

Why Is Israel Criticized When Islamic Nations Are Persecuting Religious Minorities?

Israel is the world's only Jewish state and exists as a democracy in a sea of more than 50 Islamic dictatorships, Emirates, military and/or religious strongmen and monarchies.

While some Islamic nations claim to give freedoms and rights to their religious minorities, most forbid or seriously restrict the private practice and public worship of non-Islamic faiths— even Christianity and Judaism, which are supposedly accepted by Islam. Minority believers are rejected and regularly persecuted, humiliated, or otherwise abused.

Jews are not even allowed in Saudi Arabia and all non-Muslims are forbidden from its sacred city of Mecca. Imams at Muslim mosques throughout the Islamic world and Muslim non-assimilated enclaves in Europe regularly vilify Israel and its principal ally, the United States of America. Islamic extremists live to die for their god while seeking to “destroy Israel” and “push the Jews into the [Mediterranean] Sea.”

Israel is “Jewish” in terms of its nationality and majority religion while guarding the human, democratic and religious rights of all its religious and ethnic groups as full citizens. Arab-Israelis and other religious minorities have a higher standard of living in Israel than they would enjoy in any of the surrounding Islamic-majority nations. That is why Israeli Arabs, the Druze community and other minorities in Israel choose to remain there to live, work, worship and educate their children—both boys and girls.

So why did the passing of the recent Basic Law: Israel as the

Nation-State of the Jewish People, by Israel's parliament, the Knesset, create such confusion and criticism? Wasn't provision for the Jewish nature and character of this nation the very purpose and reason it was created by international bodies more than seven decades ago?

Since the times of the Bible, the land now called the nation-state of Israel was to be a homeland for the persecuted Jewish people, as a historic, ethnic and religious entity. Now, as a modern, secular democracy, Judaism is not even a required religion of its citizens, similar to the United Kingdom, which officially exists as an Anglican state. Like the U.K., Israel grants freedom of religion to all its citizens and legal residents.

Israel's 1948 Declaration of Independence clearly states that Israel "will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex; it will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education and culture; it will safeguard the Holy Places of all religions."

Islam's religious "democracies," republics, monarchies or emirates, boldly establish Islam as the official religion and its human-rights-restrictive Sharia Law as the "principal source of legislation." It results in a) laws against religious apostasy (renouncing or changing religions), blasphemy (stifling freedom of expression) and b) laws in approval of demeaning women or minority identity groups and, in some cases, even slavery.

However, in the Jewish nation of Israel, members of all other religions and ethnic groups are respected as full citizens. They may vote, serve as lawmakers and judges, and maybe more significantly, freely worship in protected places.

Israel's new "Nation-State Law" states the obvious, that their 70-year-old nation was established by world powers as "a

homeland for the Jewish people,” in a land which has had over three millennia of Jewish presence and influence.

Now, President Trump is reported to be planning to introduce his administration’s peace plan for Israel and the Palestinians at the United Nations in late September. He has hinted that Israel may not like it and that both parties need to be willing to give a little.

Unless he accounts for the religious-supremacist basis of the Palestinians’ historic recalcitrance, long-lasting results for peace in the region will remain an Arabian night’s dream.
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*Ordained to the ministry in 1969, **Gary Curtis** is a graduate of LIFE Bible College at Los Angeles (soon to become Life Pacific University at San Dimas, California). He has taken graduate courses at Trinity College in Deerfield, Illinois. and Fuller Seminary in Pasadena, California. Gary served as part of the pastoral staff of The Church on The Way, the First Foursquare Church of Van Nuys, California, for 27 years (1988-2015), the last 13 years as the vice president of Life on The Way Communications Inc., the church’s not-for-profit media outreach. Now retired, Gary and his wife have been married for 50 years and live in Southern California. They have two married daughters and five grandchildren.*