

WEBVTT

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We have as many of your questions as possible into the discussion.

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Also please keep an eye on the chat box my colleagues at FMEP will be putting useful links and information in that box throughout the discussion, don't use the chat box for questions I won't see them.

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And finally, please note that we have enabled closed captioning. Closed Captioning function for those who prefer or need to read, rather than here, the discussion.

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Now let's begin.

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Maya.

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First, can you give a very brief synopsis of the film.

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For those who haven't seen it yet maybe mentioning Yeah, l and the becomes the film is amazing, the kind of access you got including on the hill and inside evangelical institutions like Jim Hague these Christians United for Israel is incredible with the

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benefit of all of that access and the relationship you built, how would you characterize the relationship between American evangelical Christians and Israel settlement movement up there and I want to thank you for hosting us here it's great to be here

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my living room in Tel Aviv. And so yeah till Kingdom Come is basically tries to explore the bond between the Christian evangelical community, mostly in the united in the United States, and the State of Israel in any follows two equals two main characters,

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by being one that has that he's a pastor in a smaller church in a, in a Middlesborough Kentucky. It's one of the poorest places of in the United States.

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And this small church, basically one of the biggest donors of the fellowship of Christians and Jews, which is the biggest philanthropic

organization here in Israel.

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So this is basically the basis of this film is following these two young boys and ul both of them.

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taking the legacy of their fathers and taking it forward but the overall was of course the four years of the Trump administration and, and how the Christian of Angelica community and back and back this administration and basically pushed it towards a

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certain moves here in the middle is of course the moving of the embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. The deal of the century and cutting the aid to the dinner connect to the Palestinians so the film.

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Both works in two levels on a, on a very underground let's say the grass roots of this, of this bond between Christian evangelical and goes to the top to the White House, and to Jerusalem, and your for your second question, I think, you know, I think

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this this relationship definitely can for certain pick. And the last four years.

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And they exist for at least 40 years you know they've been established at the beginning of the 80s with Reagan and Anakin begging, that work that was kind of the opening, even those Billy Graham visited here and Matt golden mayor, even before and but

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I think the last four years definitely and Bibi Netanyahu and Donald Trump to secular leaders, brought this influence of these very religious groups, and really gave them the space to influence their policy and and and the film explores the that I think

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shows how deeply this influence on the ground. That's great. Thank you, Sarah you've been researching and writing on American eventual questions for four years, based on your work, how do you see the evolution of Israel as a focal point in American evangelical

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evangelical Christian politics. And how do you see the issue evolving in the future for example did Trump raise the bar for future republican presidents who need the evangelical vote to win.

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and how do you see this continuing to shape the US debate around issues related to Israel, including a wrong.

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Well, obviously, every republican president since reagan has relied on the white evangelical vote, which in turn is very focused on supporting Israel, which in their mind is supporting the settlements and the occupation.

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That's their geopolitical stance, their theological stances of course that that Israel is the locus of where Jesus will return. I think Trump did raise the bar, because he gave them access and gave access to previously fringe players on the christian

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right he sort of expanded the universe of people who are welcome at the White House are welcome at events and so forth.

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So he raised the bar in that way and he also raised the bar with his brazenness on on Israel and unrelated issues like around backing out of the Iran deal, moving the embassy to Jerusalem, giving, giving the Israeli government more of a carte blanche

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on on settlements and so forth. So I do think he raised the bar for the christian right for white evangelicals and looking down the road, you would, I would predict seeing potential candidates like Mike Pompeo or Ted Cruz, trying to reach that bar or

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maybe go beyond it.

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Great.

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Laura for the past two decades you've been watching and documenting the phenomenon of growing evangelical Christian engagement and influence with respect to Israel and policies in your assessment, how significant is the role of evangelical Christians

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on Capitol Hill. When it comes to Israel related policies settlements, Iran, etc. And as this role has grown more significant How is it altered traditional political dynamics related to Israel, United States.

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Thanks Peter and I speak about this with a lot of humility on this panel because Sarah is the guru, when it comes to these issues and what Maya learned over the course of that film I think it dwarfs what most of us have learned in our lives on this.

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I will say, you know, as someone who has been working with capitol hill on Israel, Palestine for the past 20 years or so, there has been a clear evolution of the role of evangelicals on this.

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So as Maya said this has always been an issue for evangelicals have Sarah said here this is evolved in terms of how its treated within the evangelical community on the hill if you were to go back 20 years, there, there were evangelical Christians who

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cared about Israel, and who were active I mean going back to the 90s when I lived in Jerusalem, we had, then groups of evangelicals who would come out and visit the seller settlers and support the settlements and I remember Palestinian friends of mine

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in the early days that piece processing you know they they don't even seem to care about us what's wrong.

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But on the hill, you saw them really start to come into their own with the emergence of Christians United for Israel. I remember vividly in the early aughts The first time you had someone like Joe Lieberman, as a keynote speaker Christians United for

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Israel giving this this Jewish and and in some ways democratic kosher stamp to what was going on there, and almost moving them into what was really more than mainstream discourse on this.

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And I remember watching and documenting what seemed like this fringe element of the Tea Party, which suddenly out of nowhere started really trying to be the leading edge on what it meant to be pro Israel and Congress. So for that whole period before we had the Trump administration come in we

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had the Trump administration come in we had those years of the tea party where, year after year you would have more and more hardline pro greater Israel pro settlements, you know pro annex in Jerusalem with pro moving, whatever it is.

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And those were all led by folks from the evangelical community, who in effect or trying, or setting out a new dynamic which said we are the true standard bearers of the pro Israel agenda and you democrats you progressives aren't really pros are all enough

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and and you know you know at the end of your question you asked about you know how that's affected the evolution of dynamics, and I mean you almost have the two parallel dynamics you have the dynamic within the evangelical community or this has become

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in some ways, the issue or one of the issues defining as an identity issue and Sarah. Sarah is the expert on that. and within right wing are increasingly just brought a Republican politics being one of the definitional issues, but in parallel.

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On the Democratic side, it is shifted dynamic as well where Democrats have been on the back foot now for many years trying to say no no we care about Israel, and not defining what it means to care about Israel, or be pro Israel in their own terms but

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define them and it generally in terms of. No, no, we're just as pro Israel as these evangelical Republicans, which is why you saw during the Trump era, one of the only places you could find bipartisanship on the hill for the past for it for those four

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years was on legislation resolutions about Israel. Occasionally, we'd have one they couldn't get bipartisan support around say or, you know, something that's to openly cost free speech or something.

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But you know, time and time again and we're seeing it again now at the beginning of the Biden era where it's impossible to get bipartisanship run anything except resolutions, about, you know, preventing returned to Iran nuclear deal or, you know, Democrats,

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getting on board with an amendment to an early Senate Bill, insisting that the embassy, not be moved back to tell me which nobody is talking about doing, but politically it's still such a potent card to play for Christian evangelical so we have to have

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an amendment, saying, Don't let the democrats move the embassy back to

Jerusalem, back to Tel Aviv and democrats saying we can't dare let these people be more pro Israel than we are.

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So we will join in selling the administration, not to do what it wasn't going to do anyway to prove that we're pro Israel. And that remains the dynamic today.

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Sarah want to go back to you, one of the chief reasons that evangelical Christian say they were thrilled with Donald Trump's presidency was his policy in Israel, and yet Trump ran two campaigns that traffic at times and anti semitic language and tropes.

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He hired white supremacist to work for his administration, he you know flirted with this anti semitic Q and on conspiracy theory and and candidates and traffic didn't like Marjorie Taylor green So, can you talk about how these two phenomena r squared

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this kind of flirtation with anti semitic tropes on the one hand, and. And yet this pro Israel policy and why evangelical Christians seem not to see a dissonance between those two.

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Yeah, it's, to me it's been one of the most confounding things about covering Trump's relationship with evangelicals because on the one hand, they're claiming to be the most pro Israel and we love the Jewish people.

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Yet, they say nothing about, you know, when he said they were very time people on both sides in Charlottesville and that sort of thing and as you point out the Q not conspiracy theory, which by the way, I'm, you know, white evangelicals are many of a

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big chunk of them are supporters or adherence to the q amp conspiracy theory. Right. And so I think something that we saw in my his film so vividly is how some evangelicals can look at themselves and say I'm very pro Israel.

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Yet, say, very anti semitic things right so the scene I'm thinking of in the in the film is when pastor William the older, the patriarch of the church that you reported on.

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And he was talking to Yale about her visit to Los Angeles for the

fundraiser, and he was talking about all the wealthy Jews and the movie moguls and how their hearts were going to be turned to Jesus and but he talked about them in this like very sort

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of anti semitic trope ish way about they were wealthy movie moguls and all of that.

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and Hollywood controls the world.

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So I do think that they, they can inhabit both of these spaces where I think that they don't acknowledge that kind of anti semitism, and elevate their own Fila Semitism in place of it.

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And with regard to Trump, and why, and why they can overlook his anti semitism because of his Israel policy. I think it's part and parcel of how they see him as this anointed figure that God brought to America at this critical juncture in its history,

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and that relates to Israel as well. And so, in their view he doesn't have to be perfect. He doesn't even have to be a Christian, because he's carrying out God's purposes and so I think that they've, they've papered over all of that with all of all of

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those pieces of the puzzle,

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noting that this is not an entirely new phenomenon I mean that Arthur Balfour right you know the the frame of the Balfour Declaration was himself an anti Semite he didn't want Jews immigrating to the UK you know if you, you know, if you don't, if you

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feel like Jews are creating too much diversity in your own country and sub sub, you know subverting the kind of the kind of dominant culture, you might find the idea of them going and having their own homogenous society figured if you like homogeneity

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and hierarchy in general as kind of an appealing as an appealing idea, Laura. Let me go to you. My his film documents the warm embrace if you enjoy Christians by Israeli right wing politicians, including Prime Minister Netanyahu and by the entire settlement

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movement in the film you comment it is understandable that Israelis would seek allies. It is a question, though, of whom you would decide to align yourself with and what it says about you.

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Can you talk about what you mean by this.

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Sure. And I also just want to reflect on a link to something that that Sarah just said, you know, part of the question of why, you know, American evangelical Christians who, you know, want to not worry about the apparent anti semitism of Mr.

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Trump, I mean, part of the answer is that Israel gave them cover not to write the Prime Minister of Israel and by looking at polls a large portion of the people who are citizens of Israel, said they don't care about the, the apparent anti semitism around

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our last president so why, why should evangelicals in that sense, be more concerned about anti semitism than, then a lot of Jews.

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But, you know, in terms of that quote what is, I think, striking and this is something that's been talked about a lot in the past four years, is this sort of values gap that his values chasm that has become apparent between Israel and American Jews, and

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you know for a lot of American Jews, most of whom are progressives and Democrats.

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You know, it is understandable as I said why Israelis and why the Israeli government would be looking would always want allies you know you should take is where you can write your, you see yourself as under fire.

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But there's a question of who you ally yourself with. And, you know, for the past, it's not just the past four years, but it really came under a spotlight in the past four years, the sense that the Israeli government and many Israelis, basically are willing

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to align themselves with the most illiberal forces in the world if that's what it takes. In order to not have to look at what they're doing or take criticism or be held accountable for their policies in the West Bank and Gaza.

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And that's what's really quite striking it's, it's fine. You can say those real quality but, you know, as a Jewish American you know the idea of Israel as a light unto the nations and all of that.

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It's really been challenged by this warm embrace and it's warm embrace not just of American evangelical Christians but it's people like well scenario and deterrence and, you know, it's an Arbonne, it's a much broader phenomenon, and and the sort of bottom

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line for me goes back to something Sarah, just mentioned as well which is this idea that, you know, follow Semitism is now the name of the game, Israel appears to be less interested in fighting actual anti semitism and more interested in in feeding and

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fueling stoking follow Semitism and follow Semitism is not the opposite of anti semitism follow Semitism is a fetishized love of the Jewish people history Israel, which is a another face of anti semitism and Israel seems to have sort of gone all in on

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this and that's really, you know, the visuals of the past four years, have just been every single day have been a piece of that and by the way we saw some of that yesterday with with Mike Pompeo The day after he spoke at Deepak.

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With all the problems with this year see pack and click quitting a very problematically shape stage, the day after he spoke at CQ was fed yesterday for his accomplishments for fighting anti semitism by an organization, it's about supposed to be about

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fighting combating anti semitism, but they're very clear what he's being fitted for is moving the embassy and pushing the IRA definition of Semitism right, it's not actually fighting anti semitism it's it's fetish sizing love of the Jewish people in Israel.

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My dad was a great New York Times interview last week with you and I was struck by one particular comment you made on the question of whether evangelical Christians are motivated truly as they claimed by love and support for Israel your response was,

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when someone loves you just for being Jewish there will always be

someone who will hate you, just for being Jewish and regarding support you said it is not supportive, Israel, It's a part of a right wing agenda that many people here wouldn't agree with.

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Can you talk more about this, the question of what it means when evangelical Christians say they quote unquote love Jews and critical support Israel is of course.

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So, you know, I think when, when you come to this door to explore this a story. The first thing that you meet is actually people that constantly say to you that they love you.

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And after I've been hearing that, or time after time after time in my meetings with a Christian.

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I just started asking myself what does that actually mean, like, how you can love me, if you don't know me and you never met me before, and and then I started to ask the people that I was reading what you mean by that.

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And I have to say that the most honest answer I received from one young evangelicalism is done on Christians, United for Israel summit is said to him, I need to understand when they say to you, they love you.

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They actually mean that they love Jesus, and you just part of the story, and we cannot make it without you.

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So you kind of said to me, You shouldn't take it personally. You know, it's not like an extra love to you. And, and, and then he said that, and you just the key, and you know what you do with the key when the door is open.

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And this comment really, I think it explained many things to me, from what I was seeing and around myself when when we're filming.

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And for the, for the question of support, I think. And that's very much connected from what Lars said and in the service as well. And I think what happens with them, they they basically own today.

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The meaning of the support of Israel, right, they are now deciding what is what is considered to be support, but when we look at looking into their actions.

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It's very much a support of a very right wing approach to this place. And I think the best example that I think was of course in the event of co founders annual summit of oh five when they sell 5000 have a gel calls in the huge lobby event center the

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in to lobby against the Trump will cut the aid to the Palestinians and a month later, it actually happened. And I remember myself standing there and say to myself, but I know that the security community of Israel is really against that, because the security

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community of Israel understands what what it means to have a humanitarian crisis and our borders. So, here we are, Benjamin Netanyahu now just finish it to say to them to their our best friends and and they're pushing to this very specific agenda.

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When I know that it has nothing to do with the reality on the ground with the security reality on the ground. So I do think and that's important to remember these people has their own story.

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And and we're part of this story, and it doesn't mean that they always in really supporting us, they basically supporting their own agenda. And if it sometimes it goes together with with, you know what many people in Israel would consider as a support

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that many people would consider as a exactly the opposite. So, and I think, you know, when you look in also under what happens with the Jewish community in the United States and you know this much better than I think this, they basically starting to own

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the word support of Israel, and and i think it's it's extremely problematic. And basically it's actually exactly what happens here with the right wing the right wing today on the war that the love of Israel and be and and you know they almost own the

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flag and if you're on the left wing, your most of the time would be colored as a trader. So I think it's similar processes that happening. And and I think that the film also shows how dangerous it can be.

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Laura at one point in my as movie you say the Israeli settler movement in some ways is like the evangelical movement of the Jewish people you have to ideologically motivated crowds, pushing an agenda that is handed to them by God.

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Can you talk more about this alignment of ideologies and its impact on the ground.

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Yeah, this is, this is something I've thought about a lot when I was interested in the 90s covering the settlements and then sort of saw the flip side of it in the US.

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I mean, there is a remarkable symmetry between these two groups of people who both look at the same land and believe that they are on a mission, given to them by God.

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And it's a mission, because it's given to the My God where the ends justify the means including, you know, aligning yourself with whoever you need to align yourself with to achieve your goals, and it goes to, you know, this question of, you know, often

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you know it's asked, Well, you know, how can how can you know, Jews in the West Bank, because the settlers be comfortable aligning themselves with people who see them maybe at the end of their story, the evangelical stories, you know, dying in a pool

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of fire or something. And the answer, I think to some extent is it's just not relevant if you believe that God has told you this is what's going to happen, and this is your role in making it happen.

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You don't necessarily care whether some of its in contradiction of what the people you're standing with belief because frankly you see, you're treating for settlers in the West Bank, Christian evangelicals are useful idiots supportive of their mission.

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I suspect it's the same for Christian evangelicals looking at settlers on the West Bank, there's a certain cemetery there too. We are useful Easter Easter Seals the other as a useful tool in their own messianic view of how things work out.

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But, in both cases, I think it makes it a challenge for non messianic people whether you're Christian or Jewish to fully grasp the seriousness of the agendas that are being promoted here, you know, it goes to something that I said a lot during the Trump

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the Trump era which is you know take these people at their word, the minute the settlers in the 90s when they were faced with Oslo and I had these conversations with people on the ground, and they were unconvinced, they're utterly unconvinced that also

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is going to be a problem for them, you know, God will sort this out we're meant to do it, we're going to do and we're going to keep on, you know, pushing through, and they did and I think that failing to take them seriously in the 90s is part of the reason

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that also failed. and I think failing to take evangelical Christians, seriously, when they started to really push in on this issue politically in the US is one of the reasons why they've been so enormously successful at hijacking the issue.

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But there's, there's this great symmetry, I think when you look at these two groups on the ground which makes them ideal allies for each other and makes them incredibly difficult for non ideological non religiously ideological people to properly understand

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and properly respect on the seriousness of their endeavor.

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My following up on Laura's answer. Can you talk about how evangelicals view Palestinians and how they respond to Palestinian suffering, and how the evangelicals approaches towards Palestinians and mirror or differ.

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Those of settlers themselves there's a powerful scene in the film, when American evangelical Christian leader hears from a Palestinian Christian priest in Bethlehem about the plight of Palestinian Christians and walks away from the conferencing session

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saying there is no such thing as a Palestinian and accusing the priest of theological anti semitism basically for assert asserting the existence and legitimacy of Palestinian Christians.

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Well I think it's important to say that, Devon Jellicoe community. They're not monolith right so it's not like in the Catholic they have the Pope and you can consider what he says is this kind of thing that would, you know, most of the Catholics would

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agree with on it never Junko community is very diverse. So everything that I would say would be of course connected to those that I met. And I know that they're Christian evangelical that are yet that under understand the problem here on the ground with

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the, with the Palestinians there's an organization that called tell us that works with these people so everything that out, that would say now of course connected to the people that I met and yeah you know I do think that, and the scene that you mentioned

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were one of them, main characters of the film best to avoid goes to bless him and meets a Palestinian pastor, and it was an amazing scene to film as well, because basically understood that there's, you know, two brothers sitting, one next to each other,

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but there was a void between them and and understood that they just cannot agree with each other. And I think it's a, it's was a great example of politicization of the religion in a certain sense because Boyd, as he says about himself has been indoctrinated

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and he's actually using this word in the film, to have a certain political worldview. And he thinks that the Jews should leave it that that the land that God promised that Abraham belongs to the Jews, and of course it makes the Palestinians, basically

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relevant for them so I I just saw and you know it was almost heartbreaking because in a personal level I really liked fast avoid, and I think he's a good guy and I said that moment, you could see.

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And that was a huge power.

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This indoctrination that he went through is actually how much power it has. And, you know, yes I, for the people that I met most of them would they think that the Palestinians.

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Just not supposed to be there, I guess, and and they mostly looking at

the Jews, when they go and leave in what they will call you then scenario and the West Bank.

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And this is part of of the prophecy and what God promised to to the Jewish nation. And it really goes down to that you know and that's why any. I have this amazing at doing was pat robertson and a part of it that is not in the film but I'll tell you,

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Pat Robertson told me how he was in, together with Bibi Netanyahu during them.

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During the negotiation with Clinton and arafat's and and pat robertson tells me how he set with BB and told him, don't give them any land.

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When you need to you need to own it so it's really unbelievable story that an oven Jellicoe leader sits with the Prime Minister of Israel. During negotiation and says do you what do you think should happen here on the ground.

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And so, yeah, I hope I answered your question in that sense, but I just think that the thing is just, you know, that's the thing that Palestinians are not are not part of the story and I and I will keep going back to this, There's a story there, and there's

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a prophecy and everything goes by this plan, and the Jews has a role and Philistines just doesn't

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get us I was probably just note that, you know, while all evangelical Christians are not a monolith settlers are not a monolith either in terms of their motivations while they are all in violation of international law, that there are sellers who moved

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to the West Bank for economic reasons, rather than theological reasons.

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Laura, please go ahead.

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I just wear that. Like I said, I mean in the 90s I remember as far back as the early 90s this issue of the evangelical hardline evangelical groups coming to the West Bank and, you know, visiting

settlements and helping on insulin as part of their almost

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a mission, and the Christians on the ground Palestinian Christians just baffled and convinced that if they if Christian Americans just understood there were Christians in the West Bank and Jerusalem, that that their views would be at least more nuanced

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and and they were wrong.

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But what's also striking to me is that many of the same policymakers who are so strong on, you know, all the land is Israel, there are no crowd Palestinian Christians just ignore them are also the same ones who hold up the banner of Christians across

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the Arab world as a wonderful weapon, and in sort of an Islamophobia campaign, you know you defend Christians everywhere except the Christians who actually live in the Holy Land, because those Christians are inconvenient to your worldview and therefore

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have to be written off somehow it's it's it's really, it's tragic. Actually, I just wanted to throw that.

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Right, or if you acknowledge that they face any problems at all you blame it on Palestinian Muslims right because that's part of the whole framing it has to be, it can only be seen through the lens of Muslims being the problem.

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Sarah want to go to you. You've written about something called the prosperity gospel, and I want you to dig into it for us in my film is a scene where your LXD and visits the fundamentalist Baptist Church pastors by William and Boyd being an hour boy

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the younger, pastor drives her through his poverty stricken Appalachian town, yet you then willingly accept a \$25,000 check to the IFMJ. When it is evidence the community could use this money far more than her organization, which is also seen in the film

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giving a \$5 million, check to the American friends of the IDF later in the film Boyd in Israel tells the LDS Church has acquired a new tract of land evidence to him that his church was blessed for blessing Israel, what does this tell us about the influence

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influence of the prosperity gospel and Christian Zionism.

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So the prosperity gospel is a theology or an ideology within American evangelicalism and Pentecostalism, which says that God wants you to be rich. And that if you sow a seed, with your pastor with another ministry like the IFC Jay, God will give you a

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supernatural return on your investment, meaning that like you will be blessed in return. Now, typically, um, you know, independent fundamentalist Baptist churches like the big church are not full bore embraces of the prosperity gospel, but for example

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the prosperity gospel is very prominent within Christian Zionism because the most prominent figure in Christian Zionism in the United States or the world is John AG, who is a purveyor of the prosperity gospel and has profited from it immensely.

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And so it seemed.

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Nonetheless, the prosperity gospel it's not pinned necessarily to a particular denomination but it's been very influential in cross pollinating with a lot of American evangelical churches and so its influences felt throughout evangelicalism, even if people

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might adhere to it to varying degrees of intensity, but it struck me in these conversations that Maya showed in her film that there's been sort of some mushing together of the Genesis 12 three.

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If you know that God will bless those who bless Israel and curse those who curse Israel, which, in my experience in Christian in covering Christian Zionism has been portrayed to followers as more like, you know, God will curse America if America doesn't

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stand behind Israel and so that's why we have to be very mindful of standing with Israel.

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Um, but I felt like he had sort of missed those two things together, and in encouraging his, his young congregants to save their pennies.

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You know, and put in those bins that Maya shows in the film and then he that produces this \$25,000 check which was like really I popping given, given the community.

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And then, that he portrays it to.

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Well, as you know, we were we were blessed because you know, we got that tract of land because of, you know, so it's like a kind of a supernatural occurrence, because giving her the money doesn't like financially give you the tract of land but he made

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it seem like it was a supernatural thing, and she used the phrase she said you sewed a good seed, like she knows the lingo. She knows the prosperity gospel lingo, obviously, because I think she's probably been to a lot of churches where, where it's preached.

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So that was really striking to me and it actually made me go look at the IFC Jays tax return, because one of the hallmarks of the prosperity gospel is that the leaders profit from it, they tell the followers that they are the ones who are going to give

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a supernatural return on their investment for sowing the seed, but it's actually the leaders who end up with the fancy mansions and the private jets and the luxury cars.

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And in the last year that Rabbi Eckstein Yale's father was alive he had like an \$800,000 compensation package from if CJ and she had about a half million dollar compensation package so I found that pretty striking because those are big salaries for a

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nonprofit.

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Absolutely right and that that's okay because it's, it's connected to what to what Sarah said and and about the prosperity question so I can tell it it was actually the first filming date that we found for this film was in Mar a Lago.

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It was an annual.

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The annual gala of the, of the IFC J. And you saw on screen so you know in the crowd there were very well for Jews and very well for Christians. And you could see testimony after testimony on the screens of people that said, I had a small shop and I don't

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know, a, I want and now I have 20 shops around United States after I started to donate to it to the fellowship of Christians and Jews, so they're really link it and and and i think that also because it was of course on screen, it was the, you know, it

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was the promotion films of the IFCJ and I think the fellowship, understand that so it's it's both sides, understanding this this game almost, and it was, it was fascinating to see and yes, I can tell you from being with the behemoth, and what Sarah, it

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talks about this can be an interesting combination they they do, they, they, I can tell you that, of course, it's the, everything is edited but, like, when he says, God will bless those blessings right and curse those who curse Israel, and I want to be

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on the blessing side.

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So it's all very much connected and, and actually it was fascinating for me to listen how Sarah season, and understand the feminine and you definitely sir know the complexity of the conversation that happens there thank you for that.

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I just want to say also that something that's very common in prosperity gospel churches is for the followers to be told to so their best seed, you know, y'all made reference that but also to give their first fruits.

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So, you know, I've interviewed people who left John Hades church. And they told me that there was a lot of pressure to give what they call their your first fruits, which means that you the first money that comes into you before you pay your rent before

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you make your car payment to sow your seed with the church that sort of considered sort of like your best money.

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And I had that kind of queasy feeling watching those kids put their

coins in the bins and your film, because I just felt like oh my god these kids you know he talked about how you know the opioid epidemic has hit this town really hard and I just, it kind

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their supernatural return on their investment and if they don't. What if you don't, what if you don't have a multiplication of those stores that you had an Iowa, it means that you don't have enough faith.

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So it's a very harsh harsh ideology and it's, it's very that it's gotten wound up with this, you know, Israel, Palestine politics is extremely distressing.

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Yeah, I'm sorry, I'm sorry.

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I just want. It's important because, you know, I've been there and again it's important to say that this church. So basically the money is collected from all the people in the church and there's ties in the church.

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And yes, and I have to say that this community also helps do that to the, to the poor people in the community, but it's true they send part of the money is sent to the fellowship and and, of course, there's an Israeli there, there's a big question just

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just a more question on looking at that, even those you know even, of course not all the 25 k are made of this chair of the change of the of this kids, but the the idea that in such a poor place where the poverty rate of kids is 50% it's crazy numbers

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and sounds like the money that they haven't been a small part of it, to hear i think it's it's um it's a huge moral question to ask here in Israel. And, and I can tell you that when the film has been released here in Israel.

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That was something that really struck a huge debate on Should we take the money, or should we not and I can tell you that pastor Boyd told me that he started to receive phone calls from Israel that people say to you Thank you for sending the money goes

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and, yeah, it goes further and further.

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It's probably also just worth noting you know that this this card this language of first fruit itself right comes comes from the notion of, you know, when Jews had a temple of bringing a whole series of different sacrifices for different purposes and

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so it's a way in which Christians are taking a language that is originally a kind of language that comes out of the Hebrew Bible and rabbinic texts and and and and adapting it for their own for their own purposes.

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And given that the first fruits were things that were given in Jerusalem themselves right that it's another way of reconnecting of that connection to to the Holy Land since this is this was a kind of a reenactment of a process that actually was kind of

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religious ritual taking place in the land of Israel itself.

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I want to go back to you. Maya.

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In the interview you commented that with respect to the relationship between settlers and evangelical Christians, quote, The amazing thing in this relationship is each side thinks the other one is stupid each side is trying to trick the other.

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Can you talk to us about what you mean by this and how it plays out in practice in this relationship.

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Yeah you know from all the interview, I have to say that this specific word stupid maybe I would if I could, could have a chance to sort of phrase it I probably would.

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I don't think that they think, stupid probably not the best word but what I meant in that is that, I think, each side under, under thinks that the other side is, is deeply mistaken right, it's important to remember it's a conversation between people faith,

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so it's not like you know myself I'm a secular person I'm talking with them and say well okay this prophecy true it's not true. I'm not into this game.

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It's so these two sides of people of faith, and they still can look into each other eyes, understanding that like from their perspective is deeply mistaken and there's this wonderful scene that I really love in December, Sondra bars.

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She's a settler woman. She hosts a group of women of Christian have Angelica was at her home and she holds the Bible. And she says, Well, this is my, this is my Bible, and you have a little addition here, and you send it isn't really a little addition

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it's like it's Jesus it's not.

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It's actually pretty big and and and in that so to say that and really think that the other side is deeply mistaken, and still decided to close their eyes and say, well, we have something to achieve right here and right now.

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So, for the settlers This is the biggest group that supports them out of Israel, and for the Christian evangelical, this is the fulfillment of prophecy, you know, everything that happens here on the ground is basically takes us one step forward towards

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the return of Jesus Christ and, and they want to be in. In this game, and then another thing again they want to be part of this process, and and and so so i think it's it's it's.

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I guess hypocrisy. That's the, what amaze you the most when you see these two groups, sitting in one room look into each other eyes.

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And, you know, and still just ignoring this huge elephant in the room. And that's the that that's what I meant by this by this call right now just jump in and add this, I feel like there is a theological asymmetry in that relationship because on the Christian

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side, they believe that they will eventually be able to convert these Jews, right, they believe that eventually Jews will see the light and accept Jesus as the Messiah.

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There's no analogous belief on the Jewish side. Right. And so I think it gives the theological relationship this asymmetry asymmetrical

component, whereby you know the Christians are believing that they're eventually going to bring the Jews into their

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side but there's not, it's not in the reverse.

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Yeah.

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No, I'm sorry I'm just sorry I told him right it's a symmetric relationship, also on the numbers level we need to remember, Jews are, I know like how much it will go to that high numbers I'm 20 million.

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And if we go the right number of the evangelicals Emma Jackson, 800 million.

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conservative caucus in the in the in the healing.

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It was so it was really surreal situation where there were, like, 300, mostly white men that opened their event for the prey, then celebrated the band of that transgenders from the American army and then you'll see the guy that had have submitted a region

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sends up with the Bible and his head and says, We are friends.

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And we're working together.

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And it's just, and when you looking at that from the side to say, this is not friendship and they're not working together. He's so small and they're so big.

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And, and the Jews are not on the, on the winning side for this, that's for sure. Right, I want to go to our just wanted to add but I also do think it's a while recognizing that assembly is also important.

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Remember that people who see this relationship through Jewish techs are also likely to be inclined to believe that the great powers, come and go right that, you know, Greece, Rome Babylon Persia, and dome, right, they come and go, the Jews indoor right

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and and and the God that God uses right just like God, you know, the King Cyrus from Persia Brett allowed me to go back to that God uses.

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Great Powers in various ways to to to fulfill things for Jews so I think that that's I think also part of the story on the Jewish side, Laura. Go ahead.

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Yeah, no, i mean i actually I agree with everything. You all are saying, I would say, you know, maybe I take a slightly more sort of cynical view on this, I mean I sort of look in terms of impact, it's very clear that the Israeli right wing, not just

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the settlers but the settlers in particular have seized on evangelicals as a useful source of support.

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And that's great. They need that because you know, the American, the Jewish American community cannot be relied on to support greater Israel and violations of human rights and expansionism and annexation or whatever we ask questions we challenge, I mean

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we're it's it's a problem for years they have seized on the evangelicals as a really excellent opportunity to get support for what they want. And that means closing their eyes to anything else so it isn't seeing the hypocrisy of aligning themselves with

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groups that are homophobic, or Zena phobic or misogynist or, you know, which may be finally I think that a lot of that is present in in the hardline settler groups as well you see a growing illiberalism that goes beyond just the Palestinian issue.

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But on the other side the evangelicals I mean, the Jewish community on the ground and today in summary is an instrument of God's will, right it doesn't mean if they can convert them that's fine but it doesn't really matter and this goes back I think this

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whole idea of sort of follow Semitism this is, you know, Jews here aren't instrument there they are, they are players in a play, which is not they're not the main characters right.

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And that seems to suit both sides, just fine. I will say as a Jewish American who's worked on Israel related issues for years where every

single person that I talked to is, is scrutinized by the right to see if I have crossed some line by talking to someone

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who's to pro Palestinian or, you know, potentially has said something once in their life that could be interpreted as anti semitic to prove that I have no credibility, it seems that there is no litmus test well you can be in bed.

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If you're on the Israeli or Jewish right you can be in bed with anyone. If they are pro Israel.

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But if you're critical of Israel, you don't you don't have that space.

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So I wanted to go to you. We had a question about the end times theology and and and what I wanted to ask you was.

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If how you think about disentangling that theological if it's possible that theological motivation from other potential motivations is that strikes me that that people who have a right wing commitment in the United States who are not evangelical Christians

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whether they're Catholics or even more secular still tend to be quite strong supporters of Israel.

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Whether because you know during the Cold War, there was a whole geopolitical rationales we've talked about, there's a kind of Clash of Civilizations anti kind of Muslim, kind of, you know, we're in the war on terror together kind of rationale which has

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had some potency.

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Since 911 in particular, so I wonder if you can just talk about, if it's possible to disentangle the theological from political motivations and and and how they may intertwined with one another.

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Well, it's hard to disentangle the theological from the political but I think a lot of people tend to reduce this theological commits this theological political commitment to.

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Well, the evangelicals can't wait for Armageddon, and for all the Jews to perish in the lake of brimstone and for Jesus to vanquish the Antichrist, and they can't wait for that to happen.

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And that's the, that's all they care about. And I don't think that that's actually true for a lot of them like that they think that's going to happen, right, but they also don't think that they can do anything to make it happen and I'll get to those people

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who thinks that they can in a second, but a lot of it so a lot of them don't necessarily think that anything that they do will speed that up. They believe it's on God's timing, but they do believe that it's their duty to support the settlements because

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their theology tells them that God gave that land to Israel, including what they call today and tomorrow.

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They do believe that they have to try to convert Jews, you know now, because they do believe that when the End Times come the non Converted Jews are going to be forced to convert any way or they're going to perish.

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So, it's but it's complicated like not everybody sort of sees it the same way like some people's it will say to you, it's all prophesied in the Bible and it's going to happen.

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I don't know when it's all God's timing. But in the meantime, it's my obligation to support Israel it's my obligation to preach the gospel to the Jews to bring the good news to the Jews to bring them salvation.

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So it's not necessarily that they're, you know, hungering for some kind of war, right, some, but some tend to be like more Pro, you know, they were very pro, the Iraq war.

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They're Pro, you know, possibly going to war with Iran and backing out of the Iran deal and all of that. But you know, just like people on the ground, like, the notion that they're salivating for Armageddon it's not actually quite quite right like I think

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a lot of for a lot of them they do believe it's God's timing. Now

there is a chunk of of evangelicals who are whether called post millennials so like, unlike pastor Boyd who has the whole scenario, played out he's a pre millennial post millennials believe

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that they have to.

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They have to prepare God's kingdom on earth. Before Jesus will come back, so they have to get it ready and then he'll come back, and they're, you know, kind of a growing, growing group here and they also

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claim to be pro Israel.

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And because obviously that's where Jesus is going to come back but their, their language tends to be much more sort of openly anti semitic like saying things like, you know, Jews have a spiritual blindness and that's why we have to bring them to Jesus

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and so on.

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So, the theology is, you know, more mixed or diverse than it might appear at first blush I mean obviously like the left behind series and you know how Lindsey's late great planet earth which was really popular in the 70s, you know, gave gave it sort of

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like this pop culture haft.

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But I think it's impossible to disentangle the politics and the theology, but the theology.

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Different people take it in different ways, but I think the politics is a lot more uniform.

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And the theology is why we have a question, which mentions Boston arrow, and I think you know one of the things that perhaps some Americans were not as aware of at least non event conservative evangelical Christians, you know as a bit of a wake up call

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seeing the election of your bowl scenario in Brazil was to realize the power of this kind of politics outside the United States and

particularly in Latin America with evangelical and Pentecostal kind of right wing politics and I'm just interested if if

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you, if in the course of making the film. You got any sense of how significant if conservative evangelical Pentecostal support is for Israel from outside the United States.

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Yes, definitely. And I just want to add on something on what Sarah said and then that will answer your question, I think another important aspect of that is that is recognizing signs and everything here that happens is a sign, and as John Hagee he says

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in the film.

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When you every missile. Right. God is watching every missile. And when you see these signs. Lift up your hands and rejoice for your attention draws nigh.

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So, and I think that when we thinking what is the problem right when these deeply religious people are involved in in in our political processes is exactly that, that maybe not and I agree with sorry it's not that everyday waking up in the morning and

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saying, oh, today that will happen. It's not that and most of them also don't think that they can push to that. But this when they see all the things that's happening here is science, it means that via an end the tribulation right all the violence happens

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That's me. That makes me as an Israeli.

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That scares me to be

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the level, but also that they see. They also, some of those signs are some of that violence is part of the Genesis 12 three thinking right that like America has to strike around to protect Israel.

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protecting Israel. So that's kind of the thinking on Iran issues, you know, coming from the quarters of John Hagee. So, yes, like maybe his followers aren't like thinking Armageddon is going to happen tomorrow, but they are thinking that may be you know

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bombing around might happen tomorrow and it would be a good thing and that's obviously very dangerous for the world.

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Exactly. Totally, yeah.

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Yeah, it's last thing and I think about the Armageddon it's actually about what happens here and now and translating your political events, into the prophecy, and putting them together.

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And so, yeah, for your question about the worldwide movement I think it's actually a fascinating aspect of this relation. That is not in the film but yes I had that I definitely explore that.

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And I think today what happens also in the influence of the Christian of Angelica is basically the fastest growing denomination in Christianity. So Brazil, that was a Catholic country today in the Christian of Angelica has a huge power there of course

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what happens in Africa, and also in Eastern Europe, we see these places where the Christian evangelical plays a much bigger role today. And I think what's interesting, it's, it's an interesting deal if you would go and look on the way that some countries

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vote in the UN, you will see some certain color correlation between where you have countries with the bigger than Jellicoe community and how they vote, let's say, at the UN and I actually interviewed and had quite a few meetings with him, that I didn't

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their name but it's an organization that basically works. Establish Israeli caucuses in, in all across the world through our caucus. Yeah, exactly. and in countries where there's sometimes zero Jews.

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And look, the head of this organization explained to me and it was just really eye opening it says to me, Maya. What is the secret sauce, what do we do, we establish this Israeli caucuses in a countries in Parliament's where there is a big Ivan Jellicoe

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community. And that we make the question of the Christian of Israel. Now the for the first question, but internal a first question of this

country and then he gave me just an example of, Philippines, when there's probably zero Jews living there.

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But there's a huge, huge of Angelika community. And then he just explained it to me. He said, we know that if we push a certain policy through them. Then, you know, if they just did they just succeed to influence from within.

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And he also told me for example that in Africa today on the ground, it says to me, of Angelika pastors are basically will not work in of course not not for not for not for payment but they, they, acting as an Israeli ambassadors on the ground, and when

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Bibi Netanyahu had this in a few years ago he suddenly had quite a few visits in Africa, one after another. The Christian of the jungle community on the ground was extremely involved in it so yes the film really goes into looks into this relationship,

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only on the on the American guy angle but it's a much bigger story and I think this organization that they mentioned before, on the course of when I worked on the film.

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They opened like another 20 caucuses are in different countries. And, and, and, yeah they, they know what they do.

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You know I wanna, I want to ask you about the, the way that the kind of establishment American Jewish organizations have handled the rise of the of Christian evangelicals in in American politics on the Israel issue, you know you have some organizations

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that may have a somewhat similar view on Israel but about are at odds with these groups on some domestic policies let's say the anti defamation league on kind of church state issues.

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My sense with a pack is that a pack. On the one hand, very much welcomes this alliance and on the other hand, has perhaps been burned a little bit by for instance, the bad press they got that when John Hague he came to speak there.

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I was told by one person told me at one point that that a pack does not solicit donations from Christian evangelicals that they, although

there are a lot of Christian developers who go to the API calls the conference they actually they they they direct

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them to give to give money to Koofi and I'm just wondering what your sense is of the relationship between the kind of establishment pro Israel organizations and the evangelical right wing pro Israel organizations.

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It's a great question. I think the rising at this point it's it's risen, power, and influence of evangelical organizations, when it comes to Israel policy has been something of a challenge for the mainstream major Jewish organizations, because on the

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one hand yes this is more power, more weight behind an agenda on Israel, which essentially is an agenda, Israel right or wrong and stand with whatever these are the government's doing and don't criticize settlements and and and that that's pretty much

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across the board for the mainstream Jewish organizations, you know that those little legacy positions that have existed, through the present day. By the same token, it was, you know, it was interesting watching, particularly during the Tea Party error

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and into the Trump administration as groups like AIPAC and the American Jewish Committee, were consistently outflanked on the right to play evangelicals.

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You know, one could almost feel a little bit sorry for them they've walked themselves into this corner where you can never go too far right on Israel, Palestine, and then suddenly they're finding themselves out flanked by organizations taking positions

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that are really antithetical to the views of almost of the vast majority of Jewish Americans, and our views that maybe you know AIPAC is has been a great pains for its entire existence to not have to come out openly and supportive settlements, even if

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it does everything de facto to defend and settlements and prevent criticism or or consequences for them. It's It's been almost an awkward kind of, you know, you take off the masks and join us in a true pro Israel position or risk being framed as, as,

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people. So even for the progressives or the progressive American Jewish Americans who are progressive early but it's rather short but APAC, they are still progressive and everything else right.

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So the idea that they're finding themselves now in bed with groups that I said are you know openly homophobic, transphobic misogynist Zena phobic Islamophobia can pick your list of phobics or you know and you know things.

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Anyway, it is it is certainly a.

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I think it's a challenge whether or not they have paid a price I disagree that they've paid a price, I think, frankly, that, you know, there's the ability of APAC and American Jewish Committee or even groups like the ADL to stand shoulder to shoulder

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with the groups because we're all really pro Israel and find ways to not really deal with the fact that they are giving a kosher stamp to illiberalism, you know, Maya was talking about it today, Israel provides Israel acts as a legitimate miser as a validator

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for illiberal regimes around the world, standing with them, you know, standing with Israel at the UN is a sign that you are a friend of the US and Israel, even if your regime is against

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theory stands for and democracy and values and all that, you know, Philippines is a great example. Brazil is a great example, it's enormously awkward that that's the role that is realistic and today.

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And that's not something that the legacy American Jewish community organizations have dealt with. They've ducked it, and I don't think they've paid a price I think by and large the Jewish American community has preferred to not deal with us, and not the

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Trump era is over I think maybe the hope is we just don't have to deal with us. But I think that that's going to be more and more challenging. Again, as I said that one of the very first thing that happened to the new Congress was this Jerusalem amendment

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so that now the far right, you know, evangelical Christian Zionists

can say See we forced the democrats to stand with Jerusalem.

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On Friday we had another amendment offered around BDS which is effectively an amendment by Republicans seeking to condition coven emergency aid. So that's not available to organizations that support BDS, which is just, you know, essentially like saying

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you have to give up your free speech in order to qualify for emergency aid, it's extraordinary. And that's not vaccinate the way BDS right. Yeah, but I mean that's now being used in sort of an immediate effort to say see the democrats didn't support this

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amendment therefore they're not sufficiently pros are there for their anti Israel therefore they're anti semitic, right, this is, this is something that I don't think the Jewish community organizations have been willing to deal with and because will be

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willing to deal with. If you're going to be consistent you're going to have to be deal with some really being a declared friend of Israel doesn't actually actually make you good for Israel or work for the Jews, right, and and that's problematic when,

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you know, lining up, friends of Israel, which in this case is friends of greater Israel has been the number one agenda item for much of the Jewish community leadership for decades.

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Sarah I want we've got a lot of good questions in the in the q amp a and one of them has to do with how Muslims and Islam fit into evangelical Christian thinking, and I'm just wondering I mean we've talked about this in the visibility of Palestinians

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but we've also. We've also been in the United States particularly since September 11 in a, in an often highly Islamophobia kind of environment, but had the we, you know, how is it that the Christian evangelicals in your experience, make sense theologically

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of Muslims and of Islam in their, in their worldview, their worldview, Muslims do not worship the same God that Jews and Christians worship.

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So from a theological standpoint.

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That's a very common belief, it's also a very common belief that Islam is an inherently violent religion.

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And it's also a very common belief that Islam isn't even really a religion. It's a political ideology and therefore is not entitled to any protection under the First Amendment Free Exercise Clause.

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So all of that is very common thinking among white evangelicals, and there's pulling data that I don't have at my fingertips.

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But, that kind of Islamophobia thinking is more prevalent among white evangelicals than it is among other religious groups.

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And my on another kind of theological question a little bit which is from from the q amp a which is how in your experience, do the conservative evangelical Christians that you are engaging with.

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Think about if they think about it all the Holocaust obviously the Holocaust is a central key factor in many ways for the, I did not for the identity of many Jews, but also has occasion to enormous amount of theological questioning for many many Jews

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and and and and people who do Jewish theology. And I'm wondering for a group of people who both think in terms of Jews as precious in God's eyes, and yet also think about the idea of a cataclysm, in which Jews potentially pay some kind of price for some

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kind of Messianic.

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I wonder how they then grapple with, with a singular phenomenon as the as the Holocaust.

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You know, I think it's, you know, I think the best person to start with this is John Hey you would keep going back to him.

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But in that sense i think it's it's it's really amazing that the the process, let's say that this person is making on the way that he talks about the Holocaust.

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So, one of the most controversial videos that exists, of John Hagee he is a theme one of during one of his ceremonies, is basically says that Hitler was a hunter and connects it to him to this faith at first.

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And God said, sent it hurt so try to send the Jews to the Holy Land and once they didn't haven't the greedy Santa Hitler. So basically what he says is that that Hitler was part of God's plan, and which something that is really consider this something

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extremely anti semitic to say that, saying also medium very controversial, and of course today that's something that's, you know, it does is, Benjamin Netanyahu still it says thing that pastor Hagee is the best friend that Israeli has in the world I didn't

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know how we can.

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How it can exist to one next to each other, but the same job that pastor Hagen, just a few months ago, releases a film about the Holocaust.

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And with enormous budgets and, of course, unlimited budgets and unlimited ways to distribute it and in among his deliveries. And, you know, and suddenly you see how these people start to explain the Holocaust and and and basically start to go into the

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narrative of telling the Holocaust and, and this is something that I think you know this is when they. Yeah, like, I think I don't have the words to say, oh, how it makes me angry because what do you see this very strange combination that basically these

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people today are also the one that will explain for millions of millions of people across United States about the Holocaust and the meaning of that. And so that's for John Hagen you know I do think it's fair to consider him to look at him, as, as Sarah

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said one of the biggest leaders that this movement that this movement has.

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Just as a window into the radical trajectory of the Republican Party. Remember that in 2008, after that video of, he came to light and also

video of him saying anti Catholic things came to light john mccain,
who was running for president rejected or repudiated

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he's endorsement. Right. He's also anti Catholic too right wasn't that
part of the yeah that was part of it right.

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Um, and so that was, you know, not that long ago 2008, and now he is
not just you know, was not just welcomed at the Trump White House, but
just like Welcome to the republican party in general.

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I would also add that the use and misuse of the Holocaust I mean for
the reasons that you know the prophecy reasons that Maya lays out
there, you know that those sort of profit prophetic misuse of the
Holocaust.

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It goes beyond that, I think, in.

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In, Republican circles.

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It's often they often you compare abortion to the Holocaust.

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They often will lament the Holocaust, as a time when people's
religious freedom was in danger. And that is why we have to be wary of
the left because the left shows so many similarities with Hitler, and
with not done right right gun rights is another

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way in which is great. Right, exactly. And so, um, you know, so
there's there's multitude of ways in which the Holocaust is
misrepresented and misused in in conservative circles and particularly
in these religious circles.

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Right, right. And it's worth, I think it's probably worth noting that
unfortunately it's not only Christian evangelicals who have a time
said that that the Holocaust was some kind of divine punch but there
have been rabbis who've, you know, said said,

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similarly odious things might know that in Trump's in Trump's GOP
Holocaust denial is also the rice. Right, right, right. Lovely.

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Laura I wanted to go to you and and and maybe then bring also my answer into this, we know we have a lot of questions in the q amp a about whether there is any evidence that progressive Christians obviously there are lots of progressive Christians United

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States but whether there are people who, who are in who come, who are connected to this conservative white evangelical tradition, but themselves have progressive views when it comes to Israel, Palestine, you mentioned Telos sojourners there are other,

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there are other groups that are trying to do this work, whether you see any evidence that they are having an effect in changing the conversation among among white evangelicals or what might or what that might take for that shift to to take place.

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So, I am not the person to ask that question because I'm not in the conversations within the evangelical community I will say as an observer.

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There is no evidence that I can see that, that it is having an effect on what is the dominant narrative that was dominant in the Trump administration and was dominating in the GOP right now.

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I don't see any changes I see that continuing to escalate in a more and more. What I think it was really radical direction when it comes to Israel, and follow Semitism and all of that.

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That doesn't mean that there are not changes happening at the generational level I remember talking to a, an evangelical leader, this is over a decade ago, who started it was around the time Peter of your famous article about the change in generational

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views amongst Jewish youth and and this evangelical leader was basically saying the exact same thing was happening amongst evangelical youth and they were losing the next generation the next generation was much more tolerance when it came to the homosexuality

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and women's rights or whatever, and that if they didn't shift that they were going to lose that generation, and that may still be a phenomenon that may be true.

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But, in some ways, not unlike that what's happened with, with the generational shifts in amongst Jewish Americans. It really has yet to trickle up into the actual policies of organizations, and the leadership that's responsible, whether it's because the

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organizations, bring legions of voters or because they have enormous weight in terms of funding elections or whatever those reasons are.

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We don't see that, and I don't want to say that there's there's no impact. What is striking to me when I look at this sort of grassroots impact of the more progressive Christian voices the United States.

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I see it as part of a general progressive Advocacy Network I don't see it as specifically Christian advocacy aimed at changing the views of the evangelical community or other Christians as part of a general, we talked a lot about intersection ality now

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if you look at sort of the pushback for example, against efforts to cost free speech critical of Israel, which started under the Obama era, move through during the Trump era, you know, the big grassroots pushback on that which is which eventually push

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Trump to move. This was then the anti semitism word is active move up by executive order that pushback was an absolute grassroots, you know, authentic.

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It wasn't something that was funded by some single outside party and moving it, and it involves many Christian progressive organizations and groupings, right, because that aligned with their values, and then they became one of this multiplicity of voices

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out there in the grassroots, but they acted as part of a progressive Nazi grassroots working in that environment, not, not specifically aimed at Christian views.

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So I want to ask a version of that question to you but I want to specifically focus on, on race. So, and one of the things that obviously people talked about a lot in the Trump era is, though, is whether the whole category of evangelical, you know, is

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in some ways, you know, using a religious Do not you know just number

when you're when you're talking about white evangelicals for folks who, in some ways, maybe motivated as much or more by racial identity than by religious identity and, and I wanted

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to talk a little bit about about the way race impacts the way conservative white evangelicals see Israel, Palestine and also maybe talk a little bit about you mentioned that among there you know there are plenty of black evangelicals in United States

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who don't have, in general, as, as kind of anti Palestinian view and if you could talk a little bit about that, that tradition and how it differs.

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Well that's a huge question.

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Um, so, white evangelicals are religious and political category and they're very motivated and have been motivated.

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Since their entry into the national political electoral stage in the late 1970s and early 1980s by racial grievance I mean they were motivated a lot by school desegregation, they were motivated a lot by the idea that the government may be implementing

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liberal policies what they saw as liberal anti christian policies in desegregating public schools and desegregating private schools and change it helping to change curricula in the public schools so you see a lot of the grievances that Trumps Stoke sharing

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his campaigns and presidency, about our heritage, our communities about education and his attempt to do the 1776 Commission and all of that. That's all.

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Tapping into the racial anxieties of his white evangelical base.

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Yes, there are a lot of black evangelicals. But, but, black voters in general are obviously like the data tells us they're very they vote democratic, but I've met a lot of black evangelicals at Christian Zionists events.

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So the, the Christian Zionist ideology is, is, is has some traction in

that community.

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But there are black Christians who see find themselves in solidarity with or see see analogies with the Palestinian experience in the West Bank, with the black experience in America, so they can they find empathy there.

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So, but kind of drawing those two questions together with the one that you just asked Laura. I think that for these more liberal Christian traditions on Israel, whether it's coming from black Christians who who see that solidarity with the Palestinian

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struggle, or from white evangelicals who take issue with the Christian Scientist ideology.

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They do not have the cohesive political ideological formation that evangelical white evangelical churches and political organizations have creating this what pastor Boyd openly called indoctrination, and they don't have the money and I think there's also

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the, for lack of a better word entertainment factor, I do think that like, it's not as exciting to hear a story of how we want peace, as opposed to, you have this crucial role to play in these life world world's defining events that were foreseen by profits

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in the Bible, and our take carrying out God's will. I think all of those things combined to create this hold within white evangelicalism that's hard to break even when you have fellow evangelicals trying to break it.

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Right.

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My we're just about at the end of time and I wanted to give you the opportunity to just talk a little bit about how you see this relationship evolving in the future.

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This, the relation of the documents so well in your film.

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And, you know, I think I've been asked recently a lot if the, if I think that the film is still relevant after Trump is not a president

anymore but I'm just reminding to everyone that the 2000 year book is probably here to stay and United States will

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have another elections in two years and then another election in two years, but I'm trying to say that these powers are not disappearing, and you know it isn't that separate seller side they love to say it's a Jewish saying and you will help me to translated

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it to English, and that's a llama for head me that is the eternal nation is not afraid of a long journey.

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And forgive me for my bad day.

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I think there's some, you know, yeah this people, I really believe that these powers are here to stay and it's a question, you know, and my god basically with this film you know when it came to the story, I was amazed that no one here is actually it's

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not in the conversation you know no one asks here, is it good for the Jews is best for the Jews like like what what happens with these relationships, and I think it's, and of course with Benjamin Netanyahu it's a done deal.

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It's pretty clear that he's here to, and he's embracing these relationships but for the next leaders of Israel, how they going to treat this relationship and in many levels pester Hague he has he's like he's considered to be the leader because he's also

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accepted by Benjamin and yeah right it kind of feeding each other and Benjamin Netanyahu gave almost legitimacy to pester Haiti to, to be such a big to have such a bigger place in this conversation.

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So I do think these followers here to stay and the question is, what is our secular politics and politics and we used to look at it as a secular politics but it's actually not.

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And what is the space that we give to them. And here, I can tell you that in the red for example that Christian of Angelica will support is a bipartisan issue right it's accepted by both by the left wing by the right, which is just unbelievable because

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they're using this word of support and no one here would say no, for the support of Israel, that would immediately put him on a you know on being a trader.

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And so, yeah, I think it's here to stand the question How will will, what is the space that we will give them and how much power will give them to influence the reality on the ground.

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That's great. My we're, we're out of time. I think the mark of a good zoom event I've noticed is not just how many people are there at the beginning but how many people are there at the end.

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And the fact that we still have over 200 people here after an hour and a half, I think is a testament to how rich a discussion. All of you have provided for us on behalf of FMEP, I want to thank my Sarah and Laura for participating in today's webinar