

WATCH VIDEO: Unprecedented Crisis Dividing Israeli Society Worse Than Anything I've Ever Seen – Where Does Israel Go From Here?

JERUSALEM, ISRAEL – Please stop everything and take time to “pray for the peace of Jerusalem,” according to Psalm 122.

Usually, we pray for God to protect Israel from external enemies.

But right now, we need to pray that God will show mercy to Israeli citizens who are more deeply divided than any time in the last 75 years of the modern state.

The battle over the judicial reform legislation being advanced by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his government coalition has created an unprecedented crisis.

It's dividing Israeli society worse than anything I've ever seen before.

To better understand what's happening and what it means, I spoke with Calev Myers, Israel's leading Christian attorney, a partner in one of Israel's leading law firms, and the founder of the Jerusalem Institute of Justice, a non-profit organization that promotes and defends human rights and civil rights for Israelis.

We discussed a range of critical questions:

- Why did Netanyahu fire Defense Minister Yoav Gallant?
- Why did Gallant give a live statement to the nation over

the weekend?

- Is Gallant opposed to the judicial reforms that Netanyahu is pushing for, or simply asking that the prime minister slow down the process during the Passover holidays and search for a compromise?
- Why are far-right Knesset members like Itamar Ben Gvir threatening to bolt the Netanyahu coalition and bring down the government?
- Why was the Israeli airport been shut down on Monday?
- Why are all Israeli public schools and universities shut down?
- Why are all of Israel's ports shut down to commercial traffic?
- Why are IDF air force pilots and combat soldiers – including those in elite units – threatening not to show up and serve in their units?
- Why do many Israeli followers of Jesus feel threatened by the current judicial reform plan, even if they agree that reforms are needed?
- Where does Israel go from here?
- And what are other ways that Evangelical Christians around the world can be praying for Israel at this critical hour.

It was an important conversation and I encourage you to watch it in full and share it on social media with family and friends and mobilize them to pray, as well. {eoa}

This article originally appeared on ALL ISRAEL NEWS and is reposted with permission.

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Meteorologist Prays on Air: 'Dear Jesus, Please Help Them. Amen.'

✘ Apparently, there are some secular media outlets in America that are not anti-Jesus or anti-Christian.

In the midst of deadly tornadic outbreak Friday night in Mississippi, Matt Laubhan, a meteorologist for WTVA Fox News 9 in Tupelo, Mississippi, paused for a moment when he saw the storms approaching the town of Amory, located in the northeast corner of Mississippi between Tupelo and Starkville.

Laubhan knew that the tornado would make a direct hit on Amory.

"Oh man, like north side of Amory, this is coming in," said Laubhan, an Emmy-award winning meteorologist.

Bowing his head and sighing, Laubhan then said, "Dear Jesus, please help them. Amen."

Of course, the state of Mississippi is in the middle of the Bible Belt, but how many television personalities, national or

local, would pause their on-air broadcast to say a prayer to their Savior, and how many television station owners these days would allow that to happen?

The tornado ripped through Mississippi Friday night and killed at least 26 people.

Throughout his broadcast, Laubhan began become noticeably upset as he realized the tornado would certainly hit Amory, a small town of just over 6,500.

As the broadcast went on, Laubhan warned that “this is a strong, life-threatening tornado that’s going to move close to Amory,” and warned the audience “we need to be in our tornado safe place.”

Strong Faith in Jesus

Although the storms delivered what Fox News Digital called “unparalleled devastation,” one Mississippi pastor held church service on Sunday in wake of the devastation in “hopes of bringing his congregation together at a time when they need it the most.”

Britt Williamson, pastor of First Baptist Church in Rolling Fork, a town nearly leveled by the F-4 storm, told Fox & Friends Weekend on Sunday why he decided to hold services.

❌ “We as a church leadership just thought it was important to give the people in the community a time to come and be encouraged by the word of the Lord, the presence of the Lord,” Williams says. “Have a time of worship. Have a time of prayer, and in the midst of this devastation, in the midst of this story, to give people some comfort and some hope in the presence of the Lord.

“Because this is not something that’s going to be a week or two-week recovery. It’s going to be months, if not years.”

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Shawn A. Akers *is the online editor at Charisma Media.*

Pastor and Son Hospitalized, Church Destroyed During Extremist Attack

Persecution of biblical proportions is still occurring in the world today.

Physical violence, families threatened and churches torn down is a frightening reality in the modern age, just as it was during the reign Diocletian and the Roman Empire.

This persecution of Christians reared its ugly head when Pastor John Balidawa, 35, and his 14-year-old son were brutally beaten and hospitalized by the Muslim extremists who also destroyed their church in the Mayuge District of eastern Uganda.

On March 15, Pastor Balidawa and his son, Gilbert Sanja, were preparing their church, Ebenezer Christian Center, to hold an all-night prayer vigil. As they were setting up, they began hearing rocks hitting the roof of the church and were then approached by six Muslim radicals led by Skeikh Shafi Mukama.

Mukama ordered Balidawa and his son to leave the church, and after refusing to do so, the pair were then beaten by Mukama's thugs resulting in their hospitalization.

"When I refused to obey their orders, the sheikh and two others started slapping me and then pushed me to the floor and thereafter stepped on my stomach," Pastor Balidawa told Morning Star News. "Others started boxing my son, who started

wailing and crying for help. For me and my son to survive is by God's grace."

Pastor Balidawa was beaten so severely that he lost consciousness during the attack. When he came to, he found himself in the Buluba Hospital which is owned and operated by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Jinja.

Thankfully, his son was next to him in the hospital, joined by the church's senior Pastor Gerald Kato Wakabi.

As reported by Morning Star News, "Pastor Balidawa sustained a broken leg, a broken bone in his hand, swelling in his face and injuries to his intestines and stomach, Pastor Wakabi said. Pastor Balidawa's son suffered a deep cut on his forehead, a broken bone in his right hand and swelling of his face."

The day following the attack, Pastor Wakabi said that he found a note left behind by the attackers reading, "No more church in this area. This area is holy ground for Allah's worship only."

The devil certainly likes to resort to physical violence when he is losing the spiritual war in an area.

This was not the first note the church has received since its founding in January, 2022.

In August of that same year, a message was sent to Wakabi saying, "You should remove your church, because we cannot watch our members turning to Christianity and keep quiet."

As the church grew, it recorded 12 converts of Islam to Christianity, placing it squarely in the crosshairs of the local mosque.

To stop the spread of the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, the local Muslims applied the same techniques as Saul of Tarsus: persecute the Christians so that fear will stop them

from spreading the gospel of Jesus.

“This incident has scared many believers,” Pastor Wakabi told Morning Star News. “I believe they will be restored spiritually, but, all in all, it is not easy as per now.”

Biblical literacy is so important in times of trials for Christians such as this.

As the storm of persecution batters the spiritual doors to a believer’s heart, it is during this assault that the Word of God shines brightest.

Encouragement can be found in verses like James 1:12, “Blessed is the man who endures temptation, for when he is tried, he will receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.”

The pastors of Ebenezer Christian Center in Uganda may be tempted to stop spreading the message of Jesus Christ amidst this assault on the gospel, but the Word says they will be blessed beyond comprehension for their actions.

So as Christians around the world join them in prayer for strength, endurance and victory in the spiritual battle taking place, take note that they are living a Romans 5:3-5 moment, by which Paul instructed Christians in how to deal with this exact situation: “Not only so, but we also boast in tribulation, knowing that tribulation produces patience, patience produces character, and character produces hope. And hope does not disappoint, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.” {eoa}

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Morning Rundown: Man Stabs Wife to Death During Bible Study

Here's a quick summary of the top stories on :

Man Stabs Wife to Death During Bible Study

A Minnesota man is in custody after stabbing his wife to death during a home Bible study earlier this week, CBS News reported.

Robert Castillo of St. Paul has been charged with second-degree murder of his wife, Corinna Woodhull, the Ramsey County Attorneys office said. When St. Paul police officers arrived at the scene, they found the 41-year Woodhull with severe injuries to her torso, chest and arms.

Woodhull was treated at the scene but was later pronounced dead at Regions Hospital.

The Prodigal Daughter: OnlyFans' Top Celebrity Earner Gives It All Up to Follow Jesus

The story of the prodigal son is as relevant today for young men and women as it was in the time of Jesus some 2,000 years ago.

People are influenced by the ways of the world and seduced by the promises of good times, fame and fortune.

All too often however they find that things are not as they seem and are caught up in a soul-stealing lifestyle that leaves them feeling emptier than ever, separated spiritually

from their Creator.

Is Speaking in Tongues Just Gibberish?

☒ This is quite a revelation to some people. When it comes to speaking in tongues, some people are afraid they cannot do it, or that what comes out may not really be a language. They have little faith.

One must have faith in the operation of God.

The fact of the matter is that any language that one does not understand sounds foolish. Hearing a foreign language sounds silly to one who does not understand it. It would just be gibberish as far as the listener is concerned. But hearing a language one recognizes would not sound foolish. Because one does not know a language spoken by one speaking in tongues, they might think, "Well, they're just making it up." {eoa}

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Woodhull was treated at the scene but was later pronounced dead at Regions Hospital.

The local coroner's office has since ruled Woodhull's death as a homicide due to "multiple sharp force injuries.

An enraged Castillo was being held down on the floor by several people by the time police arrived.

Apparently, Castillo should not have been at the Bible study to begin with. The complaint against him said that he had an active warrant out for his arrest at the time of the stabbing and "recently failed to appear at a pretrial hearing in connection with fourth-degree assault charges in another county."

CBS News reports he allegedly assaulted a guard while he served as an inmate at Stillwater prison. He also has eight felony prior convictions that include first-degree assault, second-degree assault, possession of a firearm by an ineligible person and second-degree burglary.

The second-degree assault conviction was for beating the "purported mother" of his child with a hammer, causing substantial bodily harm."

CBS News reports that Castillo's sister told police she regularly hosts a Bible study at her home on Tuesday nights with family members, and the husband and wife duo sat together on a couch during the Bible study.

The complaint against Castillo said that, at one point, "Castillo whispered something into Woodhull's ear, and then pulled out a knife and stabbed her repeatedly. Castillo was then tackled by family members and disarmed."

One witness at the Bible study said that "they believed Castillo would have stabbed others if he had not been disarmed." {eoa}

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Shawn A. Akers is the online editor at Charisma Media.

Orthodox Jew: Israeli Proselytizing Bill Killed, But Damage was Done

Last Sunday, a story broke on All Israel News about a bill that was introduced in Israel's Knesset that was complicated, controversial and confusing. From there, the story was picked up by others and created a stir all around the world, among Christians, between Jews and Christians who work closely together, and with religious and civic leaders of some of Israel's democratic allies.

By late Wednesday afternoon, Prime Minister Netanyahu tweeted in Hebrew and English, "We will not advance any law against the Christian community." This seemed to put the issue to rest, but the damage was already done. What was the issue and why did it create such a stir?

The proposed bill was alleged by some as preventing Christians from preaching the gospel in Israel, even making it illegal. It was probably intended as a law that would restrict Christians sharing their faith specifically with the intent to convert people to Christianity.

But the bill was wider, speaking of efforts to persuade a member of one faith to convert to another, thus protecting Jews, Christians, Moslems, Bahai and others from coercive efforts of another faith. The bill did specifically single out

Christians, but was not restricted to Christians. It was inferred that the target of these actions would be Israeli Jews, but it also applied to Muslims trying to convert Christians, or any proselytizing of any person from one faith to another.

But the bill was vague, perhaps deliberately, or perhaps because it was just not well thought through. It's not the first time the Knesset member (MK) Moshe Gafni has proposed this bill or a version thereof. It may have been more of a knee-jerk, visceral and even pro-forma legislation, even though it's been proposed before but never passed. So why was it news now?

To be clear, as an Orthodox Jew, I am opposed to specific actions directed specifically at Jews, and specifically in Israel, the Jewish state, to convert Jews to Christianity or anything else. After millennia of being subject to the whims and threats of living as a dispersed people among the nations, at best tolerated and often persecuted and the subject of pressure from the religions of the societies in which we lived, now that we are home we should be able to live here, freely, without fear of religious coercion.

Yet I am also reminded of the sage words of a Jewish friend who died last year. He was less bothered by Christians or others "sharing their faith" to convert us because in the marketplace of faith and ideas, Judaism has more than solid footing to stand on. Jews, he would say, are party to God's original and unbreakable covenant. As such, we have our unique personal relationship with and obligations to God that Gentiles do not have, and to which gentiles are not obliged.

I believe efforts directed at Jews to convert us are theologically and historically problematic. They are also the polar opposite of the kinds of relationships that we, Jews and Christians, should and need to have.

I spend the vast amount of my waking hours building bridges between Jews and Christians. I discuss my views openly with Christian friends, sometimes uncomfortably, but always honestly and from a perspective of respect and sensitivity. I don't expect Christians to know or understand why Jews find this so offensive, or understand millennia of church history persecuting Jews, including forced conversions and even murder, in the name of Jesus. It's ancient history which most Christians don't know, but for which many Christians still atone today. When good Christians learn about and understand this, they are horrified.

But Jews know. It's part of the baggage that we have brought along with us for thousands of years. From slavery in Egypt to the destruction of the Temples, our exiles, being persecuted by the church for centuries, in the Islamic world more recently and in modern times with the Holocaust, these are all part of our history which we cannot shed or forget.

This is part of the motivation behind the introduction of the legislation, and the overall sensitivity to proselytizing and even anger and distrust that it breeds among Jews.

I write not to cast aspersions on Christians today, just to explain part of the perspective of how Jewish Israelis look at the issue, and why such legislation is being proposed to begin with. But I write also to explain why the bill was problematic. While there were many problems with the proposed legislation and the spirit behind it, there are many reasons for it and issues to which Christians who do wish to have a sincere relationship with Israel need to understand.

As an Orthodox Jew, I choose to spend my waking hours serving the calling of building bridges between Jews and Christians and Christians with Israel. It's not always easy. There's pushback from both Jews and Christians.

Sometimes I feel like I am engaged in a contact sport. I

believe that as much as we have significant theological things about which we disagree, there are many more things about which we can agree and build upon.

It's easy to build bridges when there's no conflict, or when Israel's enemies are also enemies of Christianity, and we have a common agenda. It's harder when challenges come from among Jews or Christians, and actually (or are perceived to be) targeting one another. This is when we need to redouble our efforts and create understanding, even if we still disagree.

Ironically, I read about the proposed legislation on the morning of the last day of my Run for Zion program, the first Christian oriented program around the Jerusalem marathon. Our goal is to build bridges based on mutual respect, from our respective traditions, "blessing Israel with every step." Together.

The opposite of building bridges is building barriers. I see this proposed legislation more about the latter. I don't think that the people who proposed the law care about building bridges, or the ramifications of their bill even if it was with good intent from their perspective. But for those of us who do, it was problematic for many reasons.

First, it was perceived and presented among Christians as a potential complete ban on Christians speaking about Christianity, "sharing the gospel" and maybe even practicing their faith. I read the legislation. I don't know if that was the intent, and didn't see the language that specifically says that. But because it was vague, it allowed for wide latitude on interpretation of what it means.

What the legislation actually proposed was a stricter view of how one might "share the gospel" with the intent to proselytize. The law currently is that one may not try to convert someone to another faith using any material compensation, and not among minors. I don't believe anyone has

ever been arrested much less tried for this.

By being vague, the proposed law opened questions about what might be a criminal offense. Would an interfaith group of Jews and Christians need to sign a waiver to discuss religion with one another? What about Jews and Muslims? Or would these kinds of gatherings and conversations be considered illegal?

Could I be prosecuted for hosting the Inspiration from Zion podcast where I ask Christian guests to talk about their faith, specifically in the context of their love for Israel, and where we might discuss New Testament verses that highlight this or even mention Jesus by name?

Would a tour guide risk prosecution guiding a group at Christian sites throughout Israel? Would courses in comparative religions be banned?

Would Christian media or ministries in Israel that are by definition pro-Israel and seek to bless Israel, fall in the crosshairs of such a proposed law simply by communicating to other Christians about their faith, literally sharing the gospel and the imperative to stand with Israel and be subject to prosecution?

These are extreme examples, so much so that they sound absurd. But maybe not. Since the legislation was vague, we don't know. And we don't know, if passed, how it might have been enforced.

I shudder to think about any of this happening, but because it was vague and not well thought through, such a law would leave possible interpretation up to police in the enforcement (unimaginable to me), or a judge looking for legal basis to prosecute.

Having said that, I don't believe the intent of this legislation was to bar anyone from living, worshipping or speaking about their faith broadly, outside the scope of deliberately trying to convert someone. I lost count of how

many concerned emails and text messages I got from Christian friends all around the world.

While different in Israel as the Jewish state, Israel ensures rights of belief and worship for all. I don't see that changing. I don't believe that apocalyptic suggestions made, that the proposed law was the end of freedom of worship (specifically among Christians).

As much as I believe that, there are deeper issues that need to be addressed.

There was a survey in Israel some years ago that indicated that the vast majority of Israelis have never met a Christian. My son-in-law was one of them until he came into our family and had the opportunity to meet many of my Christian friends. However, it's also intuitive that while the majority of Israelis have never met a Christian, the majority of these do not hold favorable views of Christians and Christianity. How can that be?

This is rooted in the consequence of Christian anti-Semitism and replacement theology that goes back nearly 2000 years, and all forms of persecution, pogroms, forced conversions and more, all sanctioned by the church, in the name of Jesus.

Jews also look at Christians as having a short list of ulterior motives in supporting Israel and the Jewish people. I was at a wedding recently where I saw a friend who I had not seen in a while. Catching up, he told me that he understood that Christian support of Israel was simply to get all the Jewish people to live here, and then there would be an end times war that was necessary for Jesus to return. Are there Christians who believe that? Sure. Is this what drives most Christian support for Israel?

Absolutely not.

Nor does the motive to convert Jews to Christianity drive most

Christians, at least not those I know. But many Jews think that it does. It exists of course, but is not dominant as the motivation to engage Israel and the Jewish people among those who do so. There have been notable (and egregious) recent cases of Christians trying to do so in Israel, some overtly and some deceitfully. This colors how Israeli Jews of all backgrounds perceive Christians and Christianity.

It's not just the ultra-Orthodox community as in those who proposed the new legislation. I am modern Orthodox. Many in my community believe this too. But even secular Israelis do as well. There have been notable instances of anti-Christian ideas being expressed in the secular media by secular Israelis, expressing an anti-Christian bias that's sometimes even hostile. It's something about which I spent significant time and effort to call out.

I have the privilege of knowing, and having deep intimate conversations with, Christians of many backgrounds. I get to know them and their hearts. Many Israelis and Jews who don't engage like I do simply look at Christian support for us being motivated by our being their theological pawns in a wider game to save souls or to bring Jesus back. As a whole, many or most Jews don't know much about Christians and Christianity, the same way many or most Christians don't know much about Jews.

While these (and other allegations) are not what drive most Christian support for Israel and love for the Jewish people, most Jews don't know that, and probably don't particularly care. One can be forgiven for not knowing about people or a faith group with which one has no interaction, and it goes both ways between Jews and Christians.

Christians should care that the history of the anti-Semitism of the church is what shapes much Jewish views of Christians and Christianity, and that these were done in the name of Jesus. As one Christian friend said, "we have dragged Jesus' name through the mud and it's our job to show the Jewish

people that we have no ill intent.”

From an Israeli and Jewish perspective, I didn't think the proposed law was a good one. I am against efforts to persuade Jews to convert to anything. I want Jews to embrace and live the blessings and promises of being part of God's covenanted people.

But proposed legislation like this does more to create ill will than to protect Jews, or anyone else for that matter, from efforts to convert anyone. Interestingly, as divisive as this has been, I have enjoyed the conversations with friends, Jews and Christians, as we dissect what the bill meant, what the implications could be, and how it might be applied.

It's been discussed in a way that is actually Talmudic, a detailed analysis of every word, and the spirit and circumstances behind it.

I believe that Israel has a unique role not just to allow and protect freedom of faith and worship in Israel, but a unique obligation to protect Christians and Christianity. As one friend said, he's concerned that Christians won't be able to speak about Jesus in the land of His birth.

Part of our obligation to protect Christians and Christianity in Israel relates to indigenous Christians, mostly Arabs. It's not the forum, and I cannot go into detail here for concern of placing some Christian Israeli Arab friends at risk, but the fact is that Christian Arabs in Israel face struggles and persecution from their Arab Muslim neighbors in ways that are unthinkable.

It embarrasses me as an Israeli Jew that things like this are allowed to happen at all. Rather than seeing half-baked legislation proposed like this, I'd like to see laws enforced that protect Israel's Christian minority from actual threats by their own Muslim neighbors.

As it relates to the proposed law, before the Prime Minister seemed to have hit the brakes, the genie was out of the bottle. The damage had been done. Even assuming the bill has died, for those not inclined to support Israel or looking for any occasion to give Israel a black eye, the mere reporting of the proposed legislation, that never even went to the Knesset for a preliminary discussion, gives ammunition for Israel haters to use against us. That's bad.

For Christians who tend to genuinely love and support Israel, they are legitimately feeling that they may be the ones getting the black eye. Few I know felt good about this. For some, it caused alarm because of the overdramatized reports. For every message I received, there were surely hundreds or more for whom the reports about the bill caused distress, most of whom don't know someone like me here in Israel with whom to address this openly. They simply saw misleading news reports and felt bad about it.

Part of the problem is that those who proposed the bill and those who might have supported it, are not those who typically consider how Christians feel about Israel, for good or for bad, and therefore don't take into consideration that mere discussion of something like this can be bad for Israel, and make our friends feel bad.

The afternoon that the story broke, a respected Christian journalist called and wanted my input. I had not yet read the proposed law, or even the article in which it was reported, but I basically said what I have written above.

I also noted a bit of irony in that many Christians I know celebrated the return of Prime Minister Netanyahu to power last year, some specifically celebrating the inclusion of right-wing Jewish/nationalist political parties. To be honest, I hesitated to join them on this level, specifically because I don't believe that these parties by in large understand, particularly care about or even support Christians in Israel,

or the phenomena of Christian support for Israel.

In this instance, two members of one of two ultra-Orthodox parties of the government who proposed this bill, created a big problem that is still being felt. Had Netanyahu not pulled the plug, its intuitive that the second ultra-Orthodox party would have joined as well.

And it was also possible that the two Jewish religious/nationalist parties, or at least many of their members, would too. If that were the case, it could have created a situation where half the government coalition actively supported it, and challenged or coerced Netanyahu and his Likud party to require that the entire coalition's support.

Netanyahu would have done better to take the wind out of the bill's sail on Monday morning, before the damage could have been done and ill feelings engendered. Those who read the bad news, may not read the good news.

Last year, I went to my local post office looking for stamps that the Israel Postal Authority had issued celebrating Christianity in Israel. I asked the person if they had these stamps to which he replied, "Yuck, Christians. We would never sell that here." Obviously. I wasn't speaking to a person who valued building bridges, much less understanding anything about Christianity. There's work to do on that end which I embrace.

The same year, I was hosting a webinar with pastors and other Christian leaders mostly from developing countries where there are no Jews, but who love us warmly and sincerely. It was during the period when tourism was largely shut down because of the pandemic. At the end of the program, a pastor asked if he could pray.

"Yes, please," I said. In no time the pastor began praying that Israel would open its borders soon so they could come

back to witness to and try to convert Jews.

I did not interrupt the pastor and his prayer, nor openly contradict him. But the next day. I explained why this is problematic theologically, and historically, and how Jews take such efforts with offense. He listened respectfully, and then spoke. He thanked me, apologized, and since then we have been even closer friends.

Another Christian friend sees this bill as a natural outcome of 2000 years of Christian anti-Semitism and persecution of Jews. She shared that it is the responsibility of Christians to "live out our faith" rather than trying to use persuasion to convert Jews.

Someone raised the concern that this would create anti-Semitism among Christians, based that that now they perceive they are being persecuted by Jews?

What about me? I spend all day working with Christians. Rarely a day goes by that I am not speaking with or sending electronic communication (that might have been outlawed) having to do with Christians and Christianity, including referencing Jesus and the New Testament. If I were to do this after such a law were passed, could I be arrested? It seems and feels unlikely, but with a loose reading of the text, and strict interpretation, perhaps not impossible.

There are good reasons for Jews to be concerned by and push back against efforts by Christians (or others) to try to convert us. The bill was certainly an outcome of such efforts. Even though many Christian friends say that only God can convert or change someone's heart, there are no shortage of Christians and Christian ministries that support and are actively engaged in this.

Christians have reason for concern because a loosely written bill that is as not well thought through, could have led to limitation of legitimate rights of Christians (or others) by

people who do not consider Christian feelings.

✘ For now, it seems the issue has been put to rest. But there are still underlying sensibilities and issues behind it, and the outcome, that must be addresses. The Genesis 123 Foundation will host a webinar on Monday, March 27 with a panel of Jewish and Christian leaders to do so.

You are invited to register to join the conversation. {eoa}

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Jonathan Feldstein was born and educated in the U.S. and immigrated to Israel in 2004. Throughout his life and career, he has been blessed by the calling to fellowship with Christian supporters of Israel and shares experiences of living as an Orthodox Jew in Israel. He is president of the Genesis 123 Foundation, which builds bridges between Jews and Christians. Hear and understand more about this subject, including the backstory on the Inspiration from Zion podcast.

Evangelical Leaders in US, Israel Praise Netanyahu for Stopping Legislation to Ban the Gospel in Israel

JERUSALEM, ISRAEL – A former U.S. State Department official and Evangelical leaders in the United States and Israel were quick to thank Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Wednesday after he publicly vowed to block a bill by members of his own governing coalition making it illegal for followers

of Jesus in Israel to discuss the Gospel message with other Israelis.

An article on Sunday by ALL ISRAEL NEWS first broke the **story of the dangerous bill** in which **two ultra-Orthodox members of Knesset – Moshe Gafni and Yaakov Asher** – were determined to outlaw anyone from sharing the Gospel of Jesus the Messiah in Israel, and punish violators with prison sentences.

Sam Brownback – former U.S. ambassador for international religious freedom in the Trump-Pence administration – was the **first American leader to publicly sound the alarm** about what a threat to religious freedom and human rights the bill posed.

Brownback also became the first to praise Netanyahu for taking a strong stand against the bill.

“Bibi Netanyahu is an amazing leader of courage,” Brownback told ALL ISRAEL NEWS in a text message on Wednesday. “I applaud his quick and decisive move to address what could have become a major issue.”

Later on Wednesday, I interviewed Brownback via Zoom from his home in Kansas.

He went further in expressing his gratitude to Netanyahu.

He also praised the State of Israel for being “a beacon of religious liberty” in the Middle East and a model for other nations to follow.

A HIGHLY SENSITIVE ISSUE

Brownback acknowledged that the issue of talking about one’s religious faith with another person – and even hoping to persuade that person to change religions – is a highly sensitive issue, especially between Jews and Christians.

But he noted that the freedom to not only hold one’s religious beliefs but to be able to discuss them openly with others is

part of the UN Charter on Human Rights, to which Israel is a signatory.

Brownback emphasized that another fundamental right enshrined in the UN document is the right to change one's faith if a person wants to do so.

That, too, he said, is a highly sensitive issue in the Jewish world, as in much of the world, but vitally important.

NETANYAHU'S QUICK ACTION

Initially, I heard hesitation – even resistance – from some Netanyahu confidantes about the need for him to issue a statement because they believed that there was no chance that such a bill would ever really become law.

Nevertheless, Evangelical leaders were **respectful but adamant** that private assurances were not enough.

They asked for a clear, definitive statement from the prime minister.

And that's exactly what they got.

At 4:43 p.m. Israel time on Wednesday, Netanyahu issued the following tweet in Hebrew and English to his 2.2 million followers.

“We will not advance any law against the Christian community.”

Soon thereafter, one of the bill's authors – Gafni – issued a statement that he was withdrawing his proposal from consideration.

As the original ALL ISRAEL NEWS coverage spread – including statements of concern by prominent American Evangelical leaders – it was quickly picked up by a wide range of Evangelical Christian media outlets.

The story was picked by major Israeli news outlets, as well.

As the prime minister and his staff heard from more and more Evangelicals and reporters about the issue, Netanyahu took action.

And just like Brownback, many Christian leaders were quick to express their gratitude to Netanyahu for his strong stand on this issue and for being such a solid and valued friend of the Christian world for so many years.

PRAISE FOR NETANYAHU FROM PROMINENT EVANGELICAL LEADERS

“I want to give a special word of thanks to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for making the right decision for the people of Israel and thousands of us who visit Israel every year from around the world,” said Greg Laurie, senior pastor of Harvest Church in Orange County, California, and the author of JESUS REVOLUTION, a book telling the story of the greatest spiritual awakening in the U.S. in the past century, which recently was turned into a very popular movie in the U.S.

“I’m so glad to see Israel Prime Minister Netanyahu promise to oppose the bill in Knesset that was targeting Christians, that would have outlawed the ability of anyone to share their faith with others,” said Mrs. Nadine Maenza, the former chair of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom. “This is an important right for all people of all faiths and is a win for religious freedom!”

Dr. Juergen Buehler, president of the Israel Christian Embassy Jerusalem, told ALL ISRAEL NEWS, “We appreciate the assurance from Prime Minister Netanyahu that the proposed anti-missionary bill will not go forward, and we thank him for speedily putting this matter to rest. He has done much over his long political career to strengthen and guard Israel’s relations with Christians worldwide, and our embrace of this nation is warmly returned.”

“As the president of Concerned Women for America, the largest women’s public policy organization in the United States, I am

once again so thankful for Benjamin Netanyahu,” said Penny Nance, head of the largest conservative faith-based women’s organization in the U.S. with some 500,000 members. “Our members are mostly Evangelical Christians and like me, deeply love and support Israel. We will continue to be strong defenders of the important US-Israel relationship. Prime Minister Netanyahu has once again proven to be a friend to Christians, and a worthy ally.”

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Top of the Week: California County Caught Spying on Church Members From Next-Door Church

Following are snippets of the top stories posted on over the past week. We encourage you to visit the links to read the stories in full.

California County Caught Spying on Church Members From Next-Door Church

A California church has denied coercion with county officials after being accused by a neighboring church of spying on its members who defied lockdown orders during the COVID pandemic.

Media reports say that Substack investigative journalist David Zweig obtained court documents that revealed enforcement officers with Santa Clara County began spying on the congregation at Calvary Chapel San Jose and reported details about the church's worship, prayer and other church meetings.

Pastor Mike McClure defied the mandated social distancing order and reopened the church during the pandemic in 2020 for regular church services and business.

A Prophetic Warning to Americans, from the Underground Church

There is a Satanic lullaby here in the West. A very subtle droning lullaby that is causing the church to drift asleep. That's how one Iranian woman described the American church when her family moved here before deciding to return to Iran. The simmering pressure and intensity in the underground church kept their faith alive and real, in a way that started to diminish in the lukewarm churches in the West.

That woman, along with two other women leaders in the underground church in Iran felt the Spirit of God placed an urgent prophetic message on their hearts to share with American Christians.

As they watched Biden's speech in Sept. 2022, they were moved by his demonizing pro-life supporters as "potential terrorists." Disconnected from American politics, they heard Biden's words and felt an eerie similarity to the rhetoric they have listened to in their country before.

Former Megachurch Pastor Who Had Affair Now 'At Peace with God'

If there is one thing that God has engrained into Pastor

Jeremy Foster over the past year, it's grace.

He has received a lot of it, and he's learning more and more every day how to give it back to others.

The founder of Hope City Church in Houston, Texas—a megachurch with weekend attendance of roughly 12,000—resigned his position as lead pastor over a year ago after confessing to an adulterous affair. During the past year, he has received counseling and has attempted to mend relationships between his ex-wife, his children and his ex-church.

Prophecy: Exposure Is Coming to the American Church

Is the church in the West truly prepared for an increase in persecution? Shaking has started in our culture and it is revealing the hearts of men, left and right. Many prominent pastors you relied on to guide you in your walk have come out with mind-boggling scandals, false prophets are innumerable in a social media age and Christian-Judeo values are now looked down upon by many in today's society.

“People are looking at what's going on in the world. You know, God has allowed things to be shaken. People are looking for answers,” YouTube sensation Marcus Rogers says in an interview with Charisma magazine.

Rogers is the pastor at Firehouse Church in Chicago, Illinois, and is no stranger to the trying times the church is facing. Not only does he shepherd the flock at his church, but he also has a massive online presence where many look up to him for political guidance, cultural answers and discernment on Christian leaders.


Wood Uses Scripture to Defend Saddleback's Position on Women Pastors

Andy Wood isn't about to apologize for Saddleback's Church stance on appointing women to positions of authority in his

church.

Wood, who took over as lead pastor at Saddleback last fall for founding pastor Rick Warren, says that, despite the fact his church was expelled from the Southern Baptist Convention in February for its decision to hire a female pastor—his wife, Stacie, as a teaching pastor—Saddleback will continue to stick to what God’s Word has to say on the subject.

In a recent video on the church’s YouTube channel, Wood pointed out several Scriptures in God’s Word that proved that women indeed were allowed to take on such positions in the church. {eoa}

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World Athletics Council Bans Transgender Athletes from Women’s Competition

World Athletics—the international governing body for track and field and other running-related sports—announced Thursday it would not allow transgender athletes to compete against women.

The ban, set to be implemented next week, will prohibit “male-to-female transgender athletes who have been through male puberty” from facing off against women in female sports, the BBC reported.

“Decisions are always difficult when they involve conflicting needs and rights between different groups, but we continue to take the view that we must maintain fairness for female

athletes above all other considerations,” said Sebastian Coe, president of World Athletics.

“We will be guided in this by the science around physical performance and male advantage which will inevitably develop over the coming years. As more evidence becomes available, we will review our position, but we believe the integrity of the female category in athletics is paramount.”

The council also voted to reduce the amount of blood testosterone allowed for athletes with differences in sex development (DSD). Such competitors, like South Africa’s Caster Semenya, will be required to reduce their blood testosterone level to less than 2.5 nanomoles per liter, down from five.

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Morning Rundown: Former Megachurch Pastor Who Had Affair Now ‘At Peace with God’

Here’s a quick summary of the top stories on :

Former Megachurch Pastor Who Had Affair Now ‘At Peace with

God'

If there is one thing that God has engrained into Pastor Jeremy Foster over the past year, it's grace.

He has received a lot of it, and he's learning more and more every day how to give it back to others.

The founder of Hope City Church in Houston, Texas—a megachurch with weekend attendance of roughly 12,000—resigned his position as lead pastor over a year ago after confessing to an adulterous affair. During the past year, he has received counseling and has attempted to mend relationships between his ex-wife, his children and his ex-church.

3 Keys to Stand Strong Against End Times Deception

One Los Angeles pastor, working in the heart of Skid Row and leading sheep from all walks of life is warning Christians across America to start living for the imminent return of Christ. You've probably heard of a few "signs of the times," but what does it mean to have the discernment like the sons of Issachar?

"It's hard to know the beast when you're in the belly of the beast," Pastor Troy Vaughn says in a Charisma magazine interview. In 1 Chronicles 12:32 it says, "From the sons of Issachar, those having understanding of times and what Israel should do: 200 of their captains with all their brothers at their command."

In every era of history, there is a unique set of circumstances plaguing the minds of the people. In 1 Chronicles 12 that circumstance was the death of King Saul and the future reign of David. The sons of Issachar perceived the tension in the moment and analyzed what was happening in Israel. They used that wisdom to fight with the rest of David's army at Hebron to turn the kingdom of Saul over to him.

Former Mrs. Tom Brady, Gisele Bündchen's Occult Habits on Display in Vanity Fair Article

- ✘ The time for action in the spiritual realm is long past due.

Christians need to be aware that there is a real battle being fought on all fronts of society, and you are either on Jesus' side or you are not.

Spiritual warfare has taken on specific forms in the world today, with witchcraft and occult practices not only being brought back to popularity but being promoted on some of the world's largest stages by famous personalities. {eoa}

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