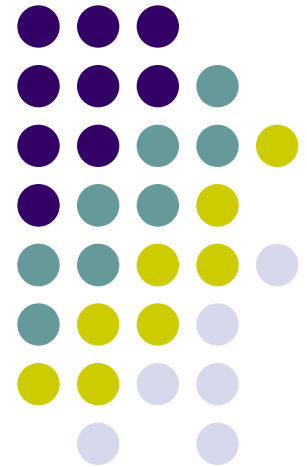


# ISRAEL'S IMPROBABLE ALLIES

Christian Zionism and its Strategic Implications  
for the US, Israel and the Palestinians

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March 13, 2008

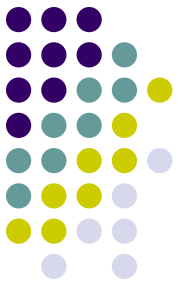


# Three arguments



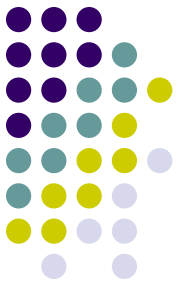
- Christian Zionism is not an epiphenomenon, but is *deeply rooted in both history and theology*.
- Christian Zionists have become important foreign policy actors on the Israel-Palestine issue, thanks to the help of both Jewish American organizations and Israeli political parties. Christian Zionists bring *substantial political assets to the pro-Israel community*.
- The Christian Zionist approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is contributing to the transformation of a *territorial conflict between two peoples into a transcendental fight between competing religious narratives*.

# Evangelicals' five core beliefs



<b>1. Inerrancy of the Bible</b>	Bible-believing Christians
<b>2. Personal conversion</b>	Born-again Christians
<b>3. Acceptance of Jesus as personal savior</b>	Followers of Jesus Christ
<b>4. Moral values</b>	Value voters
<b>5. Sharing the Gospel</b>	Evangelicals

# Three doctrines



## Anti-replacement theology doctrine

Genesis 17:7-8: “I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you. The whole land of Canaan, where you are now an alien, I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you; and I will be their God.”

Leviticus 26:9: “I will look on you with favor and make you fruitful and increase your numbers, and I will keep my covenant with you;”

## Prosperity doctrine

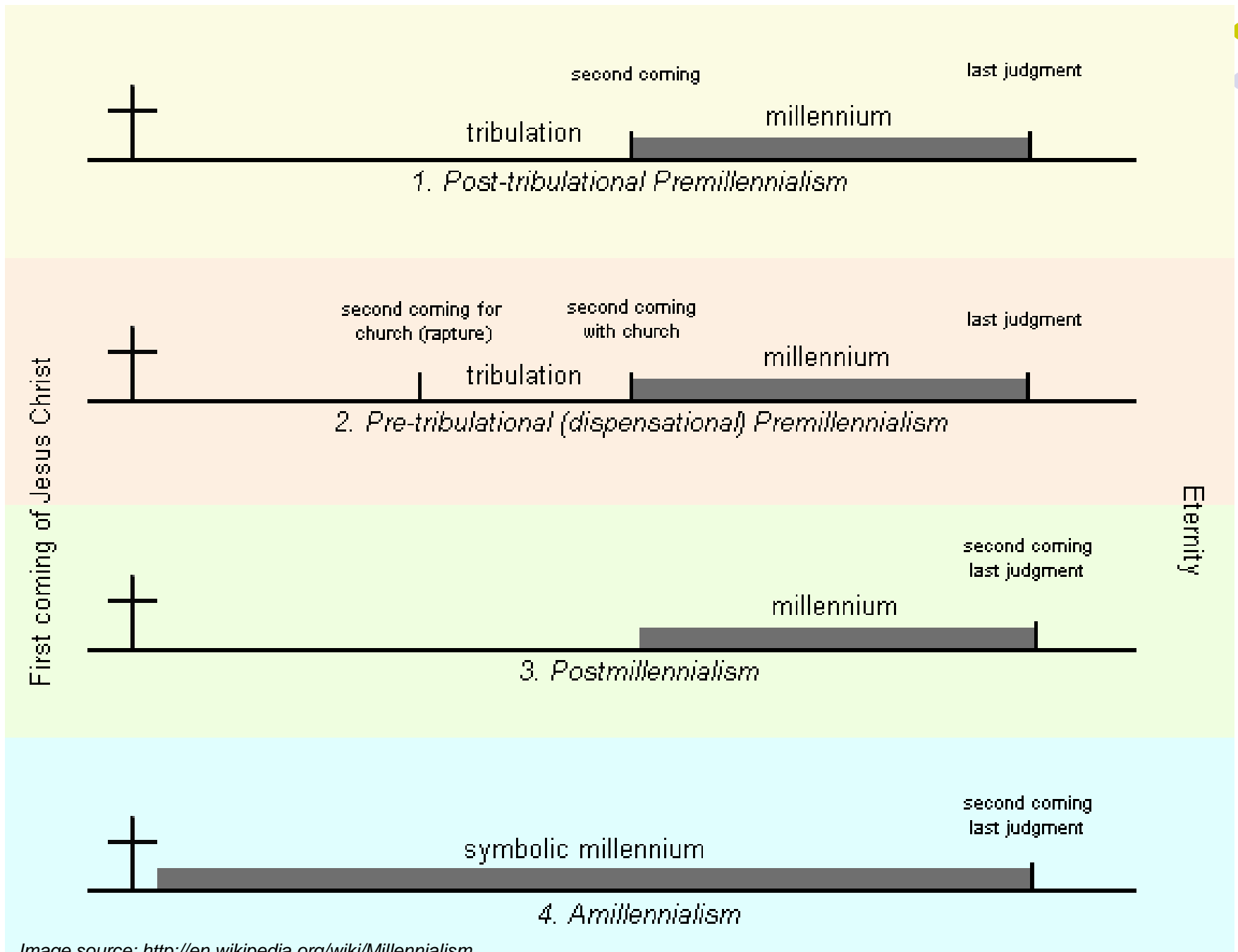
Genesis 12:3 : “I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.”

Psalms 122:6 “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: May they prosper who love you”

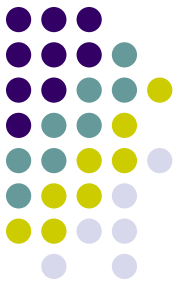
## Prophecy doctrine

I Thessalonians, 4:17: “then we who are alive, who are left; shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.”

# Comparison of Christian millennial teachings



# Political Christian Zionism - Important developments



## From apathy to action

- **1948** : Israel as the fulfillment of biblical prophecies
- **1967**: Jerusalem, Judea & Samaria in the hands of Jews
- **Promotion of Christian Zionism**: Prophetic and apocalyptic literature
- **Provide aid and support to Israel** : International Fellowship of Christian and Jews ; Bridges for Peace; International Christian Embassy; Unity Coalition for Israel; CIPAC
- **After 9-11**: Second wind for the Christian Zionist movement; creation of Christians United for Israel lobby

# Political Christian Zionism - Important developments



## Evangelicals' political awakening

- Cultural supremacy followed by political separation
- Post-WWII rejection of “moral relativism”
- Moral Majority ; Christian Coalition ; Religious Roundtable
- G.O.P.'s “southern” political strategy: rise of Value Voters

## Israel and Jewish Diaspora become pro-Evangelical

- Embrace of Christian Zionist support by Israeli Right & settlers
- Three reactions: Enthusiasts, Pragmatists and Critics
- Political lobbying : Christians United for Israel

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Efficiency factors for interest groups</b>	<b>Assets of Christian Zionism</b>
<b>Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Cohesion</li> <li>● Assimilation</li> <li>● Economic &amp; political resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Wealthy, dedicated, active community</li> <li>● Easy to mobilize</li> </ul>
<b>Interest groups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Corporate professionalism</li> <li>● Grassroots movement</li> <li>● Influential Leaders</li> <li>● Capacity to reach multiple entry points (Administration, Congress, media)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● From a Washington insiders movement to a massive constituent-driven movement</li> <li>● Influential religious ‘stars’</li> <li>● Alternative Christian media</li> </ul>



<b>Categories</b>	<b>Efficiency factors for interest groups</b>	<b>Assets of Christian Zionism</b>
<b>Political environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Echoing American vital interests and general ideology</li> <li>● Capacity to create bipartisan consensus</li> <li>● Capacity to make coalitions with other groups</li> <li>● Absence of groups with opposing views</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Evangelicals perceived as “patriots”</li> <li>● Reinforces support within G.O.P.</li> <li>● From Jewish lobbying to Judeo-Christian coalitions</li> </ul>
<b>Homeland</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Positive image of the homeland</li> <li>● No conflict of interest with the United States</li> <li>● Strong ties with the homeland</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increases Israel’s positive image</li> <li>● Evangelical support encouraged by Israel</li> </ul>

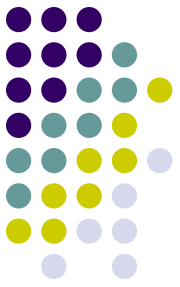
# Consequences of Christian Zionist support



## Benefits for Israel:

- **Political:** ensuring the continuing support of America
- **Financial:** securing aid to Israel; donations to Israel and to Israeli settlers ; tourism
- **Strategic :** Altering the global balance of “soft” power: towards a global network of pro-Israel transnational ?

# Consequences of Christian Zionist support



## Risks for Israel and the Palestinians:

- Radicalization of the political discourse: construction of a “**clash of civilizations**” narrative
- Transformation of the stakes of the conflict: from a territorial dispute to a **transcendental fight**
- Different nature of the bond: from ethnic & religious Diaspora attachment to a **loose religious link**