainstream." *Haaretz.*

    On this point, many Jews simply want the ability to pray on the Temple Mount. This is currently forbidden by the Arabs because they do not want violent outbursts on the Temple Mount. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. “Jewish visits to Temple Mount increase by 92% since 2009.” *Jerusalem Post*. January 25, 2015. Accessed September 18, 2016. http://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Jewish-visitors-to-Temple-Mount-increase-by-92-percent-since-2009-389154. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. "State Funds Groups That Advocate Building Third Temple." *The Jerusalem Post*. August 04, 2013. Accessed April 02, 2016. http://www.jpost.com/Diplomacy-and-Politics/Report-State-funds-groups-that-advocate-building-Third-Temple-321990. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Or, Kashti. "Religious Public Schools Teach Children to 'Long for the Third Temple'" *Haaretz*. November 01, 2015. Accessed April 02, 2016. http://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-1.683333. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Verter, Yossi. “Temple Mount extremists making inroads in both Knesset and Israeli government.” *Haaretz*. October 30, 2015. Accessed September 18, 2016. http://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-1.683179. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. “Temple Mount activist Yehuda Glick to replace Ya’alon as Knesset member.” *Haaretz*. May 20, 2016. Accessed September 18, 2016. http://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-1.720667 [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. “Jews Ascending Temple Mount are instigating war, ultra-Orthodox MK says.” *The Jerusalem Post*. April 27, 2016. Accessed September 20, 2016. http://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Politics-And-Diplomacy/Jews-ascending-Temple-Mount-are-instigating-war-ultra-Orthodox-MK-says-452499. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. Daniel Eisenburd. “Police temporarily close Temple Mount to non-Muslim visitors after rioting resumes.” *The Jerusalem Post*. June 28, 2016. Accessed September 20, 2016. http://www.jpost.com/Breaking-News/Police-Spokesman-Temple-Mount-closed-to-visitors-457937. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Matthew 5:9: “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.” [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Exodus 25:8: “Let them construct a sanctuary for Me, that I may dwell among them.” (NASB) [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. The Temple Institute does not have the Ark of the Covenant or the large external altar as previously noted. They also need the ashes of a Red Heifer for purification, and they must train people to serve as Priests. However, currently, they are in the process of breeding a red heifer, and they are establishing a school to train future priests. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Video at the Temple Institute: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B6C\_zfpEwUI [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Sprinzak, “Emergence of the Israeli Radical Right.*”* 171. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Gerald McDermott. "A New Christian Zionism,." *Providence*, no. 2 (2016): 56. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Mark Harlan, “A Middle Way in the Middle East,” *Christianity Today* (2003): 85. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Harlan, “A Middle Way in the Middle East,” 86. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)