

## **We are NOT “Waiting for Armageddon”; A Rebuttal by Dr. Robert Dean, Jr.**

As pastor of West Houston Bible Church and as one interviewed in the film, I do not believe “Waiting for Armageddon” accurately reflects my beliefs or those of my church, for these and other reasons:

- The filmmakers erroneously confuse disparate evangelical viewpoints as if identical.
- Mankind can do nothing to affect the timing of prophetic fulfillment.
- We do not believe any current events are direct fulfillments of biblical prophecy.
- We do not think Jesus returns to conduct a holy war, but to rescue the Jews in Israel from the otherwise assured destruction of the Antichrist.
- We reject the idea that any US foreign policy decisions should be made on the assumption that we are anywhere near the end of days.
- To my knowledge and from my considerable study of the subject, I know of no evangelical scholar who believes only 144,000 Jews are saved during the Tribulation.
- At no point is our support, or the support of Christian Zionists, for Israel ever based on prophecy, but only on the promise of blessing in the Abrahamic covenant.

In 2006 I, along with several members of my church, toured Israel where we were interviewed for this documentary. We were originally told the purpose of the film was to explain the strong support for Israel among evangelicals in the U.S. to foster greater dialogue and understanding between the political left and right. The filmmakers verbally assured us that we would be able to preview the final film before it was released for our approval. This did not happen. When we did see the film, I sent an eleven page list of suggested and necessary changes which were not implemented.

The message of the current film is much different from what we were originally told. Based on responses seen in reviews the documentary appears to increase rather than decrease polarization. The reason for this as I see it, based on my reading of the reviews, is the film suggests evangelicals are attempting to manipulate events to bring about a worldwide conflagration known as “the battle of Armageddon” and the return of Jesus which would also entail a destruction of Israel and the deaths of millions of Jews. I believe the film erroneously implies that evangelicals cannot be trusted to be involved in the political process and their motivations are still anti-Semitic. As such I believe the film will foster greater suspicion toward evangelical Christians in the minds of American Jews and possibly cause them to believe evangelical support for Israel is based on some hidden agenda, and that evangelical support for Israel is dangerous.

I and those in my congregation who participated in this film were appalled at how the editing made us appear to hold views very different from those we actually hold. Our beliefs about the Biblical teaching about the future are what is called dispensational theology. As such we believe, as Dore Gold observes in *The Battle for Jerusalem*, that man is “powerless to alter the timing of the Apocalypse.” We do not look forward to or eagerly desire the horrors the Bible predicts for the end times. We are not ‘waiting for Armageddon.’ We are waiting for the return of Christ in the air for

His church, an event called the Rapture, which precedes the Second Coming of Christ, in our view, by at least seven years. We believe one of the most heinous of all sins is anti-Semitism. We believe that God promised in Gen 12:1-3 that those who bless the Jews will be blessed and that those who do not will come under divine punishment. In sum, unlike the message of the film, our only motivation is to see the Jewish people and the State of Israel prosper for their own sake and that in turn we might also be blessed.