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How Christian Zionists Wield Electoral Power in the United States

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INTRODUCTION

While Christian Zionism may represent a minority religious ideology in the United States, its influence has a long history.¹ This article surfaces the ways Christian Zionists have wielded electoral power to usher in the most Christian Zionist US government in history under the Trump administration. While many have invoked “fascism,” “Christian nationalism,” and “white supremacy” as monikers for the threat of this US administration, the influence of all these ideologies is encapsulated in the fundamentalist logic of Christian Zionism. To discount this religious ideology’s influence disguises the fuller intent and scope of the harmful policies the Trump administration

1. Saafya Alnaqib, "American Evangelicals' Unique Support for Israel," *Chicago Council on Global Affairs*, September 3, 2024, <https://globalaffairs.org/commentary-and-analysis/blogs/american-evangelicals-unique-support-israel>.

How Christian Zionists Wield Electoral Power | ISCZ Vol. 1 No. 2

has implemented at a staggering rate. Beyond the policies outlined in Project 2025, an inability to recognize Christian Zionism's particular influence can hamper political prognostication and strategic response. Indeed, analysis of the United States' relationship to Israel and the Middle East often fails to even mention the influence of Christian Zionist advocacy or power, thereby failing to diagnose moves beyond capitalist interest. As the United States enables the Israeli regime's ongoing genocide in Gaza and risks regional warfare with attacks on Iran, Lebanon, Syria, and elsewhere, understanding the theological imperatives guiding policy becomes essential: rather than hawkish missteps, these are deliberate steps toward supposed biblical end times, at the cost of tens of thousands of lives.²

As this essay demonstrates, Christian Zionism's growth in power is not purely a side effect of recent global rightward shifts against democracy as some may assume, but has for decades been a method aimed and then used to suppress democratic measures to gain electoral and administrative power in the United States.³ Even as younger Christian evangelicals move away from pro-Israel fidelity, those in power maintain a right-wing supremacy doctrine intertwined with Christian nationalism and racial capitalism.⁴

2. Ellie Geranmayeh, "Israel and Iran on the Brink: Preventing the Next War," *European Union Institute for Security Studies*, October 2025, <https://www.iss.europa.eu/publications/briefs/israel-and-iran-brink-preventing-next-war>; *Al Jazeera*, "Israel Ramps up Lebanon Strikes as Hezbollah Vows to Defend Itself," November 6, 2025, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/11/6/israel-ramps-up-lebanon-strikes-as-hezbollah-vows-to-defend-itself>; Justin Salhani, "Israeli Attacks on Syria: What Happened, Who Did Israel Claim It Was After?," *Al Jazeera*, November 30, 2025, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/11/30/israel-attacks-on-syria-what-happened-who-did-israel-claim-it-was-after>.

3. Zack Beauchamp, "Why the Far Right Is Surging All over the World," *Vox*, July 17, 2024, <https://www.vox.com/politics/361136/far-right-authoritarianism-germany-reactionary-spirit>; Richard Wike, Moira Fagan, and Laura Clancy, "Global Elections in 2024: What We Learned in a Year of Political Disruption," *Pew Research Center*, December 11, 2024.

4. Shibley Telhami, "As Israel Increasingly Relies on US Evangelicals for Support, Younger Ones are Walking Away: What Polls Show," *Brookings Institution*, May 26, 2021; Halah Ahmad and Mimi Kirk, "The Dangerous Exceptionalism of Christian Zionism," *Al-Shabaka*, October 3, 2023, <https://al-shabaka.org/briefs/the-dangerous-exceptionalism-of-christian-zionism/>. See also Kristin Kobes Du Mez, *Jesus and John Wayne: How White Evangelicals Corrupted a Faith and Fractured a Nation*, Calvin University, June 23, 2020, <https://calvin.edu/publications/jesus-and-john-wayne-how-white-evangelicals-corrupted-faith-and-fractured-nation>; Greg Burris, "Escaping the Zionist Circle: Notes on Racial Capitalism and the Black Radical Tradition," *Journal of Holy Land and Palestine Studies* 23, no. 2 (2024): 257-71; Nahla Abdo, "Racial Capitalism: From British Colonialism to the Settler-Colonial Apartheid State," *Journal of Holy Land and Palestine Studies* 23, no. 2 (2024): 187-203.

How Christian Zionists Wield Electoral Power | ISCZ Vol. 1 No. 2

The result is a movement that has helped to foster, insulate, and embolden a racist global war machine: the Israeli regime alongside the United States. Amid global geopolitical entropy and climate disaster, this form of fascism represents a threat to all notions of global cooperation, international legal order, and distributive economic systems. But to Christian Zionists, even the poorest among them, such is the prophesized precursor to Jesus's return.⁵

Amid an urgent historical moment, understanding the rise and scale of Christian Zionist power is as critical as understanding its ideological contours.⁶ The electoral power this religious political group now wields is coupled with decreased democratic accountability across the US electoral system, and, namely, the unfettered influence of monied interests.⁷ The foundations of this philosophy are already shaking with younger Christian evangelicals, but the consolidated power of older Christian Zionists makes such shifts less impactful electorally without a larger, intersectional mass movement. To that end, this article discusses the counterintuitive political economy of this movement and concludes with how Christian Zionism's electoral history bears on present efforts to wield electoralism for Palestinian rights.

20TH CENTURY POLITICAL POWER

Christian Zionists have successfully leveraged electoral politics to gain power and influence in Congress for longer than many realize; they represent the most unwavering and largest front for the pro-Israel lobby in the United States, surpassing Jewish or secular Zionist groups. Understanding their growth in the 20th century demonstrates the convergence of cultural narrative and both imperial and economic interests.

5. Stephen R. Sizer, *Christian Zionists: On the Road to Armageddon* (electronic book), *Presence Ministries International*, 2004, https://stephensizer.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/ebook_sizer.pdf; Max Blumenthal, "The Christian Zionist Leading the International Court of Justice," *Transcend Media Service*, February 2025, <https://www.transcend.org/tms/2025/02/the-christian-zionist-leading-the-international-court-of-justice>.

6. For a deeper look at the ideology, see Sizer, *Christian Zionists*.

7. Samuel Breidbart, "The Supreme Court's Presidential Immunity Ruling Undermines Democracy," *Brennan Center for Justice*, October 1, 2024, <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/analysis-opinion/supreme-courts-presidential-immunity-ruling-undermines-democracy>; "How Does the Citizens United Decision Still Affect Us in 2025?" *Campaign Legal Center*, January 21, 2025, <https://campaignlegal.org/update/how-does-citizens-united-decision-still-affect-us-2025>; Ross Sherman, "Report: Most Americans' Votes Don't Matter In Deciding Elections," *Unite America*, April 14, 2025, <https://www.uniteamerica.org/articles/report-most-americans-votes-dont-matter-in-deciding-elections>.

How Christian Zionists Wield Electoral Power | ISCZ Vol. 1 No. 2

Christian Zionist ideology first took root in the United States in part due to post-World War II interest in the region as a site of contestation for geopolitical power, with seemingly righteous US interest pitted against totalitarian communist Soviets and others.⁸ In other words, the Middle East was a proxy battleground for the Cold War, with the United States vying for a “benevolent supremacy” over the Soviet Union – especially as European powers’ influence receded and access to Middle East oil resources became more critical and contested.⁹

For Americans, this warfare was imbued with religious and moral overtones and a sense of providence for their nation’s role in re-shaping the international world order – in part because of the influence of popular religious fiction in film and literature throughout the 1950s and early 1960s and 1970s. Epics like *The Robe* and *The Ten Commandments* became top-grossing movies in the United States, and Leon Uris’s book *Exodus* spent 80 weeks on the bestseller list before becoming the most popular film in America by 1961. These media covered biblical stories of the Exodus and apocalyptic notions from Revelations, with directors and commentators making direct allegories to modern political dynamics involving Israel, the Soviet Union, and anti-colonial struggles.¹⁰ Viewers were primed to draw pseudo-religious comparisons to an evolving US foreign policy in the Middle East. For example, 1956’s *Ten Commandments* retold the story of Moses leading his people from slavery and against the oppression of the Pharaoh, while Uris’s *Exodus* depicted the establishment of Israel and Zionism as a modern epic of the same nature in which Jewish people were escaping persecution in Europe. Using a combination of reality, biblical story, and fiction, these films engendered sympathy for the budding Zionist colonial project, while casting the United States in a similar anti-authoritarian light against Soviet interests and the sunseting of colonial powers.

8. Charles C. Hilliard, *Supremacy and Peace: The Principle of Benevolent Sovereignty in Search of a Political Party* (North River Press, 1956).

9. Hilliard, *Supremacy and Peace*; Melani McAlister, *Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, and U.S. Interests in the Middle East, 1945–2000* (University of California Press, 2001), chapter 1; Rashid Khalidi, “The Superpowers and the Cold War in the Middle East,” in *The Middle East and the United States: History, Politics, and Ideology*, 6th edition, ed. David Lesch and Mark Haas (Routledge, 2018), 157–176.

10. McAlister, *Epic Encounters*.

How Christian Zionists Wield Electoral Power | ISCZ Vol. 1 No. 2

This cultural phenomenon would bear significantly on the budding US-Israel relationship in the aftermath of the 1967 “Naksa,” the six-day war in which Israel took control of the West Bank, East Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip, and the Golan Heights, beginning an almost 60-year military occupation to date. Israel’s massive land grab struck the US audience – particularly evangelical Christians – as steeped in biblical narrative. Christian magazine editor L. Nelson Bell captured the prevailing sentiment, writing that the Israeli victory “gives [the] student of the Bible a renewed faith in the accuracy and validity of the Bible.” Many evangelicals viewed the Zionist state’s sudden and massive territorial seizure as a modern manifestation of the pseudo-biblical prophecies widely circulating in public discourse.¹¹

The trend intensified in the 1970s, when readership for religious literature in the United States more than doubled.¹² It was then that Hal Lindsay’s *The Late Great Planet Earth*, a fictionalized account of biblical prophecy in Palestine, became a *New York Times* bestseller with millions of readers.¹³ At this critical juncture of the Middle East becoming a site of vital importance to US dominance, televangelists and the state would soon capitalize on popular religious interest to signify, and seek divine alignment between, US foreign policy and supposed biblical prophecy.¹⁴

Leaning into this cultural phenomenon, two televangelists became some of the most influential leaders of the 20th century Christian Zionist movement: Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson. Both used their media and pastoral platforms for extensive grassroots campaigns to influence elections and politicians in power. Falwell established The Moral Majority in 1979, a movement that activated thousands of churches and millions of registered voters for collective political action and votes.¹⁵ By 2003, successive versions of this Christian Zionist lobby became the Republican Party’s largest voting bloc, with close ties between its leadership and the Israeli government from the outset.¹⁶

11. McAlister, *Epic Encounters*, chapter 5 via CBS Evening News, August 7, 1980. Accessible by request at <https://tvnews.vanderbilt.edu/siteindex/1980-8>.

12. McAlister, *Epic Encounters*.

13. Erin A. Smith, “The Late Great Planet Earth Made the Apocalypse a Popular Concern,” *HUMANITIES* 38, no. 1 (Winter 2017), <https://www.neh.gov/humanities/2017/winter/feature/the-late-great-planet-earth-made-the-apocalypse-popular-concern>.

14. McAlister, *Epic Encounters*, chapter 1.

15. Michael Sean Winters, *God’s Right Hand: How Jerry Falwell Made God a Republican and Baptized the American Right* (HarperCollins, 2012).

16. Chip Berlet and Jean Hardisty, *Drifting Right and Going Wrong: An Overview of the U.S. Political Right* (Political Research Associates, 2003).

How Christian Zionists Wield Electoral Power | ISCZ Vol. 1 No. 2

Falwell, for instance, was reportedly given a jet by Israel and was bestowed an award (the Jabotinsky Centennial Medal) by Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin in 1980.¹⁷ When Begin unilaterally bombed Iraq's nuclear reactor in 1981 he called Falwell for support from the evangelical base to defend Israel's actions.¹⁸ Falwell repeated Begin's narrative about the bombing to his parishioners and across major media, contesting the National Council of Churches' opposition to the attack.¹⁹ This move was critical to counter public pressure on Reagan to stop weapons shipments to Israel due to the attack, and it helped solidify US Christian support for Begin as he looked to shore up his international image in the midst of a legislative election for his Likud Party.²⁰ Begin would also direct the Tourism Bureau to bring fundamentalist pastors like Falwell for "Holy Tours," a model that continued to grow as an Israeli political courtship tactic.²¹ Both Falwell and Robertson had close ties to the Reagan administration, emphasizing the need to prepare for – or rather usher in – the battle of Armageddon, which Reagan referenced on multiple occasions.²² It was in part for this reason that Reagan advocated for military strength in the United States, while he and Attorney General Edwin Meese reportedly prayed for Armageddon to come (though presumably they would be saved from it themselves through the rapture).²³

17. Rammy M. Haija, "The Armageddon Lobby: Dispensationalist Christian Zionism and the Shaping of U.S. Policy Towards Israel-Palestine," *Holy Land Studies* 5, no. 1 (2006): 75–95

18. For Reagan's reaction to the news, see Matthew L. Allen, "Reagan's Secure Line," *The New York Times*, June 7, 2010, <https://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/07/opinion/07allen.html>.

19. Winters, *God's Right Hand*. See also UPI, "Moral Majority Leader Jerry Falwell Says Israeli Prime Minister...," July 6, 1981, <https://www.upi.com/Archives/1981/07/06/Moral-Majority-leader-Jerry-Falwell-says-Israeli-Prime-Minister/7833363240000/>; Joe L. Kincheloe and George Staley, "The Menachem Begin-Jerry Falwell Connection: A Revolution in Fundamentalism," *Journal of Thought* 17, no. 2 (1982): 35–39.

20. Kincheloe and Staley, "The Menachem Begin-Jerry Falwell Connection." See also NLI, "1981 Elections," National Library of Israel, accessed December 3, 2025, https://web.nli.org.il/sites/nli/english/collections/treasures/elections/all_elections/pages/e1981.aspx.

21. Donald Wagner, "Short Fuse to Apocalypse?," *Sojourners Magazine*, July-August 2003, <https://sojo.net/magazine/july-august-2003/short-fuse-apocalypse>. See also Halah Ahmad, "Tourism in Service of Occupation and Annexation," *Al-Shabaka*, October 13, 2020, <https://al-shabaka.org/briefs/tourism-in-service-of-occupation-and-annexation/>.

22. John Herbers, "Religious Leaders Tell of Worry on 'Armageddon' View Ascribed to Reagan," *The New York Times*, October 21, 1984, <https://www.nytimes.com/1984/10/21/us/religious-leaders-tell-of-worry-on-armageddon-view-ascribed-to-reagan.html>. See also Wagner, "Short Fuse to Apocalypse?"

23. Ronnie Dugger, "Does Reagan Expect a Nuclear Armageddon?," *Washington Post*, April 18, 1984. While some believe the rapture will occur after a period of tribulations, this notion of the rapture complements the fact that leadership in the Reagan administration in 1983 was planning around the likely death of top US government officials at the start of any nuclear warfare, reportedly because of intelligence that the Soviets could take out leadership immediately. See, for instance Marc Ambinder, *The Brink: President Reagan and the Nuclear War Scare of 1983* (Simon & Schuster, 2018), chapter 8.

How Christian Zionists Wield Electoral Power | ISCZ Vol. 1 No. 2

Under Reagan, the United States participated actively in the warfare between Iran and Iraq in ways that show the marriage of US right-wing religious ideology and imperial economic interests. To be sure, the United States' interests in Iran predated Reagan; the CIA facilitated the 1953 coup that instated Reza Shah Pahlavi as monarch of Iran over the democratically-elected Mohammed Mossadegh, who had moved to nationalize Iranian oil resources (of which US companies owned 20% of profits).²⁴ Of course, the United States would then oppose Pahlavi's deposition in the Iranian Revolution of January 1979, which threatened roughly 3% of US oil supply.²⁵ The American public and US economy had already been jolted by oil prices just a few years before, when President Nixon backed Israel in the 1973 Yom Kippur War and OPEC countries responded by cutting off oil to the United States for five months – quadrupling oil prices and causing a global price shock that rattled the US dollar in addition to threatening roughly 7% of US oil consumption.²⁶ Hence when the United States backed Iraqi warfare against Iran, it was not without critical stakes in oil supply and profit upsets having rocked the past decade.

Following the revolution, Iran halted all multinational oil companies' operations, but the United States had already stopped sourcing oil from Iran during the 1979-81 hostage crisis that ended as Reagan took office. In addition, the shah had rejected Western attempts to renew their 1953 agreements for foreign companies' 50% stake in Iranian oil profits. Soon thereafter, the armageddonist Reagan backed Iraqi attacks on Khuzestan, an oil-producing province of Iran.

24. This was on account of the Consortium Agreement of 1954, which gave 50% ownership of Iranian oil production to foreign companies, of which 40% belonged to five American companies. See an original copy of the agreement here: <https://inlibris.com/item/bn57173/> and official record here: US Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, Iran, 1951-1954, vol. X, doc. 449, "Telegram - The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Aldrich) to the Department of State," April 1, 1954, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v10/d449>. National Security Archive, "CIA Confirms Role in 1953 Iran Coup," August 19, 2013, <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB435/>; *Al Jazeera*, "UK's Lead Role in 1953 Iran Coup d'État Exposed," August 18, 2020, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/8/18/uks-lead-role-in-1953-iran-coup-detat-exposed>.

25. This number draws from two sources. On US oil supply from Iran (555,000 barrels per day in 1978): US Energy Information Administration, "US Imports from Iran of Crude Oil and Petroleum Products (Thousand Barrels per Day)," accessed December 1, 2025, https://www.eia.gov/dnav/pet/hist/LeafHandler.ashx?n=pet&s=mttim_nus-nir_2&f=m. On total US oil supply (18.8 million barrels per day): Office of Technology Assessment, US Congress, US Oil Import Vulnerability: The Technical Replacement Capability, US Government Printing Office, 1991, <https://www.princeton.edu/~ota/disk1/1991/9143/914304.PDF>.

26. Michael Corbett, "Oil Shock of 1973-74," Federal Reserve History, accessed December 3, 2025, <https://www.federalreservehistory.org/essays/oil-shock-of-1973-74>; Donald A. Watt, "Arab Oil Embargo of 1973," *Research Starters*, EBSCO Research, <https://www.ebsco.com/research-starters/history/arab-oil-embargo-1973>.

How Christian Zionists Wield Electoral Power | ISCZ Vol. 1 No. 2

Christian Zionists viewed the war and Reagan's escalatory moves against the new Islamic Republic as an awaited battle, while capitalist interests likewise sought stable oil supply and profits, especially relative to the Soviets.²⁷ In this foreign policy case study, cynically-aligned interests driven by religion and US capital would enable the deaths of half a million people, largely in Iran, over the course of that war.²⁸ This and other foreign policy measures were the subject of several private White House briefings for popular Christian Zionist figures like Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, and Hal Lindsey.²⁹

To complicate this picture, the Reagan administration was also covertly selling weapons to Iran in the infamous "Iran-Contra Affair." While the specifics of that controversy are complex, one of the lead architects was a key intermediary to the Christian Zionist lobby, Robert MacFarlane, alongside his aide at the National Security Council, Oliver North – a "born again" evangelical Christian Zionist.³⁰ As a national security advisor to Reagan, MacFarlane enlisted NSA resources to sell thousands of munitions to Iran under supposed agreements to return American hostages held by Iran-supported proxy groups.³¹ The resulting US policy was both illegal and irrational, but it contributed to more destruction between two oil-rich countries, Iraq and Iran, and a weakening of both. What followed was a security agreement between Israel and the United States with no concessions, the 1981 Strategic Cooperation Agreement, which signified the start of closer coordination with Israel to deter Soviet threats and their like in the Middle East.³²

27. Herbers, "Religious Leaders Tell of Worry on 'Armageddon' View Ascribed to Reagan." There were negotiations throughout the 1970s to ensure continued oil supply after the Consortium Agreement's scheduled expiration in 1979. Federal intelligence notes record competing demands between the United States and the shah. See, for instance Department of State, "Intelligence Note RECN-36 Prepared in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, December 6, 1972," in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976, volume E-4: Documents on Iran and Iraq, 1969-1972*, United States Government Printing Office, 2006, doc. 239, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76ve04/d239>.

28. Ian Black. "Iran and Iraq Remember War that Cost More than a Million Lives," *The Guardian*, September 23, 2010, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/sep/23/iran-iraq-war-anniversary>.

29. Donald Wagner, "Reagan and Begin, Bibi and Jerry: The Theopolitical Alliance of the Likud Party with the American Christian 'Right,'" *Arab Studies Quarterly* 20, no. 4 (1998): 33-51.

30. Alessandra Stanley, "Faith in a True Believer," *Time*, February 16, 1987, <https://time.com/archive/6708373/faith-in-a-true-believer/>; Wagner, "Reagan and Begin, Bibi and Jerry. See also Seth Rogovoy, "The Secret Jewish History of Oliver North," *The Forward*, May 8, 2018, <https://forward.com/culture/400643/the-secret-jewish-history-of-oliver-north/>.

31. Peter Kornbluh and Malcolm Byrne, eds. "The Iran-Contra Affair 20 Years On," *National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book* No. 210, November 24, 2006, <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB210/index.htm>.

32. Yale University Law School, "Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the United States and the Government of Israel on Strategic Cooperation, November 30, 1981," *Avalon Project*, accessed December 3, 2025, https://avalon.law.yale.edu/21st_century/pal03.asp; Bernard Gwertzman, "U.S. and Israel Sign Strategic Accord to Counter Soviet Threat: Text of Memorandum," *The New York Times*, December 1, 1981, <https://www.nytimes.com/1981/12/01/world/us-israel-sign-strategic-accord-counter-soviet-text-memorandum-page-a14.html>.

How Christian Zionists Wield Electoral Power | ISCZ Vol. 1 No. 2

Meanwhile, Israel had invaded Lebanon to attack the PLO and refused to remove their forces until the PLO was ousted.³³ Notorious for their pro-Israel stances, MacFarlane and North ultimately represented early Christian Zionist power brokers willing to forgo democratic norms and allow American casualties in favor of ideological alignment with Israel. But they were not alone in their convictions; in fact, both North and MacFarlane were lauded and defended by a Christian Zionist lobby led by Pat Robertson. Even amid subsequent investigations and Robertson's prospective presidential bid, Robertson called North "a great American hero" and lauded the affair on his show, "The 700 Club."³⁴

Marion "Pat" Robertson was a religious broadcaster and Southern Baptist Minister who founded and chaired the Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN). After helping to elect Reagan, he himself ran for resident on the Republican ticket in 1988, coming in third after George H.W. Bush (Bush senior) and Bob Dole.³⁵ He then played a pivotal role in Bush senior's (unsuccessful) reelection campaign.³⁶ Robertson ultimately helped shepherd a path to mainstreaming both the modern Christian right's religious views and their access to political power through his political advocacy group, the Christian Coalition, through private meetings and lobbying of religious leaders, and through his nationwide television show. Bush senior's reelection campaign dramatically illustrated Robertson's influence in Republican politics at the highest level, though data on the degree of Robertson's illegal coordination with the campaign and electioneering did not emerge until several years later.³⁷ For example, Robertson personally chose over 30 Bush reelection campaign leaders, providing a list in 1992 of "persons [he] would like to see as Bush campaign co-chairmen." Then, when the Christian Coalition alerted the Bush campaign that their base favored

33. Institute for Palestine Studies. "Lebanon War, 1982." n.d., <https://www.palestine-studies.org/en/node/1651350>.

34. Jess Bravin and Daniel M. Weintraub. "The Iran-Contra Hearings: Robertson Insists North Did Tell Him About Iran Trip in 1985," *Los Angeles Times*, July 15, 1987, <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1987-07-15-mn-2508-story.html>; Stanley, "Faith in a True Believer."

35. Stephen D. Johnson, Joseph B. Tamney, and Ronald Burton, "Pat Robertson: Who Supported His Candidacy for President?," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 28, no. 4 (1989): 387–99.

36. Federal Election Com'n v. Christian Coalition, 52 F. Supp. 2d 45 (D.D.C. 1999), <https://law.justia.com/cases/federal/district-courts/FSupp2/52/45/2522449/>.

37. Federal Election Commission, "FEC v. Christian Coalition," accessed December 3, 2025, <https://www.fec.gov/legal-resources/court-cases/fec-v-christian-coalition/>; Brooks Jackson, "The Christian Coalition and George Bush," *CNN*, August 19, 1997, <https://www.cnn.com/ALLPOLITICS/1997/08/19/christian.coalition/>; Westlaw, Federal Election Commission v. The Christian Coalition, No. CIV. A. 96-1781 (JHG) (D.D.C. Aug. 2, 1999), 52 F. Supp. 2d 45, <https://content.next.westlaw.com/Document/lf57986a7568d11d997e0acd5cbb90d3f/View/FullText.html>.

How Christian Zionists Wield Electoral Power | ISCZ Vol. 1 No. 2

Bush's opponent, Robertson interviewed Bush senior on "The 700 Club," using pre-determined questions and emphasizing Bush's "recourse to prayer." After the interview, the Christian Coalition distributed over 40 million voter guides across 100,000 churches to a targeted list of likely supporters, a list likely obtained illegally through campaign data coordination according to CNN documents.³⁸ Robertson had the ear of the Bush campaign in part due to his effectiveness, alongside Falwell, in organizing the Christian right in the lead-up to his own presidential campaign in 1988. From 1985 to 1990, the Christian Zionist lobby mobilized to overturn UN Resolution 3379, which in 1975 had declared Zionism a form of "racism and racial discrimination."³⁹ After the US Congress and president signed a resolution calling on the UN to repeal it, in 1985 the resolution was overturned – a rare redaction.⁴⁰ After years of advocacy from other Zionist groups such as the World Jewish Congress, the success of this effort was largely due to the National Christian Leadership Conference, affiliated with but older than Falwell's Moral Majority.⁴¹

The cultural and religious pretexts for the earlier 20th century justifications of US foreign policy in Palestine would emerge again in the 1990s on account of the influence and electoral organizing power of figures like Falwell and Robertson. Despite lawsuits following the Christian Coalition's illegal election activity, the group distributed 20 million voter guides in the 1992 elections and over 40 million voter guides in the 1996 midterm elections, including at over 22,000 churches.⁴² Following on from the previous decades, the 1990s saw the United States cut off relations with Iran and impose sanctions. Since the Iran-Iraq War, Christian Zionists have closely watched periodic regional escalations and proxy wars,

38. Jackson, "The Christian Coalition and George Bush."

39. United Nations General Assembly, "Resolution 3379 (XXX): 'Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination: Zionism as Racism,'" November 10, 1975, accessed December 3, 2025, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-181963>; Haija, "The Armageddon Lobby."

40. GovTrack.U.S., "Summary of H.J.Res. 457 (101st): Calling upon the United Nations to Repeal General Assembly Resolution 3379," accessed December 6, 2025, <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/101/hjres457/summary>.

41. World Jewish Congress, "WJC 85th Anniversary," n.d., <https://www.worldjewishcongress.org/en/85th-anniversary/fighting-delegitimization-the-united-nations-zionism-is-racism-resolution-a-case-study>.

42. Americans United for Separation of Church and State, "Christian Coalition Hopes to Mobilize Huge Christian Vote for 1992 Elections," *Church & State* 44 (1991). Brooks Jackson, "Christian Coalition Set for Voter-Guide Blitz," *The Washington Post*, November 2, 1996, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1996/11/02/christian-coalition-set-for-voter-guide-blitz/bec562e7-d780-40b2-a4d2-3ff412b8b8b1/>.

How Christian Zionists Wield Electoral Power | ISCZ Vol. 1 No. 2

with a pro-war orientation toward regional escalation and the prevention of a Palestinian state.⁴³

In a revival of the 1970s trend, the *Left Behind* biblical-fiction series by Tim LaHaye, an associate of Falwell, became a multi-year *New York Times* bestseller. The series again drew the American public into a plot interpreting present politics within biblical apocalyptic dispensations approaching the end times. In 1996, the Christian Coalition, led by Ralph Reed, raised \$26 million to oppose Bill Clinton's election.⁴⁴ It would then raise a more modest \$3 million to support the election of George W. Bush, but the leadership of these movements was reconfiguring in this period.⁴⁵ Newer voices like Pastor John Hagee would begin to interpret post-Cold War and post-Soviet politics in terms of an armageddon war with Israel and the United States pitted against Muslim countries.⁴⁶ Relations with Iran continue to be central to this understanding of imminent war, and this is no more explicit than now with the current US administration and the June 2025 military campaign against Iran. US military campaigns alongside or via Israel in Gaza, Lebanon, and Yemen have all involved a vision for the protection and formation of Greater Israel among both the leading far-right Israeli government and among US Christian Zionists.

21ST CENTURY POLITICAL POWER

By the turn of the century the Christian right voting bloc had solidified its influence. As such, President George W. Bush (Bush junior) was also likely influenced by a combination of this Christian Zionist activism, US imperial interests, and his own belief system. While an evangelical “born again” Christian himself and notoriously religious, Bush junior was not as vocally adherent to such messianic Zionist views as his predecessors (e.g., Reagan),

43. Jay Michaelson, “The Head of the Largest Christian Zionist Organization is No Friend to Israel – He Wants an Apocalypse There,” *The Forward*, April 16, 2024, <https://forward.com/opinion/603310/john-hagee-christian-zionist-iran-israel/>.

44. Jeremy R. Hatfield, “For God and Country: The Religious Right, the Reagan Administration, and the Cold War,” PhD dissertation, Ohio University, 2013, https://etd.ohiolink.edu/acprod/odb_etd/ws/send_file/send?accession=ohiou1365158195&disposition=inline.

45. Hatfield, “For God and Country.”

46. See, for instance Pat Robertson, *The New World Order* (Word Publishing, 1991) and John Hagee, *Earth's Last Empire: The Final Game of Thrones* (Worthy Publishing, 2018).

How Christian Zionists Wield Electoral Power | ISCZ Vol. 1 No. 2

but ardently believed he was enacting the will of God through his foreign policy.⁴⁷ While Falwell was sometimes credited for his role in supporting Reagan's election, historian and Reagan biographer Lou Cannon posits a larger role for Falwell in Bush junior's election, noting that "George W. Bush almost certainly would have failed to win the presidency in 2000 without Mr. Falwell's evangelical foot soldiers."⁴⁸

Bush junior's policies reveal Christian Zionist influence. Even as Bush made a show of chastising Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon for expansions of Maale Adumim settlements east of Jerusalem, he generally looked away while such settlements undermined the Oslo Accords.⁴⁹ However disingenuous about Palestinian statehood and damaging Oslo may have been, these settlements were a clear physical obstacle to maintaining East Jerusalem as Palestine's capital.⁵⁰ Bush similarly backtracked on promises made in the Middle East Quartet's "roadmap for peace" and on Palestinian statehood in 2003 after receiving over 50,000 postcards from the Apostolic Congress, another Christian Zionist advocacy group, in opposition to peace talks between Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and Ariel Sharon.⁵¹ Then, after concluding his tenure as president, with no election to worry about, Bush spoke at a fringe Christian Zionist organization known for its Jewish conversion agenda to usher in the end times: the Messianic Jewish Bible Institute conference.⁵²

47. Ron Suskind, "Faith, Certainty and the Presidency of George W. Bush," *New York Times Magazine*, October 17, 2004, https://w.leadingtowar.com/PDFsources_mythic_reality/2_NYT.pdf; Paul Boyer, "Give Me that End-Time Religion: The Politicization of Prophetic Belief in Contemporary America," *Reflections*, Spring 2005, <https://reflections.yale.edu/article/end-times-and-end-gamesis-scripture-being-left-behind/give-me-end-time-religion>.

48. Lou Cannon and Carl M. Cannon, *Reagan's Disciple: George W. Bush's Troubled Quest for a Presidential Legacy* (PublicAffairs, 2008).

49. The Economist, "Israeli Settlements and the Palestinian Uprising," April 26, 2001, <https://www.economist.com/international/2001/04/26/israeli-settlements-and-the-palestinian-uprising>; Aaron D. Miller and Daniel Kurtzer, "Let's Not Pretend Washington Ever Really Tried to Stop Israeli Settlements," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, November 22, 2019, <https://carnegieendowment.org/posts/2019/11/lets-not-pretend-washington-ever-really-tried-to-stop-israeli-settlements-november-22-2019?lang=en>.

50. Ali Abunimah et al., "Focus On: 25 Years of Oslo," *Al-Shabaka*, September 13, 2018, <https://al-shabaka.org/policy-focus/focus-on-25-years-of-oslo/>; Miller and Kurtzer, "Let's Not Pretend."

51. John Tarleton, "In Line for the Rapture," *AlterNet*, May 25, 2004, https://www.alternet.org/2004/05/in_line_for_the_rapture; Khaled Elgindy, "The Middle East Quartet: A Post-Mortem," *Brookings*, February 12, 2012, https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/02_middle_east_elgindy_b-1.pdf.

52. Kenneth Derstine, "George Bush Set to Speak to Christian End-Times Group That Calls for Conversion of Jews," *Mondoweiss*, November 13, 2013, <https://mondoweiss.net/2013/11/george-christian-conversion/>.

How Christian Zionists Wield Electoral Power | ISCZ Vol. 1 No. 2

The move, which some believe is reflective of Bush's previously veiled religious views on the end of times, was criticized even by Jewish Zionist groups, which view such initiatives as openly antisemitic.⁵³

From a teleological perspective, that is, from the perspective of effects and outcomes if not intent, Bush did the most as president to advance the armageddonists' great war, starting "endless," untracked warfare across over a dozen largely Muslim countries after the September 11 attacks.⁵⁴ It was neither a coincidence nor without political power that televangelists and public officials would characterize this violence as America at war with Satan himself via Islam and Muslims.⁵⁵ Bush was known for his certainty on this point: A former advisor to his father and Reagan, Bruce Bartlett, said, "Bush is so clear-eyed...about the Islamic fundamentalist enemy. He believes you have to kill them all...he truly believes he's on a mission from God."⁵⁶ Bush believed he acted in God's – and by extension Israel's – interests; indeed, Bush's invasion of Iraq, which he at one point termed a "crusade," was based in large part on Israeli intelligence allegedly proving the existence of weapons of mass destruction, which (then former) Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu testified about in Congress.⁵⁷

53. Abby Ohlheiser, "Bush's Jews for Jesus Speaking Gig Troubles His Pro-Israel Friends," *The Atlantic*, November 11, 2013, <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/2013/11/george-w-bushs-jews-jesus-speaking-gig-disappoints-his-pro-israel-friends/355142>; Derstine, "George Bush Set to Speak to Christian End-Times Group;" Andrew Brown, "George W. Bush's New 'Crusade': Converting Jews to Christianity," *The Guardian*, November 14, 2013, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/andrewbrown/2013/nov/14/george-w-bush-speech-messianic-judaism>.

54. Bruce Riedel, "30 Years after Our 'Endless Wars' in the Middle East Began, Still No End in Sight," *Brookings*, July 27, 2020, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/30-years-after-our-endless-wars-in-the-middle-east-began-still-no-end-in-sight/>; International Crisis Group, "Overkill: Reforming the Legal Basis for the U.S. War on Terror," September 17, 2021, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/united-states/united-states/005-overkill-reforming-legal-basis-us-war-terror>.

55. See, for example, PBS, "General William Boykin: Words of Faith," October 21, 2003, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/general-william-boykin-words-of-faith>; BBC, "Top US Evangelist Targets Islam," March 14, 2006, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/4805952.stm>.

56. Suskind, "Faith, Certainty and the Presidency of George W. Bush."

57. The White House, "Remarks by the President Upon Arrival - The South Lawn," September 16, 2001, <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010916-2.html>; Robert Mackey, "Kerry Reminds Congress Netanyahu Advised U.S. to Invade Iraq," *The New York Times*, February 25, 2015, <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/02/26/world/middleeast/kerry-reminds-congress-netanyahu-advised-us-to-invade-iraq.html>; Paul Waldman, "A Reminder About Netanyahu, Iraq, and Iran," *The American Prospect*, April 7, 2015, <https://prospect.org/world/reminder-netanyahu-iraq-iran/>; Ben Norton, "Netanyahu's Long History of Crying Wolf over Fake WMDs in Iran and Iraq," *The Real News Network*, May 7, 2018, <https://therealnews.com/netanyahus-long-history-of-crying-wolf-over-fake-wmds-in-iran-and-iraq>.

How Christian Zionists Wield Electoral Power | ISCZ Vol. 1 No. 2

That intelligence was later proven false, but proof would not have mattered.⁵⁸ As Barlett said, “[Bush] dispense[d] with people who confront him with inconvenient facts.”⁵⁹ Moreover, Christian Zionist leaders in this period had shifted their anti-Soviet prophecy to the “war on terror” as a religious war on Islam, echoing the language and general thrust of Bush’s speeches moralizing US warfare.⁶⁰

Even as subsequent Democratic administrations would rally an anti-war American constituency to win elections, they were still subject to preexisting Christian Zionist influence combined with Jewish and secular Zionist advocacy on the political left.⁶¹ Despite less religious adherence to a pro-war Christian Zionist agenda as Republicans, Democrats did not end the wars or stand in the way of Israel’s continued efforts to undermine Palestinian statehood, allowing the influence of Christian Zionist-friendly administrations to set sticky paths for future policy.⁶² Under President Obama, the United States voted against even “observer status” for Palestine at the United Nations, one of just nine countries including Israel to do so.⁶³ And despite Netanyahu’s infamous speech before Congress to oppose Obama on a nuclear deal with Iran, Obama still approved the largest 10-year aid package to Israel to date: \$38 billion, a clear testament to the pro-Israel lobby’s power.⁶⁴ While Christian Zionist lobby groups failed to stop the Iran nuclear deal, their ally and right hand to Netanyahu, Israeli Ambassador Ron Dermer, secured Obama’s \$38 billion and was a regular speaker at Christian Zionist conferences. During this period, a new Christian Zionist organization was quickly taking up the mantle as the dominant Christian right advocacy group: Christians United for Israel, or CUFI, founded in 2006. Dermer spoke to CUFI on several occasions, defending Israeli massacres in Gaza in 2014 and seeking to rally

58. Robert E. Kelley, “Twenty Years Ago in Iraq, Ignoring the Expert Weapons Inspectors Proved to Be a Fatal Mistake,” *SIPRI Essay*, March 9, 2023, <https://www.sipri.org/commentary/essay/2023/twenty-years-ago-iraq-ignoring-expert-weapons-inspectors-proved-be-fatal-mistake>.

59. Suskind, “Faith, Certainty and the Presidency of George W. Bush.”

60. The White House, “Remarks by the President Upon Arrival.”

61. William Roberts, “US Anti-War President’s New War Resolution,” *Al Jazeera*, February 19, 2015, <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2015/2/19/us-anti-war-presidents-new-war-resolution>.

62. Ramzy Baroud, “Israel’s Friends at the RNC: ‘Christian Zionists’ Dictate the Agenda of the Republican Party,” *The Palestine Chronicle*, September 2, 2020, <https://www.palestinechronicle.com/israels-friends-at-the-rnc-christian-zionists-dictate-the-agenda-of-the-republican-party/>.

63. United Nations, “General Assembly Votes Overwhelmingly to Accord Palestine Non-Member Observer State Status,” Press Release GA/11317, November 29, 2012, <https://press.un.org/en/2012/ga11317.doc.htm>.

64. Matt Spetalnick, “U.S., Israel Sign \$38 Billion Military-Aid Package,” *Reuters*, September 15, 2016, <https://www.reuters.com/article/world/us-israel-sign-38-billion-military-aid-package-idUSKCN11K2Cl>.

How Christian Zionists Wield Electoral Power | ISCZ Vol. 1 No. 2

the group's grassroots electoral base against any leader standing in the way of Israeli interests.⁶⁵

Similarly, Biden's campaign narrowly defeated Donald Trump in 2020, even when far right-wing policies had caused over a million preventable deaths during the COVID-19 pandemic – a dynamic of preventable suffering relevant to political economy factors discussed below.⁶⁶ But Biden was never going to backtrack on Christian Zionist wins or warfare: Biden was a self-proclaimed Zionist who oversaw the genocide of tens of thousands of Palestinians in Gaza, with more Palestinians killed, displaced, injured, and imprisoned than in the 1948 Nakba.⁶⁷ To be sure, Christian Zionists continued to apply pressure during Biden's term. After Obama's election, the Christian Zionist group Faith and Freedom Coalition emerged. Led by Ralph Reed, a former leader of the Christian Coalition, the group deployed voter guides and mass mobilization efforts among millions of Christian voters during midterm elections under Biden.⁶⁸ It also announced \$62 million spent on voter turnout in the 2024 general election in favor of Trump, aiming to mobilize over seven million voters with traditionally lower turnout rates.⁶⁹

65. Alex Kane, "Israeli Ambassador Ron Dermer Gives Pro-war Pep Talk to Christian Zionists," *Mondoweiss*, July 11, 2014, <https://mondoweiss.net/2014/07/ambassador-christian-zionists/>.

66. Steffie Woolhandler and David U. Himmelstein, "Public Policy and Health in the Trump Era," *The Lancet* 397, no. 10275 (2021): 705–753; Philip Bump, "One Million Died. It Didn't Have to Happen," *The Washington Post*, May 9, 2022, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2022/05/09/million-american-covid-deaths-preventable/>.

67. Halah Ahmad, "The US Democratic Candidates on Racial Justice and Palestine: Divergence or Convergence?" *Al-Shabaka*, February 27, 2020, <https://al-shabaka.org/commentaries/the-us-democratic-candidates-on-racial-justice-and-palestine-divergence-or-convergence/>; Mohammed Salem and James Mackenzie, "Palestinians Mark 1948 Nakba in the Shadow of War in Gaza," *Reuters*, May 15, 2024, <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/palestinians-mark-1948-nakba-shadow-war-gaza-2024-05-15/>; Ali Harb, "Biden's Legacy is Gaza Genocide, Palestinian Rights Advocates Say," *Al Jazeera*, July 22, 2024, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/7/22/bidens-legacy-is-gaza-genocide-palestinian-rights-advocates-say>.

68. CBN, "Faith & Freedom Coalition Invests \$40M in '2022 Project' to Get Christians in 24 States to Vote," September 26, 2022, <https://cbn.com/news/politics/faith-freedom-coalition-invests-40m-2022-project-get-christians-24-states-vote>; Alex Isenstadt, "Ralph Reed's Army Plans \$62 Million Spending Spree to Boost Evangelical Turnout," *Politico*, March 11, 2024, <https://www.politico.com/news/2024/03/11/ralph-reed-army-spending-trump-00146170>.

69. FEC records are unclear on the actual amount spent.

How Christian Zionists Wield Electoral Power | ISCZ Vol. 1 No. 2

Reports after his loss found that Biden never pushed Israel for a ceasefire even as the genocide hampered his already-low approval ratings.⁷⁰ That said, Obama's or Biden's Zionist bona fides were arguably more attributable to a weakened democratic system and the permeation of the broader Zionist pro-Israel lobby rather than the specifically Christian Zionist one. Yet Democrats failed to stop the advance of an armageddon agenda by Christian Zionist-friendly administrations, an intransigence that allowed the metaphorical "goal posts" to be set by those administrations and contribute to Bush's wars and Trump's unprecedented actions to erase Palestine and reverse de-escalatory agreements with Iran.

The weakening of US elections and the increased role of monied interests is a key site of right-wing Zionist influence as Zionist donors worked across the political spectrum toward the same aims. Among the more than one third of major donors (\$900,000+) to Biden's "Victory Fund" who are staunchly pro-Israel, virtually all of them are Jewish rather than Christian Zionist, but they formed part of the same war-mongering voices during Israel's genocide.⁷¹ In other words, both Christian Zionist donors on the right and Jewish Zionist donors on the left aim to ensure continuous and unfettered aid to Israel, undermining both US and international law in the process. And while not all donations come with clear strings, many of these political donors openly used their access and influence to communicate opposition to any motion from the Biden administration criticizing Israel or threatening to reduce the scale of the weaponry the United States was providing.⁷²

Similarly, those politicians receiving the most money from the pro-Israel lobby were most likely to support Israel's warfare in Gaza, according to analysis conducted by *The Guardian*.⁷³

70. "Israeli News Investigation Confirms Biden Administration Did Not Try to End Genocide in Gaza," *Democracy Now!*, May 1, 2025, https://www.democracynow.org/2025/5/1/headlines/israeli_news_investigation_confirms_biden_administration_did_not_try_to_end_genocide_in_gaza.

71. Eli Clifton, "Biden's Gaza Policy Risks Re-Election But Pleases His Wealthiest Donors," *Responsible Statecraft*, May 16, 2024, <https://responsiblestatecraft.org/biden-gaza-2668270281/>.

72. Alex Thompson and Barak Ravid, "Biden's Big Donors Fume over Israel Criticism," *Axios*, May 10, 2024, <https://www.axios.com/2024/05/10/israel-gaza-biden-rafah-donors>.

73. Tom Perkins, "Revealed: Congress Backers of Gaza War Received Most from Pro-Israel Donors," *The Guardian*, January 10, 2024, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2024/jan/10/congress-member-pro-israel-donations-military-support>.

How Christian Zionists Wield Electoral Power | ISCZ Vol. 1 No. 2

Still, more of these major pro-Israel dollars go to the Republican Party, which also enjoyed the largest share of billionaire donors in the 2024 US presidential election with over 70% of billionaire donations.⁷⁴ Mega-donors Miriam Adelson, Paul Singer, the late Bernard Marcus (now succeeded by the Marcus Foundation), and Timothy Mellon have been key enablers of the Christian Zionist agenda, funding pro-Israel candidates including Trump, as well as such hawkish think tanks as the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies and Christian Zionist propagandist groups like the Philos Project and the Museum of the Bible.⁷⁵ Such political spending power has come to surpass the power of grassroots advocacy in many parts of the United States.⁷⁶

THE CHRISTIAN ZIONIIST WHITE HOUSE

Notwithstanding Obama or Biden's pro-Israel policies, the most Christian Zionist administration was Donald Trump's first administration – until his second. From Vice President Mike Pence, an ardent evangelical Christian Zionist, to Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and white supremacist Steve Bannon as chief strategist, powerful placements of Christian Zionists led to an accelerationist policy of normalizing the rapid expansion of illegal Israeli settlements, moving the US embassy to Jerusalem, ending funding to the UN Relief and Works Agency serving Palestine refugees of 1948, targeting US-based activism for Palestine, and, of course, Trump's "Deal of the Century," which all but erased any notion of Palestinian self-determination or core demands.

74. Arno Rosenfeld, "As Spending by Jewish PACs Soar, Two Billionaires Give GOP Group Major Fundraising Advantage," *The Forward*, November 7, 2024, <https://forward.com/news/669961/jdca-rjc-fundraising-2024-trump-harris/>. Regarding over \$230 million in pro-Israel, pro-Trump spending, see also Track AIPAC, "The Trump Administration," accessed December 1, 2025, <https://www.trackaipac.com/trump>; Americans for Tax Fairness, "Billionaires Buying Elections: They've Come to Collect," accessed December 1, 2025, <https://americansfortaxfairness.org/billionaires-buying-elections-theyve-come-to-collect/>.

75. Eli Clifton, "Home Depot Founder's Quiet \$10 Million Right-wing Investment," *Salon*, August 5, 2013, https://www.salon.com/2013/08/05/home_depot_founders_quiet_10_million_right_wing_investment/; Beth Reinhard et al., "How Billionaires Took over American Politics," *The Washington Post*, November 21, 2025. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/interactive/2025/billionaires-politics-money-influence/>.

76. OpenSecrets, "Outside Money, Inside Influence: How National Donors Shaped the 2024 Congressional Elections," accessed December 1, 2025, <https://www.opensecrets.org/news/reports/outside-money-inside-influence>. See also Reinhard, "How Billionaires Took over American Politics."

How Christian Zionists Wield Electoral Power | ISCZ Vol. 1 No. 2

As ambassador to Israel, Trump appointed David Friedman, who actively fundraised for illegal Israeli settlements in the Occupied West Bank through US and Israeli nonprofit networks, working in close partnership with Christian Zionist groups.⁷⁷

In turn, Israeli government leaders, now largely representing far-right political parties, dramatically accelerated construction of settlements, pursued the eviction of hundreds of Palestinians in Jerusalem, and increased demolitions of homes in Masafer Yatta and areas connecting Jerusalem to major West Bank settlements.⁷⁸

77. Walid Khalidi, "The Jerusalem Declaration on Christian Zionism," Institute for Palestine Studies, December 14, 2016, <https://www.palestine-studies.org/en/node/1649378>; Center for Constitutional Rights, "David Friedman: Ambassador for Settlers," February 15, 2017, <https://ccrjustice.org/home/get-involved/tools-resources/fact-sheets-and-faqs/david-friedman-ambassador-settlers>; CUFI, "Mike Pence to CUFI: I Support Israel Because I Am a Christian," *Christians United for Israel*, July 8, 2017, <https://cufi.org/issue/mike-pence-to-cufi-i-support-israel-because-i-am-a-christian/>; Ali Abunimah, "The Zionist-White Supremacist Alliance in Trump's White House," *Electronic Intifada*, August 15, 2017, <https://electronicintifada.net/blogs/ali-abunimah/zionist-white-supremacist-alliance-trumps-white-house>; Hady Amr, "In One Move, Trump Eliminated US Funding for UNRWA and the US Role as Mideast Peacemaker," *Brookings Institution*, September 7, 2018, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/in-one-move-trump-eliminated-us-funding-for-unrwa-and-the-us-role-as-mideast-peacemaker/>; Felicia Schwartz and Courtney McBride, "Trump Administration to Say Israeli Settlements Aren't Illegal," *Wall Street Journal*, November 18, 2019, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/trump-administration-to-say-israeli-settlements-arent-illegal-11574104691>; Rashid Khalidi, "No Deal: Why Trump's Plan for Palestine Will Only Create More Conflict," *The Guardian*, January 30, 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jan/30/no-deal-why-trumps-plan-for-palestine-will-only-create-more-conflict>; Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, "'Deal of the Century': What Is It and Why Now?," February 4, 2020, <https://arabcenterdc.org/resource/deal-of-the-century-what-is-it-and-why-now/>; Josef Federman, "Israel OKs Hundreds of Settlement Homes in Last-Minute Push," *PBS NewsHour*, January 17, 2021, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/israel-oks-hundreds-of-settlement-homes-in-last-minute-push>; Maayan Jaffe-Hoffman, "Mike Pompeo Named Top Christian Ally of Israel for 2023 - Exclusive," *Jerusalem Post*, September 29, 2023, <https://www.jpost.com/christianworld/article-760883>; Al Jazeera, "Who Are Israeli Settlers, and Why Do They Live on Palestinian Lands?," November 6, 2023, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/11/6/who-are-israeli-settlers-and-why-do-they-live-on-palestinian-lands>.

78. BBC, "Israel Approves Settlement Homes Following Trump Inauguration," January 22, 2017, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-38711701>; Zena Agha, "Israel's Annexation Crusade in Jerusalem: The Role of Ma'ale Adumim and the E1 Corridor," *Al-Shabaka*, March 26, 2018, <https://al-shabaka.org/briefs/israels-annexation-crusade-in-jerusalem-the-role-of-maale-adumim-and-the-e1-corridor/>; "Humanitarian Impact of Settlements in Palestinian Neighborhoods in East Jerusalem: Evictions and Displacements," United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, June 5, 2018, <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-impact-settlements-palestinian-neighbourhoods-east-jerusalem-evictions-and>; Alon Cohen and Maya Atidia, "Expert Report on Palestinian Villages in Masafer Yatta 1945-2020," February 2021, https://www.btselem.org/sites/default/files/2022-10/202102_Bimkom_Expert_Report_on_Palestinian_Villages_in_Masafer_Yatta_1945_eng.pdf.

How Christian Zionists Wield Electoral Power | ISCZ Vol. 1 No. 2

These mass land grabs echo the events that gave early Zionist fervor to Christian evangelicals after Israeli seizure of the West Bank in 1967, which they believe signaled impending Israeli rule across historic Palestine and beyond – and thus the coming of Jesus and supposed biblical prophecy.⁷⁹

“This is the first time we’ve had connections with as many people in national government as we do now.”
– Pastor Doug Wilson, co-founder of the Communion of Reformed Evangelical Churches, a Christian nationalist church to which Secretary Pete Hegseth belongs

In the current administration, the key Christian Zionist figures include Secretary of State Marco Rubio, Secretary of Defense (now War) Pete Hegseth, Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem, Secretary of Education Linda McMahon, Director of the Office of Management and Budget Russell Vought, US Homeland Security Advisor Stephen Miller, and US Ambassador to Israel Mike Huckabee.⁸⁰ The overlap between white supremacists and Christian Zionists in the administration is prominent; Project 2025 and Project Esther, originating from the Heritage Foundation, both move to advance Christian Zionist views of the end of times and white supremacist visions to protect the privilege of white (and largely Protestant) Americans while suppressing pro-Palestinian advocacy.⁸¹ Like Robertson’s role in the Bush campaign, it was the Heritage Foundation (whose lead author of its policy plans

79. Ninan Koshy, "Christian Zionism," Global Ministries, December 22, 2014, https://www.globalministries.org/mee_resources_christian_zionism_koshy.

80. Jacob Kornbluh, "What a Secretary of State Marco Rubio Would Mean for American Jews and Israel," *The Forward*, January 14, 2025, <https://forward.com/news/673807/marco-rubio-trump-state-israel-jews/>; Halah Ahmad, "How Anti-Palestinian Repression Is Building U.S. Authoritarianism," *American Muslims for Palestine*, July 30, 2025, <https://www.ampalestine.org/media/media-room/press-releases/new-amp-report-how-anti-palestinian-repression-building-us>; Michelle Boorstein, "Huckabee Pick as Israel Ambassador Reflects Long Evangelical Alliance," December 2, 2025, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2024/12/02/evangelicals-israel-trump-huckabee/>.

81. Myah Ward and Irie Sentner, "Trump's Pro-Palestinian Activism Crackdown Closely Mirrors a Plan from the Creators of Project 2025," April 6, 2025, <https://www.politico.com/news/2025/04/06/project-2025-project-esther-university-crackdown-plans-0027275>; Tariq Kenney-Shawa, "Project Esther: Suppressing Palestinian Solidarity in the US," *Al-Shabaka*, April 15, 2025, <https://al-shabaka.org/briefs/project-esther-suppressing-palestinian-solidarity-in-the-us/>.

How Christian Zionists Wield Electoral Power | ISCZ Vol. 1 No. 2

was Vought) that prepared a list of thousands of figures to be placed in the Trump administration and bureaucratic jobs across federal agencies.⁸² These leaders have created little distinction between Christian nationalism, led by the evangelical right, and Christian Zionism, also led by the evangelical right and many of the same figures. Secretary Hegseth has also started an optional prayer service for staff within the Department of War, in what some believe to be an explicit orientation toward both a Christian nationalist and armageddonist agenda.⁸³

The overlap with Christian nationalism is not a coincidence; the same eschatology that results in Zionism on the Christian right also results in an agenda of Christianizing the country and removing the state from welfare and aid programs worldwide: A weaker welfare state means more generalized precarity, creating both the pretext for Jesus's return and the impetus for the public to turn to Church groups and faith. This is how the Christian nationalist and armageddonist agenda extends also to the Department of Health and Human Services, the office of the Attorney General, the Treasury, the Federal Communications Commissioner, and dominant voices on the Supreme Court, who voted to overturn women's rights and have hampered executive and corporate accountability through the court system.⁸⁴

One of the most direct overlaps in pro-Israel strategy domestically concerns a weaponization of antisemitism to silence critique of the Israeli regime while also creating the precedent to suppress other forms of speech. While it is beyond the scope of this article to extrapolate all of the alignments with Christian nationalist, supremacist, and Zionist agendas

82. Erich Wagner, "Conservative Think Tanks Are Preparing a List of 20K Potential Political Appointees in Hopes of Reviving Schedule F," *Government Executive*, April 24, 2023, <https://www.govexec.com/workforce/2023/04/conservative-think-tanks-are-preparing-list-20k-potential-political-appointees-hopes-reviving-schedule-f/385545/>; Faith Wardwell, "The Key Project 2025 Authors Now Staffing the Trump Administration," *NBC News*, March 12, 2025, <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/trump-administration/key-project-2025-authors-now-staffing-trump-administration-rcna195107>. Notably, the Heritage Foundation also created a policy plan for Reagan, pushing for anti-Soviet policies.

83. Natasha Bertrand and Haley Britzky, "Hegseth Hosts First Meeting of What He Says Will Be a Monthly Christian Prayer Service at Pentagon," *CNN*, May 21, 2025, <https://edition.cnn.com/2025/05/21/politics/hegseth-pentagon-christian-prayer-service>.

84. For example, Clarence Thomas is famously patronized by Christian Zionist billionaire GOP donor Harlan Crow, alongside Trump appointees Brett Kavanaugh and Amy Coney Barrett.

How Christian Zionists Wield Electoral Power | ISCZ Vol. 1 No. 2

across these figures and agencies, many examples have been unearthed by such civil society and legal organizations as PalLegal, American Muslims for Palestine, Jewish Voice for Peace, the US Campaign for Palestinian Rights, Tamleh, and Al-Shabaka. Examples of the weaponization of antisemitism reveal its intent as a cudgel to discipline government agencies of all kinds into alignment with the Trump agenda – and to discipline pro-Palestinian Jewish organizations.⁸⁵ Indeed, the heads of the federal Task Force on Anti-Semitism are largely Christian Zionist figures and longtime pro-Israel advocates who helped inform the Project 2025 policy agenda. Similarly, Christian Zionist Victoria Coates was the lead author of Project Esther, the policy plan supposedly targeting antisemitism (but in fact criminalizing anti-Israel critique), alongside hawkish figures from the Israeli right like Daniel Flesch (who is also American).⁸⁶ Collaborations between the right-wing Israeli government and Christian Zionists in the United States signal a cynical strategy with widespread domestic and foreign consequences. Certainly some of the Christian Zionist right's success in electing Donald Trump a second time is the failure of the Democratic establishment to rally voters in the 2024 election cycle, resulting in lower Democratic turnout in key states and cities.⁸⁷ Notably, according to polling data a significant portion of that voter apathy was due to or exacerbated by inaction to stop the genocide in Gaza.⁸⁸ Still, the Christian Zionist and broader pro-Israel lobby had also grown stronger and more emboldened under Trump's first term and the resulting anti-democratic movement. The preeminent Zionist lobby, Christians United for Israel (CUFI) now boasts over 10 million members, roughly a quarter of the number of Christian evangelicals who believe that Israel and the Jewish people have a divine right to the land of Palestine (1 in 8 Americans).⁸⁹

85. Ahmad, "How Anti-Palestinian Repression is Building Authoritarian Precedent."

86. "Project Esther: NYT Details Right-Wing Plan to 'Rebrand All Critics of Israel' as Hamas Supporters," *Democracy Now!*, May 19, 2025, https://www.democracynow.org/2025/5/19/project_esther.

87. Tessa Stuart, Asawin Suebsaeng, and Andrew Perez, "How the Democrats Blew It," *Rolling Stone*, January 11, 2025, <https://www.rollingstone.com/politics/politics-features/campaign-2024-democrats-failure-1235230952/>; Catalist, "What Happened in 2024," *Catalist LLC*, May 2025, <https://catalist.us/whathappened2024/>.

88. Halah Ahmad, "Depressing the Vote: Genocide and the 2024 US Presidential Race," *Al-Shabaka*, February 25, 2025, <https://al-shabaka.org/briefs/depressing-the-vote-genocide-and-2024-us-presidential-race/>.

89. Alice Bach, "Inside the Christians United for Israel Summit in Washington, D.C.," *Institute for Palestine Studies*, July 20, 2010, <https://www.palestine-studies.org/en/node/42381>; Becka A. Alper, "Modest Warming in U.S. Views on Israel and Palestinians," *Pew Research Center*, May 26, 2022, <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2022/05/26/modest-warming-in-u-s-views-on-israel-and-palestinians/>.

How Christian Zionists Wield Electoral Power | ISCZ Vol. 1 No. 2

Yet perhaps more important than these numbers is the unchecked financial power of these groups, as – as indicated above – Zionist donors dominate electoral fundraising across both Democratic and Republican candidates.⁹⁰ This financial reality helps to explain not only Trump’s victory but also the failure of Democrats to differentiate themselves from Republicans on Israel even amid a livestreamed genocide in Gaza. Importantly, while many funders are not themselves Christians, the funding of Christian Zionist and Christian nationalist figures by Zionist mega-donors represents an attempt to extend Israel’s largest and most natural grassroots base – not Jewish communities, but Christian fundamentalists. This is evidenced as well in the widespread state-level passage of anti-BDS bills as well as antisemitism bills silencing critique of Israel; these often begin in states where Jewish populations are a small minority but Christian Zionists hold sway, like Alabama, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Tennessee, and Texas.⁹¹ Groups such as AIPAC have supported these efforts, empowering a Christian religious minority and its ideological kin.

The largest case study of such financial influence in US elections occurred in fact before the general election of 2024, when the pro-Israel lobby successfully ousted two of the most pro-Palestinian incumbent members of Congress.⁹² Jamaal Bowman of New York and Cori Bush of Missouri were defeated in the most expensive primaries in history, with their opponents backed by pro-Israel political bodies and donors.⁹³

90. Philip Weiss, “The Arms Race Between Dems and GOP for Pro-Israel Donors,” June 1, 2020, <https://mondoweiss.net/2020/06/the-arms-race-between-dems-and-gop-for-pro-israel-donors/>; Corey Tusak, “AIPAC-backed Candidates Win Big in US Elections, Strengthening pro-Israel Presence in Congress,” *Jerusalem Post*, November 7, 2024, <https://www.jpost.com/diaspora/article-828009>.

91. Human Rights Watch, “US: States Use Anti-Boycott Laws to Punish Responsible Businesses.” April 23, 2019, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/04/23/us-states-use-anti-boycott-laws-punish-responsible-businesses>; BillTrack50, “Executive Order - Similar Bills,” February 2, 2025, <https://www.billtrack50.com/executive-order/similar/78040>; World Population Review, “Jewish Population by State 2025,” n.d., <https://worldpopulationreview.com/state-rankings/jewish-population-by-state>.

92. Geoffrey Skelley, “Pro-Israel Groups Spent Big to Oust Two Squad Members in Primaries,” *ABC News*, September 30, 2024, <https://abcnews.go.com/538/pro-israel-groups-spent-big-oust-squad-members/story?id=113675889>.

93. Ellie Kreidie, “A Deep Dive Into the Bowman Loss,” *Arab American Institute*, July 8, 2024, <https://www.aaiusa.org/library/a-deep-dive-into-the-bowman-loss>; Al Jazeera, “Cori Bush Loses Democratic Primary After Huge Campaign by pro-Israel Groups,” August 7, 2024, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/8/7/cori-bush-loses-democratic-primary-after-huge-campaign-by-pro-israel-groups>.

How Christian Zionists Wield Electoral Power | ISCZ Vol. 1 No. 2

In effect, the political advocacy groups AIPAC and Democratic Majority for Israel demonstrated that there was no price too high to pay to oust a popular Democratic incumbent candidate for another, pro-Israel one.⁹⁴ The Marcus Foundation and Miriam Adelson contributed millions to the United Democracy PAC, which also targeted those races. As major funders of Christian Zionist groups, their influence was a sign of the administration to come. Collectively, the lobby proved that they have the funds and fundraising power to win in multiple races in the same year. When Trump thereafter won the election, the strength of billionaire power over grassroots power was only more instantiated. When Trump thereafter won the election, the strength of billionaire power over grassroots power was only more instantiated.⁹⁵ Christian Zionists therefore have not only grassroots power and influential government placements; they also have what is perhaps the strongest form of electoral power on their side: billionaire influence over US elections. Since the Supreme Court ruled in favor of unfettered election spending in the 2010 Citizens United case, US elections have seen unprecedented fundraising for campaigns, and with it, the growing influence of the wealthiest individuals and corporations.⁹⁶

THE PARADOX OF CHRISTIAN ZIONIST POLITICAL ECONOMY

Yet there may be reason to expect the political-economic dynamics of the present to begin to weaken the Christian Zionist movement's power, at the very moment its agenda is most likely to be implemented both domestically and internationally. This is because most political movements are predicated on access to a benefit or privilege, dismantlement of an

94. Ryan Grim, "A People-Powered Insurgency Threatened to Reshape the Democratic Party. Then Came AIPAC and Its Allied Super PAC, Democratic Majority for Israel," *The Intercept*, February 23, 2023, <https://theintercept.com/2022/10/16/democratic-party-progressive-israel-aipac-dmfi/>; Eli Clifton, "AIPAC's New Political Strategy: Spend Millions on Elections Without Mentioning Israel," *Common Dreams*, April 12, 2024, <https://www.commondreams.org/views/2022/08/09/aipacs-new-political-strategy-spend-millions-elections-without-mentioning-israel>; OpenSecrets, "American Israel Public Affairs Cmte Profile: Summary," 2025, <https://www.opensecrets.org/orgs/american-israel-public-affairs-cmte/summary?id=D000046963>.

95. Zachary Tashman and William Rice, "Billionaires Buying Elections: They've Come to Collect," Americans for Tax Fairness, May 12, 2025, <https://americansfortaxfairness.org/billionaires-buying-elections-theyve-come-to-collect/>; Popular Democracy in Action, "Trump's Corporate Oligarchs: Billionaires Cash in While Working People Pay the Price," 2025, <https://populardemocracyinaction.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Trump-Corporate-Oligarchs.pdf>.

96. Ian Vandewalker, "Megadonors Playing Larger Role in Presidential Race, FEC Data Shows," Brennan Center for Justice, November 1, 2024., <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/analysis-opinion/megadonors-playing-larger-role-presidential-race-fec-data-shows>.

How Christian Zionists Wield Electoral Power | ISCZ Vol. 1 No. 2

acute injustice or disadvantage, or establishment of systems that benefit adherents in some way—much like religion promises paradise for good deeds and faith.⁹⁷ Christian Zionist philosophy is like this in some ways, as many evangelical Christians believe in the “rapture” and a “prosperity gospel” that suggests they will be blessed in worldly ways through faithfulness to the Bible and God’s will, including a belief that “blessing” Israel will likewise cause one to be blessed.⁹⁸ In addition, Christian Zionism and Jewish Zionism are both tied to racialized visions of a privileged colonial position or salvation that condemns a racialized other to displacement, violence, death, and systemic disadvantage.⁹⁹ But the Christian Zionist ideology is also paradoxical in that its benefit involves an intervening period of intense suffering, both personal and global, such that any benefit is deferred and may never be realized.¹⁰⁰ That is, Jesus’s return, according to dispensationalist eschatology, is contingent on mass warfare, hunger, and disease (according to Revelations). Those who work toward that outcome thereby work toward their own and others’ suffering, optimizing for a deferred reality at odds with one’s own interests – and certainly at odds with the interests of Jewish people in Palestine, who are expected to suffer immensely.

While it is true that pre-millennialists often believe they will be raptured before the ultimate period of tribulations, the signs of that period being imminent would be tantamount to signs of the coming rapture, and there is disagreement about whether the rapture comes before or after the tribulations.¹⁰¹

97. See, for example, John Kelly, *Rethinking Industrial Relations: Mobilization, Collectivism and Long Waves* (Routledge, 1998); Marshall Ganz, *Why David Sometimes Wins: Leadership, Organization, and Strategy in the California Farm Worker Movement* (Oxford University Press, 2009); David A. Snow and Sara E. Soule, “Mobilizing Grievances,” in *A Primer on Social Movements* (W.W. Norton, 2010), 24–58.

98. See, for example, this sermon on the rapture by Christians United For Israel President and Pastor John Hagee: <https://sermons.love/john-hagee/16212-john-hagee-the-revelation-of-the-rapture.html>.

99. Darryl Li, “On Law and Racial Capitalism in Palestine,” LPE Project, June 11, 2021, <https://lpeproject.org/blog/on-law-and-racial-capitalism-in-palestine/>.

100. Andra Watkins, “Christian Nationalists and the End of the World,” *For Such a Time as This* (blog), November 21, 2024, <https://andrawatkins.substack.com/p/christian-nationalists-and-the-end>.

101. Gleason L. Archer, Paul D. Feinberg, Stanley N. Gundry, Douglas J. Moo, and Richard R. Reiter, *Three Views on the Rapture* (Zondervan, 1996); Timothy P. Weber, *On the Road to Armageddon: How Evangelicals Became Israel’s Best Friend* (Baker Academic, 2004), 149.

How Christian Zionists Wield Electoral Power | ISCZ Vol. 1 No. 2

Understanding this notion explains why adherents might rationalize some of the harmful policy moves of Project 2025, and why leaders would usher in a policy of deprivation. However, Vought, who identifies as a Christian nationalist, seems to ascribe primarily to exceptionalizing advantage (granting benefits to a much more limited set of largely white, Christian citizens), while other Christian Zionist leaders suggest wider suffering will lead people to a return to the Church.¹⁰² This paradoxical dynamic is also why, in part, traditional tools of progressive grassroots organizing and messaging for political support of various policies do not hold among the Christian right.

The departure from this philosophy of suffering among some on the Christian right seeks to exceptionalize and protect a White Christian person from the suffering their ideology seeks to establish. Figures like Tucker Carlson, former conservative Fox News anchor and now independent journalist and YouTube streamer with over four million followers (and over 16 million on X); Congresswoman Marjorie Taylor Greene, a far right MAGA figure who has become outspoken about ending “foreign wars;” and other conservative leaders who have recently departed from unconditional support for Israel all fall in a category of “America First” ideals with special condemnation for the persecution of Christians, though this occurs as part of broader persecution of Palestinian and Arab peoples.¹⁰³

102. Andra Watkins, "Christian Nationalists: Suffering Brings People to God," *For Such a Time as This* (blog), December 3, 2024, <https://andrawatkins.substack.com/p/christian-nationalists-suffering>. This post also cites a public official making this claim: “Rep. Mark Green Says Let Tennesseans Suffer,” *The Tennessee Holler*, uploaded 23 May 2024, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N2tOpPF9nVU>; Rena Steinzor, "The Man Behind the Trump Deregulatory Throne," *The Regulatory Review*, May 8, 2025, <https://www.theregreview.org/2025/05/08/steinzor-the-man-behind-the-trump-deregulatory-throne/>.

103. Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, X post, May 1, 2024, <https://x.com/RepMTG/status/1785690629118251476?s=20>; Amanda Kadlec, “MAGA Zionism and Its Discontents,” *New Lines Magazine*, January 21, 2025, <https://newlinesmag.com/reportage/maga-zionism-and-its-discontents/>; Alison Main, Manu Raju, and Nicky Robertson, “Marjorie Taylor Greene Says Trump Voters Wanted ‘No More Foreign Wars’ and Iran Strikes Expose MAGA Divide,” *CNN*, June 23, 2025, <https://edition.cnn.com/2025/06/23/politics/marjorie-taylor-greene-iran-strikes-trump-maga-divide/>; “Is Israel Not Safe for Christians? Matt Gaetz Weighs in on Huckabee Warnings of Visa Backlash,” *One America News Network*, July 20, 2025, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TMbCm_FGZII; “Putin Won’t Stop Until Somebody Makes Him Stop, Says Sen. Lindsey Graham,” *Fox News*, July 21, 2025 <https://www.foxnews.com/video/6375894866112>; Abdullah Hayek, “The American Right is Falling Out of Love with Israel,” *The Hill*, July 30, 2025, <https://thehill.com/opinion/international/5425774-the-american-right-is-falling-out-of-love-with-israel/>; Tucker Carlson, X post, August 11, 2025, <https://x.com/TuckerCarlson/status/1954950949073559733?s=20>.

How Christian Zionists Wield Electoral Power | ISCZ Vol. 1 No. 2

Whereas these same impulses have been readily leveraged and amplified by pro-Israel groups to capitalize on Christian nationalist ideologies toward foreign warfare, an emergent conservative movement is breaking with the presumptive Zionist and armageddonist alignment.¹⁰⁴

Polling of American Christians, particularly Protestants who are the largest adherents to Christian Zionism, suggests that there is significantly less support for Israel among younger generations.¹⁰⁵ This decrease in support even preceded the beginning of the genocide in Gaza in 2023 and has continued since, alongside broader trends in younger Americans' opposition to Israeli warfare.¹⁰⁶ But such decreases in evangelical fidelity to right-wing political figures has not yet resulted in a change in broader lobbying or power, suggesting the older generations have succeeded in allying with far right-wing groups to reduce the democratic safeguards that would allow mass movements to obstruct their minority views.¹⁰⁷ Still, older generations of Christian Zionists did not experience the effects of their political philosophies at the scale possible now – in which their leaders are actively removing public health safeguards, pursuing aggressive regional warfare amid a genocide, undermining international court orders, escalating climate disaster-prone technologies while removing climate regulation, weakening democratic systems, and redacting women's

104. See, for example, Tucker Carlson's interview with the conservative pundit Nick Fuentes: "Tucker Carlson Interviews Nick Fuentes," uploaded October 27, 2025, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=efBBOD4tf1Y>.

105. Jacob Magid, "Support for Israel among Young US Evangelical Christians Drops Sharply - Survey," *The Times of Israel*, May 21, 2021, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/support-for-israel-among-young-us-evangelicals-drops-sharply-survey/>; Alnaqib Saafya, "American Evangelicals' Unique Support for Israel," *Chicago Council on Global Affairs*, September 30, 2024, <https://globalaffairs.org/commentary-and-analysis/blogs/american-evangelicals-unique-support-israel>.

106. Laura Silver, "Younger Americans Stand Out in Their Views of the Israel-Hamas War," *Pew Research Center*, July 21, 2025, <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2024/04/02/younger-americans-stand-out-in-their-views-of-the-israel-hamas-war/>.

107. Arit John, Dianne Gallagher, and Jaide Timm-Garcia, "Post-Evangelicals Shift away from Faith Tied to Republican Politics," *CNN*, September 7, 2024, <https://edition.cnn.com/2024/09/07/politics/post-evangelicals-politics>; Maya Sen, "Why Federal Courts Are Unlikely to Save Democracy From Trump's and Musk's Attacks - Ash Center," February 12, 2025, <https://ash.harvard.edu/articles/why-federal-courts-are-unlikely-to-save-democracy-from-trumps-and-musks-attacks/>.

How Christian Zionists Wield Electoral Power | ISCZ Vol. 1 No. 2

rights, among other agendas of suffering and control.¹⁰⁸ It is yet to be seen whether such faithful adherence will hold for what is to come – but at least in the case of Biden, a major pandemic’s deadly toll was at least part of what spurred his initial win.¹⁰⁹

CONCLUSIONS

“Americans – secular or religious – who find the dispensationalists’ nightmarish visions appalling have scarcely begun to grasp their pervasiveness, let alone consider how to combat them.”¹¹⁰

–Dr. Paul Boyer

The resonance of Christian Zionism has expanded and contracted in the past 77+ years in the United States, but its electoral influence has mostly grown since the 1970s.

108. Li Zhou, “Trump Wants a Big Expansion in Fossil Fuel Production. Can He Do That?” *Vox*, November 20, 2024, <https://www.vox.com/politics/386462/trump-fossil-fuels-gas-oil.v>; UN News, “ICC Issues Arrest Warrants for Netanyahu, Gallant and Hamas Commander,” November 23, 2024, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/11/1157286>; Lindsay Freeman, “Dear Congress: If You Value National Security, Do Not Sanction the ICC,” *Default*, Lawfare, December 11, 2024, <https://www.lawfaremedia.org/article/dear-congress--if-you-value-national-security--do-not-sanction-the-icc>; The White House, “Imposing Sanctions on the International Criminal Court,” February 10, 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/02/imposing-sanctions-on-the-international-criminal-court/>; “RFK Jr to Tell CDC to End Fluoride Recommendation for Drinking Water,” *The Guardian*, April 8, 2025, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/apr/07/rfk-jr-flouride-water>; “Statement Release: Doctors for America Calls for the Resignation or Removal of HHS Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr.,” *Doctors for America*, April 15, 2025, <https://doctorsforamerica.org/statement-release-rfk-resignation/>; Mary Kekatos, “RFK Jr. Removes All 17 Members of CDC’s Vaccine Advisory Committee,” *ABC News*, June 10, 2025, <https://abcnews.go.com/Health/rfk-jr-removing-17-members-cdcs-vaccine-advisory/story?id=122670046>; Dharna Noor and Oliver Milman, “Trump Bids to Scrap Almost All Pollution Regulations - Can Anything Stop This?,” *The Guardian*, July 31, 2025, <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2025/jul/31/trump-epa-endangerment-finding>; Madeline Halpert, “RFK Jr Cancels \$500m in mRNA Vaccine Development in the US,” August 6, 2025, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c74dzdddvmjo>; Katya Mendoza, “EPA Moves to Rescind Landmark Climate Rule, Threatening Net-zero Goals,” *PBS-NPR AZPM*, September 3, 2025, <https://news.azpm.org/s/101646-epa-moves-to-rescind-landmark-climate-rule-threatening-net-zero-goals/>. As an example of the resonance with Christian Zionist biblical prophecy and broader dispensationalism, see more on the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse. As a general introduction, see *Encyclopaedia Britannica Online*, “Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse,” accessed December 3, 2025, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/four-horsemen-of-the-Apocalypse>.

109. Leonardo Baccini, Abel Brodeur, and Stephen Weymouth, “The COVID-19 Pandemic and the 2020 U.S. Presidential Election,” *Journal of Popular Economy*, 2021, <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC7809554/>.

110. Boyer, “Give Me that End-Time Religion.”

How Christian Zionists Wield Electoral Power | ISCZ Vol. 1 No. 2

Its rise is a key case study in the ways extreme political groups more broadly have been able to gain power and change policy across the US population. However, the power has involved exceptionalizing advantage and disadvantage through the lens of end-of-times prophecies and generalized racism against a Satanic other – whether the Soviet Union and its proxies or Iran and other Middle Eastern governments.¹¹¹ The implications have been wars with a toll largely borne by dehumanized others and an emboldened and hawkish Israel. It follows that such policies would bolster right-wing, anti-democratic trends as they have, correlating with the dramatic increase in billionaire influence in US elections. Indeed, as the natural and largest partner to a Zionist agenda in the United States, the Christian right and Christian nationalism has been bankrolled heavily by Christian, Jewish, and secular Zionist billionaires alike, becoming a leading source of funding in US elections.

In effect, Christian Zionism has reshaped US politics, foreign policy, and democratic norms through a fusion of racial capitalism, Christian nationalism, and Zionist eschatology. Its paradoxical political economic value proposition – demanding suffering in service of deferred prophetic reward or rapture – has produced an electoral bloc and donor base with outsized power.¹¹² The electoral autocracy produced by right-wing and Christian Zionist organizing is most threatened—for now—by a stronger democracy that can evolve with evident generational shifts, the emergence of mass movements, and exposure of the underlying contradictions of the Christian right’s weaponization of their theology in service of an antisemitic vision of destruction.¹¹³

111. See, for example, Ronald Reagan. “Remarks at the Annual Convention of the National Association of Evangelicals in Orlando, Florida,” March 8, 1983, <https://www.reaganlibrary.gov/archives/speech/remarks-annual-convention-national-association-evangelicals-orlando-fl>; Paul Kengor, “Hot Words in the Cold War,” *Christian History Magazine*, 2008, accessed December 3, 2025, <https://christianhistoryinstitute.org/magazine/article/hot-words-in-the-cold-war>; Yaakov Ariel, *Evangelicals and Israel: The Story of American Christian Zionism* (Cambridge University Press, 2013); Sarah Posner, “The Evangelicals Who Pray for War With Iran,” *The New Republic*, May 11, 2021, <https://newrepublic.com/article/156166/pence-pompeo-evangelicals-war-iran-christian-zionism>; Brian Talbot, “Mike Huckabee’s Old-School Christian Zionism Is Bad News for Anyone Who Wants Middle East Peace,” *The Forward*, April 9, 2025, <https://forward.com/opinion/675457/mike-huckabee-christian-zionism-israel-evangelical/>.

112. For a look at subnational power held by the far right, see, for example, Jacob M. Grumbach, “Laboratories of Democratic Backsliding,” *American Political Science Review* 117, no. 3 (August 2023): 967–84.

113. “Electoral autocracy” is a term political scientists use to describe authoritarianism that has the perceived legitimacy of continued elections, but which are – or become – less free, fair, and open. It is the most common form of authoritarianism in the modern era. See, for example, Erica Chenoweth and Zoe Marks, “Pro-Democracy Organizing against Autocracy in the United States: A Strategic Assessment & Recommendations,” *Harvard Kennedy School Faculty Research Working Paper Series*, October 2022, <https://www.hks.harvard.edu/publications/pro-democracy-organizing-against-autocracy-united-states-strategic-assessment>.

How Christian Zionists Wield Electoral Power | ISCZ Vol. 1 No. 2

As such, intersectional resistance is pivotal to stop the broad-based suffering and violence that the movement presently bolsters, especially as progressively fewer people are insulated from the effects.

In recent years, as many Palestinian rights advocates have sought to wield unprecedented electoral and grassroots power across the political spectrum to stop the flow of weapons to Israel, and progressive groups seek to rally pro-Palestinian sentiment to secure major electoral victories, this analysis may provide a generative and sobering understanding of their opposition— and its paradoxical political economy.¹¹⁴ Whether through counter-electoral efforts or organized disruption of monied interests, the scale of an oppositional movement must be larger and more ubiquitous to succeed.

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114. Samer Badawi, "American Society Will Have to Divest from Israel Before Our Leaders," *+972 Magazine*, September 27, 2024, <https://www.972mag.com/palestine-movement-us-local-elections/>; Al Jazeera, "Mamdani's New York Victory Boosts Pro-Palestine Politics in US," June 26, 2025, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/6/26/mamdani-new-york-victory-boosts-pro-palestine-politics-in-us>.