

“The Holy Business” in America, End-Times Buffoonery in a Modern World, Bizarre Sects and Cults, Christian Zionism,

Politics and religion all too often assume odd and distorted forms in America.

By [21st Century Wire](#)

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Region: [USA](#)
Theme: [Religion](#)

The United States has long been the home of a wide assortment of bizarre and eccentric sects and cults, most being harmless, or at least lacking the ability to do any serious harm outside of their immediate proximity without large-scale followings nor serious political access. But there are always exceptions, and one of the more prominent and influential ones is the highly-politicized and well-funded [Dispensationalist movement](#), a vocal and well-represented faction among fundamentalist Protestants. Not only do Dispensationalists have a large scale following, but they also manage to wield considerable influence in Washington, especially on US foreign policy.

The relationship between fundamentalist Protestant eschatology of the Dispensationalist variety and America’s geopolitical agenda can be clearly seen in the figure of Hal Lindsey. In the early 1970’s he published a [book](#), *The Late Great Planet Earth*, which proved a bestseller among fundamentalist Protestants. Scrawled during the height of the Cold War, Lindsey’s work proposed that Soviet Russia was the sinister entity known as Gog spoken about by the Hebrew prophet Ezekiel, and that it would soon invade Israel, thus bringing about Armageddon. Lindsey was not an isolated figure by any means; a film based on his book – narrated by none other than Orson Welles – was made, and his admirers included Ronald Reagan, who cited Lindsey’s teachings on Russia as Gog in a speech prior to becoming president.

Lindsey’s eschatology served to provide a Manichean, religious veneer to America’s Cold War against communist Russia. It conveniently serviced Washington’s geopolitical ends, as well as casting all of Israel’s Arab opponents as agents of sinister supernatural forces. America and Israel were the Sons of Light, while their adversaries were the Sons of Darkness. As such, Protestant fundamentalists found ample theological justification to support Euro-Atlantic elites’ drive for global hegemony. Indeed, the late American intellectual Gore Vidal whimsically [observed](#) that the practical result of this Dispensationalist theology was a “military buildup that can never, ever cease until we have done battle for the Lord.”



Blood moons, everyone! Have you blessed Israel enough to escape tribulation?

With his end-of-the world predictions long unfulfilled, Hal Lindsey has long since faded into relative obscurity, yet others have ambitiously taken up his mantle. Among the most prominent of the current crop of evangelical Christian Zionists stands John Hagee, the pastor of a Texas mega-church and founder of the lobbying group Christians United for Israel. His theological platform is based not only on uncritical, unwavering support for the nation-state of Israel, but [belief](#) that at some point in the near future Russia, in an alliance with several Islamic countries, particularly Iran, will attack Israel, only to be defeated by God's divine intervention.

Unfortunately, Hagee isn't some irrelevant firebrand country pastor. He is a man with deep connections to the Republican Party faction of the ruling establishment. Republican presidential candidates seek out [his endorsement](#), and he has been honored by the Israel lobby for his vocal advocacy for Zionism. But Hagee goes further than mere pro-Israel sermonizing; he also uses his pulpit and political connections to push for a belligerent US position against any and all of Israel's enemies, again, with a special emphasis on Iran, against which he advocates a [preemptive military strike](#). He claims this confrontation is a necessary precondition that "will lead to the Rapture, Tribulation, and Second Coming of Christ."

Standing behind or perhaps [next to](#) John Hagee is the billionaire casino mogul and heavyweight fundraiser for Zionist causes, Sheldon Adelson. Adelson uses his vast wealth not simply in the American Jewish community, but consistently rewards Republican politicians for screamingly hawkish pro-Israel, bomb-Iran posturing. He is also an [admitted](#) pro-abortion social liberal, which makes Hagee's warm association with him all the more dubious. John Hagee has on numerous occasions intoned against America's moral degeneracy and warned that God would [punish](#) the nation with various natural disasters as a result. Yet that Adelson made his fortune promoting said degeneracy in the casino industry is irrelevant to Hagee, since cultish devotion to Israel trumps all other considerations.

John Hagee exploits a variety of Biblical prophecies to push for what amounts to a holy war against Muslim nations. When he writes his books and preaches his sermons, his aim is not spiritual or academic; he clearly desires war against Iran and increased American hostility toward Russia. He also completely distains political self-determination for the Palestinians; he opposes granting them an independent state, dismissing their identity as entirely

manufactured. Waxing prophetic for his followers, he even suggested that last year's [Ebola](#) outbreak was [punishment](#) on America for Obama allegedly trying to "divide" the land of Israel.

Being an appendage of the Atlanticist establishment, John Hagee is eager to hype war and hatred against America and Israel's enemies. Absent in his commentary on "blood moons" and Israel's sacred status is any mention that the very radical Muslim groups he rails against have been [fostered](#) by the West and Israel. Nor does he speak up for the millions of Christians displaced and massacred in the wars he has supported. The Christian notion of charity is absent from his worldview.

Cynical geopolitics masked as end-times prophecy is far from restricted to Hagee's church congregation and a few offices in Congress. It is distilled and widely promoted by prominent American conservative outlets. Among its most prominent cheerleaders is the odd Dispensationalist-Mormon hybrid Glenn Beck, embraced by Dispensationalist Protestants despite his Mormon beliefs. Beck has [allowed Hagee](#), who he describes as "one of the bravest guys I know," and other pro-war Dispensationalists such as Joel Rosenberg, onto his TV program to espouse all sorts of [anti-Iranian](#) and anti-Russian sentiments.

Glenn Beck uses his program to regularly accuse Iran of trying to unleash apocalyptic chaos [usher in](#) their *Twelfth Imam*, a messianic figure in Shiite Islamic eschatology that Beck associates with the Antichrist. But Beck is not content to project the nihilistic apocalyptic fantasies of his cohorts onto Iran; as of late, he has set his sights on Russia.

Like Hal Lindsey and John Hagee, Beck has [posited Russia](#), along with China, as being "the alliance of Gog and Magog." Beck, childishly babbling and crying his way through his pseudo-history presentations, also never misses a chance to [suggest](#) that Russian president Vladimir Putin is a [new Hitler](#) seeking to carry out a thousand year old plan for Russian fascist domination.

More recently, the buffoonish Beck has taken to the airwaves to [warn about](#) the Russian philosopher Aleksandr Dugin, denouncing him as one of the "most dangerous human beings on the planet," despite the fact that Mr. Dugin holds no political power and has only a minor influence on the Kremlin. In Beck's often-incoherent apocalyptic worldview, Russia is irredeemably evil, the perpetual foe of America and the West. Naturally, no mention is made of the Washington's overthrow of Russia-friendly governments in the Ukraine and elsewhere with the goal of establishing Euro-Atlantic hegemony. Beck is unable, or unwilling, to move beyond his petty, self-serving cartoonish thinking.



Clearly a serious man: Glenn Beck, American talk-media clown-kingpin.

To be fair, not all evangelical commentators cast Russia in this sinister role. The up-and-coming author Joel Richardson finds [no central role](#) for Russia in his scheme of the End Times. Rather, his villains are almost entirely the Muslim nation states of the Middle East, particularly Turkey and Iran. He proposes the notion of the “[Islamic Antichrist](#)”, a Muslim dictator that will unite Muslims and lead a war against Israel and unleash a mass persecution of Christians and Jews (he is Glenn Beck’s source for this idea). He offers the suggestion that the “Caliphate” of the terrorist ISIS faction is a “[harbinger](#)” of this predicted event.

To be just to Mr. Richardson, he has [spoken out against](#) American military intervention against Bashar Assad in Syria. But the real world implications of his ultra-apocalyptic theology perpetuate the [dialectical narrative](#) of a necessarily violent clash between the West (and Israel) and the Islamic world. His depiction of ISIS’s pseudo-Caliphate as the forerunner of the reign of the ‘Muslim Antichrist’ betrays a lack of understanding or interest in the origins of the jihadist group. That ISIS and other radical Islamic sects are able to proliferate due to long-standing covert Western support is never addressed. ISIS isn’t in the driver’s seat, as it were, but is [rather a pawn](#), if an often unruly one, in other powers’ geopolitical gambits. The situation is only evaluated from Mr. Richardson’s narrow theological disposition, and whether intentionally or not, he reinforces the operative clash-of-civilizations template of globalist elites.

Christians seeking to understand Biblical prophecies and relating them to current events is obviously an ancient tradition, shared by Christians in both the West and the East. Taken in themselves, these various aforementioned eschatological interpretations could be dismissed as harmless musing, perhaps less gifted imitations of Vladimir Solovyov’s “[A Short Tale of the Antichrist](#).” After all, the great Solovyov depicted in his story an aggressive Japanese-lead pan-Asian army that assaulted and conquered Russia and Europe as a precursor to the advent of the Antichrist. (He even predicted the return of the Jews to Palestine.) Yet Solovyov understood, as St. Paul said, that we see through the glass darkly, and never thought to present his parable as a literal description of future events. Nor was he interested in perpetuating the dialectical manipulations of certain power factions.

In the theological view of Lindsey, Hagee, Beck and their fellow travelers, the Iranians, Russians, and Palestinians aren’t viewed as actual human personalities. They aren’t seen as people bearing the divine image of God, however imperfectly (much like the rest of us). Instead, they are reduced to little more than Satan’s hordes, predestined as cannon fodder for the Apocalypse. Whether by delusion or naked cynicism, “Christian Zionists” proclaim a theology of de-humanization.

The Russian philosopher Nicolas Berdyaev in his [book](#) *The Fate of Man in the Modern World* commented on this trend among certain Protestant thinkers who see in the world “only sin and powerlessness.” And that while they still believe in God, it is a deity “absolutely transcendent, separated by an abyss from the world and from man.” In this theology, the “image of God in man is shattered.”

Berdyaev’s analysis describes well the fruits of wedding Dispensationalist eschatology to Atlanticist geopolitics. Such grand distortions deprive the image of God to Russians, Iranians, or other villains de jure, casting them only as evil and depraved instruments of infernal powers. They are not only denied the divine image, but the freedom and human agency that corresponds to the spiritual personality. And while a few individuals among them might be “saved,” according to this formula, the collective peoples of Russia, Iran, and

other Muslim nations are primarily destined to be hurled into hellfire after they serve their purpose on the cosmic stage. Only the few elect who donated sufficient funds to John Hagee's King-Kong megachurch will be "raptured" out of tribulation unto the place of the righteous.



Now that we've nuked Russia and Iran, it's time to ascend to our reward!

The German philosopher Josef Pieper, a devout Christian, [reminded us](#):

...prophecy certainly speaks about coming events, about a future that cannot be calculated in advance by any speculative technique, but it does not straightforwardly describe what is to happen. One cannot read prophecy like a "wanted person" notice in which something previously unknown is made recognizable and identified by name, so that one could keep it in mind like a detailed image of a sought object and use it to make the future "present".

This is wisdom that has been forgotten, or deliberately ignored, by the end-times hucksters. Instead of humility, they offer their flock perverted hope for Armageddon, despair, and global conflict (which they eagerly incite). The real war and conflict isn't ultimately between America and Russia or Israel and Iran. As Fyodor Dostoevsky and Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn taught with such profundity, the battle line between God and the Devil, good and evil, runs through the heart of every man.

The Savior warned us that there would come false prophets and teachers appearing as sheep, but inwardly ravenous wolves, and to be ever mindful of their works. What is to be said of those whose fruits are greed, lust for power, warmongering, and the dehumanization of their fellow man? Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather.

We must look beyond the doom-speculating despair and cynical political maneuvering of the Dispensationalist carnival barkers, and affirm supernatural hope. "In this world you will have many tribulations," Christ told us, "but be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world."

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