

**Paul Merkley: A CHRISTIAN ZIONIST PERSPECTIVE ON THE  
NEW “NATION-STATE” LEGISLATION.**

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**Blog, September 10, 2018**

**<https://www.isranet.org/blog/paul-merkley-a-christian-zionist-perspective-on-the-new-nation-state-legislation/>**

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**On July 19, the Knesset of Israel engrossed as part of “the Basic Law” of Israel language defining Israel as a “nation-state.”**

**From Israel’s beginnings, friends of the State have been twisting themselves into semantic knots trying to explain to the world how Israel can be, now and forever, (in the words of Israel’s Declaration of Independence of 1948) “both a Jewish and a democratic state.”**

**The founders of Israel never intended that demographic realities in the surrounding world should ever rob Israel of its “Jewish” character. But none of them foresaw the present world in which millions of Muslim people are fleeing every day from the incompetence of Muslim governance and demanding admission without question to the non-Muslim world - which contains post-Christian Europe, America and (closest to home) Israel.**

**The new “constitutional” language establishes Israel as “the national home of the Jewish people” for the first time, and says further that “the right to exercise national self-determination in the State of Israel is unique to the Jewish people.” It has sparked widespread criticism at home and abroad. Leaders of the Druze community of Israel are throwing a tizzy-fit over this new law, using epithets such as “evil and racist” – some crossing a dangerous polemical line with talk about Israel turning into an “apartheid state.” The Druze leaders are perfectly aware that this new language, no less than the existing set of legal arrangements, makes them secure as no non-Arab community is secure anywhere in the Middle East. Secure, and prosperous! But they have a well-worn and calculating habit of screaming “unfair” at every turn of Israel’s public life, so that their Arab neighbours should not turn on them as enemies of mankind.**

**This new constitutional language conforms even better than the language of 1948 with Christian Zionist understanding of life’s realities –namely, that hashem, the God of Israel, is the Lord of History. Implicitly, it clarifies both the political and the theological significance of the Twentieth Century Restoration of the Jews to the Land of Israel.**

**Sadly, there has never been room in the official publications of the historic churches in the West for affirmation of Israel along the lines described by this new declaration. In fact, since the 1970s, Christian Zionism has been explicitly defined as a “heresy” by the World Council of Churches - a body which otherwise has shown no interest in discussion of heresy or, for that matter, orthodoxy, or any**

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**other matters of theology. The WCC has its eyes on the target of commanding world opinion - not on theology.**

**In light of this reality, it has fallen to voluntary, para-church bodies like International Christian Embassy Jerusalem to give voice to the pro-Israel disposition of the vast majority of Christians in our part of the world.**

***(Paul Merkley is a retired Professor of History***

***from Carleton University and a CIJR Academic Fellow)***