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Special Edition

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Special Edition for an Important Issue – Who Really Is *In Defense of Israel*?

Noted below is a brief explanation as to the change in the quarterly editions of *Tzedakah Times*. The change has a two-fold purpose behind it. First, the alteration enables the newsletter to fall more closely with Jewish holidays. Second, the adjustment makes it possible for this editor to spend more time fine-tuning the articles so that they will be even more useful and practical for you the reader.

Therefore, I am going to take a timely and needed editorial privilege and use this *Special Edition* of the *Tzedakah Times* to write a review of one of the **most dangerous** books ever written.

No, this review is not Philip Pullman's *The Golden Compass*. This review is not even about the atheistic claims of Richard Dawkins. For while these writers are dangerous in their own sphere of influence, the **most dangerous** book available on book shelves today was written by an evangelical pastor from San Antonio.

John Hagee's *In Defense of Israel* (Lake Mary, FL: FrontLine, 2007, \$14.99) appears on the surface to be a call for Christians – especially Evangelicals – to stand with the nation of Israel. To stand behind God's Chosen People would normally be a good approach to take; however, Hagee's approach is not only theologically **dangerous** but also eternally **dangerous** to souls of the Jewish people.

In order to review *In Defense of Israel*, it is necessary to begin by pointing out to John Hagee

that his claim to represent all Evangelical Christians most definitely does not include me (p. 2). Hagee cannot represent me when we disagree on one basic premise – the need for Jewish people to receive and believe in Jesus as Messiah and Savior (p. 148).

Therefore, it would be convenient to end this review at this point. I believe he is wrong on so many different levels – historical, theological, hermeneutical, etc. However, Tzedakah Ministries owes it to you to break down Hagee's failings in each of these areas so that you are equipped and ready to give an answer to those who are confused and/or misled by the aberrant teachings of John Hagee concerning evangelism and the Jewish people.

The historical weaknesses are similar to those described in my review of *Jerusalem Countdown* (<http://www.tzedakahministries.org/documents/ReviewofJerusalemCountdown.doc>). For, ultimately, his understanding of history is simplistic. However in this work, he goes beyond simplicity to historical revisionism of many facets of Christian history. For example, Hagee claims that the Holocaust "was carried out by baptized Christians in good standing with their church" (p. 5).

There are two problems with this statement. First, Hagee illustrates a basic misunderstanding of
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**CHANGE IN NEWSLETTER
STRUCTURE ANNOUNCEMENT!**

**2008 editions of *Tzedakah Times* will run in
March, June, September, and December.**

Tzedakah Ministries – To Equip His Church to Reach His People

Who Really Is *In Defense of Israel*? (continued from front page)

the religious affiliation of Nazi leaders. Heather Pringle's *The Master Plan* provides an in-depth explanation of the cultic views of the Nazi Party especially those members of the upper echelon. Second, Hagee's source material contradicts (<http://www.christianitytoday.com/history/newsletter/2002/jan25.html>) his own position.

At this point in the review, you may be asking yourself why this error is so important. This historical error is serious as it not only illustrates Hagee's shallow understanding of history but also casts a shadow on any historical claims made by the author. Indeed, Hagee is guilty of hyperbole and simplistic statements throughout the historical section (p. 17, 19, 25, 27, 33, 61, 74, 92-94, 105-106)

Do not doubt that the Christian history is replete with examples of anti-Semitic hatred. Contriteness will never atone for the actions done against the Jewish people by those who claimed to be Christians. However, Hagee's approach only makes a bad situation worse.

Several pages could be devoted to the historical overstatements found in this work. However, the **most dangerous** statements, and the words which could cause the word "unorthodox" to be bantered about by reviewers is found in the theological and hermeneutical sections.

Hagee (p. 7) asserts that even though the Jewish people do not see Jesus as Messiah in this moment they will at a future date. This strikes me as interesting especially since he states categorically that Jewish people will never become Christians.

Examine his own words: "It is time for Christians everywhere to recognize that the nation of Israel will never convert to Christianity and join the Baptist church in their town... But the idea that the Jews of the world are going to convert and storm the doors of Christian churches is a myth" (p. 148). How can Hagee, unless he is a dual covenantalist, hold this position? I believe he does especially given the fact that his "Night[s] to Honor Israel" events are non-conversionary (p. 46).

It is impossible to elaborate on some of the most inane theological errors written in this book. A simple listing must suffice. First, he separates Romans 9-11 from the rest of the epistle (p. 50-51). Second, he refers to Samaritans as Gentiles (p. 116). Third, he advocates a position held by the liberal James Parkes (p. 125) and then exhibits weak research by only using a single source in his response to Replacement Theology (p. 132, 147, 158).

Much more could be written; however, the **most dangerous** section of this book is devoted to his contrived view that Jesus never claimed to be Messiah. Hagee states, "... it was Jesus who was refusing to be the Messiah to the Jews" (p. 140). His avoidance of Jesus' own words (John 8:58; 10:30; and all the "I Am's") should cause these pages to be labeled as nothing but anathema (p. 132-145, 148).

Jesus is Messiah for all peoples but first and foremost for the Jewish people (Matt. 15:24; Rom. 1:16). Hagee unintentionally acknowledges this truth when he lists Felix Mendelssohn as one of the greatest of all Jews (p. 101). For you see Felix Mendelssohn was a Jewish believer in Jesus.

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