

Christian Zionism and Its Influence on Trump's Israel Policy*

Yasin Mandaci**

Abstract

Following Donald Trump's inauguration in 2016, Evangelicals were widely perceived to have reached the peak of their influence, significantly impacting the U.S. foreign policy-making process regarding Israel. Many studies have attributed the increased U.S. support for Israel to the beliefs and influence of this religious group. However, this study contends that while Evangelicals represent a large and influential demographic, a more specific sub-group – Christian Zionists – can be more accurately identified as a pressure group.

The central argument of this study is that although Christian Zionists had a strong relationship with the first Trump administration, they did not wield enough power to unilaterally shape Israel policy. In this context, the research examines the religious evolution from Evangelicalism to Christian Zionism, seeks to clarify conceptual confusion through an analytical approach, and emphasizes the significance of the position and ideas of Christian Zionist groups during the Trump era.

Keywords: Christian Zionism, Evangelicalism, Israel, Trump Administration

Received: 10.05.2025 | Accepted: 16.06.2025 | DOI: 10.47932/ortetut.1696777

* This article is derived from the author's master's thesis titled "The influence of Christian Zionists on Israeli policy in the Donald Trump era".

** E-mail: yasinmandaci1996@gmail.com, ORCID: 0009-0002-7088-2056

Hristiyan Siyonizmi ve Trump'ın İsrail Politikası Üzerindeki Etkisi*

Yasin Mandacı**

Özet

Donald Trump'ın 2016 yılında ABD başkanı olarak göreve başlamasının ardından, Evanjeliklerin etkisinin zirveye ulaştığı ve İsrail'e yönelik dış politika sürecini önemli ölçüde etkilediği düşünülmüştür. Yapılan araştırmalar, ABD'nin İsrail'e artan desteğini bu dinî grubun inançları ve etkisiyle açıklamaktadır. Ancak bu çalışma, Evanjeliklerin büyük ve geniş bir kitle olmasına rağmen içlerinden “Hristiyan Siyonist” olarak bilinen belirli bir alt grubun bir baskı grubu olarak değerlendirilebileceğini ortaya koymaktadır.

Bu çalışmanın temel savı, Hristiyan Siyonistlerle Trump'ın ilk dönem yönetimi arasında güçlü bir etkileşim olmasına rağmen bu grubun İsrail politikaları üzerinde belirleyici bir kontrol gücüne sahip olmadığıdır. Bu bağlamda araştırma, Evanjeliklikten Hristiyan Siyonizme uzanan dinî dönüşümü inceleyecek kavramsal karmaşayı analitik bir yaklaşımla açıklığa kavuşturmayı amaçlayacak ve Trump döneminde Hristiyan Siyonist grupların konumu ile fikirlerinin önemini vurgulayacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Hristiyan Siyonizmi, Evanjelizm, İsrail, Trump Yönetimi

Geliş Tarihi: 10.05.2025 | Kabul Tarihi: 16.06.2025 | DOI: 10.47932/ortetut.1696777

* Bu makale, yazarın “Donald Trump Dönemi İsrail Politikasında Hristiyan Siyonistlerin Etkisi” başlıklı yüksek lisans tezinden üretilmiştir.

** E-mail: yasinmandaci1996@gmail.com, ORCID: 0009-0002-7088-2056

الصهيونية المسيحية وتأثير ترامب على السياسة الإسرائيلية*

ياسين مانداجي**

ملخص

تظهر التحليلات أن نفوذ الإنجيليين بلغ ذروته بعد تولي دونالد ترامب رئاسة الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية في فترته الأولى عام 6102، وأثر بشكل كبير على نهج السياسة الخارجية تجاه إسرائيل. وتشير الأبحاث التي جرت في هذا الصدد إلى ازدياد دعم الولايات المتحدة إلى إسرائيل جراء معتقدات هذه الجماعة الدينية وتأثيرها. ولكن هذا المقال يكشف أنه على الرغم من أن الإنجيليين جماعة كبيرة وواسعة الانتشار، إلا أن هناك مجموعة محددة تابعة لهم تعرف باسم "الصهاينة المسيحيين" يمكن تقييمها بأنها جماعة متسيّدة ولها تأثير كبير على الجماعة الأم.

الادعاء الرئيسي لهذه الدراسة هي أنه على الرغم من التفاعل القوي بين المسيحيين الصهاينة وإدارة ترامب في ولايته الأولى، إلا أن هذه المجموعة لم يكن لها سيطرة حاسمة على السياسات الإسرائيلية. وفي هذا السياق، تتناول هذه الدراسة التحوّل الديني من الإنجيلية إلى المسيحية الصهيونية، وتهدف إلى توضيح الالتباس المفاهيمي عبر منهج تحليلي، والتأكيد على أهمية موقف وأفكار الجماعات المسيحية الصهيونية خلال عهد ترامب.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الصهيونية المسيحية، الإنجيلية، إسرائيل، إدارة ترامب

تاريخ الاستلام: 10.05.2025 | تاريخ القبول: 16.06.2025 | DOI: 10.47932/ortetut.1696777

* هذه المقالة مستمدة من رسالة الماجستير، بعنوان: "تأثير الصهيونيين المسيحيين على سياسة إسرائيل خلال فترة دونالد ترامب".

** E-mail: yasinmandaci1996@gmail.com, ORCID: 0009-0002-7088-2056

Introduction

Evangelicalism serves as a broad umbrella term that needs to be defined in relation to specific historical and geographical contexts. Therefore, an analytical approach is essential for examining the issue within the United States (US). The first section explains the logic of interest and pressure group, its meaning in the US, and defines the Christian Zionists within Evangelicalism in this way and builds the core of the article on this. The second section will explore what Evangelicalism is – and what it is not – by tracing the transformations it has undergone. This discussion will focus more specifically on the cohesive concept of Christian Zionism, which should be central to analyzing US policy toward Israel. The following section will address the politicization and fragmentation of Evangelicalism, outlining the reasons Christian Zionists felt compelled to engage in politics, and highlighting their objectives in pursuing lobbying efforts. Next, the foreign policy during the first term of the Donald Trump administration will be examined through the triangular relationship between Christian Zionists, the administration, and geopolitical dynamics.

In the study using discourse analysis, it will be argued that the perceived influence of Christian Zionists is largely a result of their adoption of the Trump administration's political discourse and priorities, rather than a reflection of independent policy-shaping power. It will be emphasized that the primary driving force behind U.S. policy toward Israel was the Jared Kushner-led faction, whose approach was rooted in international geopolitical developments that began prior to the Trump era. In the conclusion, the text will present the underlying reasons for the widespread perception of Christian Zionist influence, as well as the factors contributing to their actual ineffectiveness.

Theoretical Framework

In modern democracies, interest groups consist of individuals who unite around common interests. Pressure groups, on the other hand, are more organized entities that have the ability to sway decision-makers due to their political demands.¹ Lobbying, a form of pressure group activity, involves efforts to influence political leaders by reaching out to legislative and executive officials to promote, delay, or block legislative proposals.²

1 Markus Ürek and Nejat Doğan, *Lobicilik ve Baskı Grupları: Devlet Sivil Toplum ve Demokrasi* (İnkılap, 2011), 11.

2 Nermin Abadan, "Devlet İdaresinde Menfaat Gruplarının Rolü," *Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi* 14, no.1 (1959): 234-235

Pressure groups are considered essential to political life in the U.S. and are viewed as a means of democratic participation.³ The US political system is characterized by fragmentation, with multiple actors competing for influence. Political decisions often emerge from intense bargaining and compromise among various interest groups. Harry Truman underscored the significance of having access to and influence over government decisions, highlighting that interest and pressure groups serve as a crucial balancing force in American politics.⁴ However, the demands of the U.S. public may not be adequately represented in foreign policy. The president wields considerable power in foreign policy, and, along with their appointees, plays a pivotal role in shaping the nation's direction. In summary, individuals play a crucial role in US politics and are susceptible to external influence. This gives pressure groups significant flexibility to impact foreign policy.⁵

There are organic connections between political parties and pressure groups. The Republican Party's support base is comprised of energy interests, military-industrial groups, and Evangelicals. Within the Evangelical community, there is a pressure group known as Christian Zionists. This group advocates for U.S. policies that support Israel, aligning closely with Jewish lobbying efforts. However, unlike many Jewish organizations, Christian Zionists offer unconditional support for Israel and endorse all its actions.

To understand Christian Zionism, it is better to examine the relationship with Evangelicalism.

From Evangelicalism to Christian Zionism

Evangelicalism refers to the good news that centers on Jesus and his apostles, while also pointing to the Bible.⁶ The concept of Evangelicalism has evolved considerably over different historical periods and geographical contexts. Initially, it referred to Christianity as a whole. However, during the Reformation, the term became more closely linked to Protestantism. Reformers like Martin Luther and John Calvin, who rejected the Pope's spiritual authority in the 16th century, emphasized the Bible's authority over the

3 Ürek and Doğan, *Lobicilik ve Baskı Grupları*, 54.

4 Mark V. Kauppi and Paul R. Viotti, *International Relations Theory*, 6th Edition (Rowman & Littlefield, 2020), 67.

5 Muhittin Ataman, "Değerler ve Çıkarlar: ABD'nin Ortadoğu Politikasını Belirleyen Temel Unsurlar ve İlkeler," in *Ortadoğu Yıllığı*, ed. Muhittin Ataman and Kemal İnat. (Nobel Yayın, 2008), 413-14.

6 Şinasi Gündüz, "Evanjelizm: Hristiyan Fanatizmi," *Hikav*, September 20, 2018, <https://hikav.org/makaleler/evanjelizm-hiristiyan-fanatizmi/>.

institutional power of the Church. In the 17th century, the migration of the Puritans from England to what is now the U.S. breathed new life into the concept of Evangelicalism, distinguishing it from its European origins. The Puritans considered themselves the true practitioners of Christianity and sought to establish a society firmly rooted in biblical teachings. For them, salvation was entirely contingent upon faith and divine grace, with the acceptance of Christ and his message serving as the foundation of their beliefs. Protestantism, which linked divine election to salvation, encountered a challenge. In response, the Puritans reinterpreted hard work and material success as signs of God's favor, creating a significant divide in their community.⁷ The divide became increasingly apparent in the 18th century, especially with the onset of the Great Awakening in the U.S. Evangelicals criticized the Puritans, arguing that the system they had established distorted the true message of Christianity and failed to shield individuals from the corrupting effects of wealth and power. Their aim was to restore the nation to the genuine essence of Christianity.⁸ The focus on true Christianity highlighted the theme of being chosen. The theologian Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) revived the idea that the Kingdom of God would start in America, asserting that God had specifically commissioned the US for this purpose.⁹

In the late 18th century, the Second Great Awakening movement was led by Charles G. Finney.¹⁰ According to Finney, salvation was no longer the result of the will of an angry God. The obligation and salvation passed to the individual, who was responsible for attaining his grace. The perception of the resurrection was also changing. Instead of God directing the revival, society had to take over this work.¹¹ The movement aimed to reach the millennium – the 1,000-year period of peace in which Christian law would rule the world, and everyone would be a Christian – as proposed by the English theologian Daniel Whitby (1638-1726). Finney took this further and systematized it, emphasizing that Christ's return would come after Christians had established the Kingdom of God on their own merits. This view was called

7 Şener Faruk Bedir, "Reformasyon'dan Günümüze Evanjelik Hristiyanlık," *Birey ve Toplum Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 3, no. 2 (2013): 80-81. Ali İ. Güngör, "Hristiyanlıkta Püriten Anlayış ve Et-kileri," *Dini Araştırmalar* 7, no. 21 2005, 14-20.

8 Filiz Çoban, "Amerikan Kimliği ve Dış Politikasında Evanjelizmin İzleri: Sosyal-İnşacı Perspektiften ABD-İsrail İlişkileri," *İnsan ve Toplum Bilimleri Araştırmaları Dergisi* 6, no. 3 (2017): 2023.

9 Donald M. Scott, "The Religious Origins of Manifest Destiny," National Humanities Center, Accessed February 2, 2025, <https://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/tserve/nineteen/nkeyinfo/mandestiny.htm>.

10 Bedir, "Reformasyon'dan Günümüze," 81-82.

11 Jeffrey K. Hadden, "Religious Broadcasting and the Mobilization of the New Christian Right," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 26, no. 1 (March 1987): 10.

Postmillennialism and gradually became the view of mainstream Protestants.¹²

The theologian John Nelson Darby pioneered an alternative view. Darby re-interpreted scripture from an apocalyptic perspective, aiming to redefine history. This sacred history unfolds according to God's plan and is divided into seven periods.¹³ At the end of each period of this history, beginning with Genesis and ending with the millennium, there was a period in which God tested people for salvation. This sacred history was the essence of history for Evangelicals,¹⁴ rather than mainstream Protestants, until the divisions between them.¹⁵ This was called Dispensationalism.¹⁶ Dispensationalism is rooted in the verse from Paul's Gospel, specifically First Thessalonians 4:16-17, which states that the true church will be raptured. According to Darby, the modern world is inherently evil, and God will soon intervene to punish humanity. Darby asserted that before the seven-year period of catastrophe known as the Tribulation,¹⁷ faithful Christians would be taken from this world, reach the Kingdom of God, and form the New Israel. Those left behind would face punishment during the reign of the Antichrist.¹⁸

Unlike Postmillennialism, Darby, who is a premillennialist, believed that Jesus would come to establish the Kingdom of God, centered in Jerusalem. There was no need for Christians to make a communal effort for salvation; the end was near.¹⁹ All that Christians needed to do was create the conditions for divine intervention. In this context, the Jews played a central role. Although the Jews were originally chosen for the Kingdom of God, they disobeyed Him. As a result, God's plan for Israel was interrupted, leading to the punishment of the Jews with the destruction of the Jerusalem temple and their subsequent exile. This shift caused God to turn His attention to the Christians. While the focus of salvation changed, the promises re-

12 Ali R. Özkan, "Amerikan Fundamentalizminin Dünyü Bugünü," *Atatürk Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 1, no.18 (2002): 36.

13 Donald Wagner, "Reagan and Begin, Bibi and Jerry: The Theopolitical Alliance of the Likud Party with the American Christian 'Right,'" *Arab Studies Quarterly* 20, no. 4 (1998): 37.

14 Although the term gradually came to refer to fundamentalist Protestants, they would in the process completely break away from mainstream Protestants.

15 Later on, Neo-Evangelicalism and Left Evangelicalism would move away from this historical understanding.

16 Wagner, "Reagan and Begin," 37.

17 According to Matthew 24, during these years false Messiahs will arise, wars will occur, hatred against the Jews will increase. These years will end with the second coming of Jesus as a result of the Armageddon.

18 Karen Armstrong, *Tanrı Adına Savaş*, trans. Murat Erdem (Alfa, 2017), 219-21.

19 Mokhtar Ben Barka, "The New Christian Right's Relations with Israel and with the American Jews: The Mid-1970s Onward," *E-Rea*, no. 10.1 (2012): 6.

mained unchanged. God's promise to Abraham, as stated in Genesis 15:17,²⁰ still holds true. Darby argued that the return of the Jews from exile to their homeland, and the creation of a Jewish homeland there would lead to the second return of Jesus.²¹ Connecting the salvation of Christians entirely to the return of the Jewish people to the Holy Land and living there, Darby laid the foundation for Christian Zionism.²² Cyrus I. Scofield advanced Christian Zionism further with his 1909 publication, *The Reference Bible*, released by Oxford University. Selling millions of copies and placing Jews at the center of all theological discussions, this book evolved from being an eschatological commentary by Darby to becoming a key scripture for Christian Zionists.²³ Over time, this religious perspective encouraged Christian Zionists to believe that active political involvement was not only necessary but vital.

The Politicization of White Conservative Evangelicalism

Christian Zionism²⁴ originally became politicized as part of White Evangelicalism. Over time, disagreements over modernism and the relationship with Israel led to significant divisions within this movement, first among the Neo-Evangelicals and later among the Left Evangelicals. This caused a major rupture, resulting in the fragmentation of the White Evangelicalism concept. The White Conservatives who continue to uphold these principles today can be classified as Christian Zionists. Thus, Christian Zionism serves as the foreign policy of this particular brand of Evangelicalism, which is both white and conservative. It is important to note, however, that this ideology should not be broadly applied to Evangelicalism as a whole. To gain a clearer understanding, it is helpful to examine the process of politicization.

Towards the end of the 19th century, divisions among Protestants became more pronounced. The conflict between liberals and conservatives in the 20th century led to a significant divergence in beliefs and practices. Evangelicalism increasingly became associated with conservatism. This conser-

20 "The LORD made a covenant with Abram and said to him: "To your descendants I will give this land from the river of Egypt to the great river Euphrates."

21 Carlo Aldrovandi, "Theo-Politics in the Holy Land Christian Zionism and Jewish Religious Zionism," *Religion Compass* 5, no. 4 (2011): 116-17.

22 H. Şule Albayrak, "ABD'de Hristiyan Siyonizmi: Kökeni, İnanç Esasları ve Günümüz Amerikan Siyasetine Etkisi," *Darülfünun İlahiyat* 30, no. 1 (2019): 158-61

23 Aldrovandi, "Theo-Politics in the Holy Land Christian Zionism and Jewish Religious Zionism," 116.

24 It is Whites who created the concept, built a theology on it, made intellectual progress in it, and controlled and guided it. There are also Hispanics and Blacks among them, albeit relatively few. However, Christian Zionism should not be considered merely as a religious view. The concept is a social and political product of the social conditions, historical experience and imagination of Whites.

vative faction asserted the infallibility of the Bible through a literal interpretation. Firmly committed to doctrines such as the Second Coming of Christ, they withdrew from mainstream society in anticipation of Jesus's return. During this period, Evangelical organizing against modernism began to take shape.²⁵

The identity of Evangelicalism underwent significant politicization beginning in 1925. During this period, White Evangelicals²⁶ actively engaged in institutionalizing their beliefs, staunchly defending the infallibility of the Bible. This defense not only solidified their religious convictions but also facilitated their increasing involvement in political matters.²⁷ However, this isolated life created tensions due to its disconnect from broader social life. Neo-Evangelicals responded by reinterpreting secular life and morality, adopting a different approach. They defended and legitimized capitalist American culture. Billy Graham, the most recognizable face of the movement, began promoting this new ideology. This marked the first major break of conservative Evangelicalism.²⁸

After World War II, the belief that the state was restricting Christian life continued to grow. In the 1960s, mandatory prayer and Bible reading were prohibited in public schools, and sex education became compulsory. During this time, modernization in the South also posed a threat to the region's cultural identity, leading many conservative Evangelicals to feel that both the church and the traditional family structure were falling apart.²⁹ The issue of race was also critically important, which led to the emergence of Left Evangelicals in the early 1960s. Advocates fought against racism, but faced significant resistance from the deeply ingrained racism of white fundamentalists. This represented a second major break within the movement.³⁰

In the 1970s, family life became increasingly politicized. In 1972, Congress passed the *Equal Rights Amendment*, which was seen as a threat to traditional family roles. White conservative Evangelical leaders believed that the amendment would lead to an expansion of abortion and gay rights, impose

25 Bedir, "Reformasyon'dan Günümüze," 80-81.

26 For now, it is necessary to accept White Evangelicalism as fundamentalist. The first rupture will occur in 1947 with Neo-Evangelicals.

27 Bedir, "Reformasyon'dan Günümüze," 87-89.

28 Walter J. Koehler, "A look at the positive side of neo-evangelicalism," *Consensus* 13, no. 1 (1987): 81-85.

29 Armstrong, *Tanrı Adına Savaş*, 417.

30 David R. Swartz, "The Evangelical Left and the Politicization of Evangelicalism" In *American Evangelicalism: George Marsden and the State of American Evangelicalism*, ed. Darren Dochuk, Thomas S. Kidd, and Kurt W. Peterson, (University of Notre Dame Press, 2014), 446-49.

coeducation, and ultimately signal the end of Evangelical values.³¹ Evangelicals found themselves in a desperate situation, because they felt constantly oppressed. Consequently, these internal developments, combined with external factors, necessitated a shift toward active lobbying.

The external situation played a significant role in the politicization of white conservative Evangelicals. The creation of Israel in 1948 and its territorial expansion after the Six-Day War in 1967 were seen as signs of the imminent return of Jesus.³² In this context, Christian Zionism emerged as a key element, which can be seen as the foreign policy of White Conservative Evangelicalism. It differs from traditional Evangelicalism in several ways, particularly in its views on family, Islam, Israel, and apocalyptic theology. Central to this ideology is the belief in the Second Coming of Jesus.³³ This ideology, grounded in a Dispensationalist interpretation of history, holds that the events described in Revelation, the final book of the Bible, will be fulfilled literally. The Battle of Armageddon, the apocalyptic war described in the text, will be fought between Jesus and the Antichrist. According to this belief, Jesus will lead Christians to victory, ultimately establishing a 1,000-year Kingdom of God.³⁴

The journey to the Kingdom of God is often viewed as proceeding through the Jewish people and the nation of Israel. Within this perspective, Islam is frequently perceived as an impediment to this divine plan. The Scofield Reference Bible depicts Jews as a pivotal instrument of Christian salvation, which has profoundly influenced Christian Zionists to offer unwavering support for Israel.³⁵ This devotion is so embedded in their belief system that the establishment of Israel in 1948 is regarded as the most monumental event since the ascension of Jesus Christ. Many believers emphasize this momentous occasion as a profound sign indicating the imminent return of the Messiah.³⁶ As a result, they not only support the return of Jews to the Promised Land but also advocate for settlement policies, convinced that such actions will accelerate the arrival of Jesus back to Earth.³⁷ Christian Zionists assert that Israel has a divine right to expand its borders into the

31 Anneke Stasson, "The Politicization of Family Life: How Headship Became Essential to Evangelical Identity in the Late Twentieth Century," *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation* 24, no. 1 (2014): 102. Ingmar Karlsson, *Din, Terör ve Hoşgörü* trans. Turhan Kayaoğlu (Homer Yayınları, 2005), 43.

32 Aldrovandi, "Theo-Politics in the Holy Land Christian Zionism and Jewish Religious Zionism," 117.

33 Gündüz, "Evanjelizm: Hristiyan Fanatizmi."

34 İncil (Kitab-ı Mukaddes Şirketi, 2020) Vahiy 7:5-8.

35 Ali İ. Güngör, *Evanjeller*, (İlgi Kültür Sanat Yayınları, 2016), 30.

36 Armstrong, *Tanrı Adına Savaş*. 342

37 Güngör, *Evanjeller*, 194.

region recognized as Eretz Yisrael, encompassing Gaza, the West Bank, the Golan Heights, Lebanon, Jordan, and parts of Egypt.³⁸

Christian Zionists view Islam as a direct threat to the dominance of Christianity, resulting in its perception as an “evil empire.”³⁹ This struggle is often framed as one between the Judeo-Christian God and the God of Islam.⁴⁰ Consequently, some encourage radical Jews to demolish Islam's holy site in Jerusalem, the Al-Aqsa Mosque, along with its landmark, the Dome of the Rock, to replace it with the Third Temple of Solomon. This action aims to provoke a divine conflict between Jews and Muslims, which they believe will pave the way for the Messiah's return to Earth.⁴¹

Christian Zionists are sympathetic to Israel, yet they harbor anti-Semitic views. While Jews play a central role in apocalyptic scenarios, Christian Zionists believe that the majority will be ruled by the Antichrist, with only 144,000 being saved by converting to Christianity. The verse in Romans 9:27 says: “... Although the children of Israel are as numerous as the sand of the sea, only a few will be saved.”⁴²

Consequently, this politicization process created significant divisions within Evangelicalism and solidified the presence of Christian Zionism. Both internal and external developments have driven these groups deeper into political engagement and lobbying efforts. To this end, Christian Zionists oppose both the two-state solution and peace initiatives to reach their purposes. They support Israel's military operations, provide financial assistance, and deny Palestinian property rights. They aim to prevent Israel from withdrawing from any land. Notably, their lobbying efforts are more vigorous than those of Jewish organizations. In this context, *Christians United for Israel (CUFI)* stands out as the most important lobbying group and has been particularly active during the Trump administration.⁴³

Trump Administration and Israel Policy of the U.S.

Trump's stance on Israel was similar to that of other U.S. presidential candidates. During the 2016 election campaign, he characterized Israel as the

38 Albayrak, “ABD’de Hristiyan Siyonizmi,” 163.

39 Stephen Spector, *Evangelicals and Israel: The Story of American Christian Zionism* (Oxford University Press, 2009), 76.

40 Pat Robertson, “Why Evangelical Christians Support Israel,” Accessed March 5, 2025, <https://www.patroberson.com/Speeches/IsraelLauder.asp>.

41 Ömer Kemal Buhari, “(Dost) Düşmanlar: Hristiyan Siyonizmde Antisemitizm ve Anti-İslamizm,” *Cumhuriyet İlahiyat Dergisi* 23, no.3 (2019): 1326.

42 İncil. Vahiy 7:5-8, and Romalılar 9:27.

43 Albayrak, “ABD’de Hristiyan Siyonizmi,” 163. Grace Halsell, *Tanrıyı Kiyamete Zorlamak*, trans. Mustafa Acar (Serbest Kitaplar, 2021), 123-28.

true and most important ally. For him, Israel was essential to maintaining stability and security in the Middle East and was the only stable democracy in the region. He was personally very close to the Jewish community and stated that the U.S. would stand by Israel under all circumstances, as it always had. Notably, Trump's personal style in expressing his support for Israel was a significant aspect of his approach.⁴⁴

This personal style was accompanied by a deep distrust of the State Department. According to Trump, the State Department was responsible for the crisis in which the U.S. found itself, and it was no longer necessary to heed "so-called experts"⁴⁵ This skepticism towards the system brought Trump's inner circle to the forefront. Relationships with other world leaders and decision-making processes were often reduced to personal connections.⁴⁶ Central to this approach were Trump's beliefs about the world, his networks, and his business experience. Key figures included Kushner and his team, who embodied this mentality, as well as Steve Bannon, one of Trump's advisors until his dismissal. American Jews played a crucial role in this dynamic, particularly Kushner and his associates, but also a larger group. They held influential positions within the government, while those outside it had the financial means to exert pressure. In mainstream politics, they represented a significant and entrenched force in both parties, wielding transformative influence. Conversely, Christian Zionists, although they outnumbered Jews in terms of voters, were considered a marginal and lesser-quality group. While they had key figures like Vice President Mike Pence, they were not as directly embedded in Israel policy as the Jewish community; instead, they acted as an external factor.

The Kushner group, which Trump entrusted with crafting Israel policy, was entirely composed of Jewish members. Kushner, who led the group and is Trump's son-in-law, was deeply committed to Israel's security. His family had donated millions of dollars to Israeli institutions, including those in the settlements. Kushner's longstanding relationship with Prime Minister

44 Donald J. Trump, *Yeniden Büyük Amerika*, trans. İrem Sağlamer (Pegasus Yayınları, 2017), 20, 56-57, 65.

45 Trump, *Yeniden Büyük Amerika*, 49-50.

46 Christina Pazzanese, "Tillerson's exit interview," *The Harvard Gazette*, September 18, 2019, <https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2019/09/rex-tillerson-details-his-frustrations-on-iran-israel-russia-and-his-revamp-of-the-state-department/>. Ben Fox, "Tillerson says Kushner conducted foreign policy without him," *AP News*, June 28, 2019, <https://apnews.com/article/7fa3d3e354014e0a864601fc8f6f24ff>. Cansu Güleç, "Dış Politika Analizinde Karar Verme Süreci ve Karar Verme Modelleri," *Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart Üniversitesi Uluslararası Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 3, no. 1 (April 30, 2018): 83.

Benjamin Netanyahu was notable.⁴⁷ Another important figure in this group was Jason Greenblatt, a real estate lawyer from Trump's company. Greenblatt later became Trump's White House Israel Advisor and Special Envoy for Middle East Peace, despite lacking prior diplomatic experience.⁴⁸ David Friedman, who was considered by some to be even more radical than Netanyahu, opposed the two-state solution and advocated for settlement expansion. He was appointed as the Ambassador to Israel.⁴⁹ Avi Berkowitz, an Orthodox Jew and Kushner's right-hand man, had family ties to *The American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC)*.⁵⁰ These individuals were fiercely loyal to Trump and benefited from a close working relationship with him, which allowed them significant freedom in their actions. No one from the cabinet intervened in their work, nor could they have been expected to. According to *New York Magazine*, Kushner was Trump's closest advisor and the last person Trump consulted before making crucial decisions.⁵¹ Therefore, their perception and definition of the problem took center stage, leading to a complex interaction between the Jewish billionaire Sheldon Adelson, who was a Republican Party donor, Bannon, Christian Zionists, and the Israeli government, which supported and pressured them. It was noteworthy that Trump wanted Kushner to seek advice from Adelson in developing their strategy. Throughout this process, the group maintained constant communication with Netanyahu.⁵²

Kushner served as a key link between Christian Zionists and the Trump administration. He was present at the meeting between religious leaders and Trump, and for Christian Zionist leaders, he represented a departure from the politicians who had previously let them down. Ronnie Floyd described Kushner as their close friend, while Jack Graham noted that he was a crucial connection for Evangelicals.⁵³ These groups had previously enjoyed access

47 Eliza Relman, "Jared Kushner's 28-year-old protégé is his right-hand man in the White House," <https://www.businessinsider.com/jared-kushner-avi-berkowitz-trump-2017-3>, April 5, 2017, <https://www.businessinsider.com/jared-kushner-avi-berkowitz-trump-2017-3>.

48 Alex Ward, "Trump's top Middle East peace envoy is quitting. There's still no Israel-Palestine deal," September 6, 2019, <https://www.vox.com/2019/9/5/20851230/jason-greenblatt-israel-palestine-middle-east-trump>.

49 Ron Dart and Colter Louwerse, "Donald Trump and the Christian Zionist Lobby: Letter from Canada," *Journal of Holy Land and Palestine Studies* 16, no. 2 (November 2017): 240-41.

50 Relman, "Jared Kushner's 28-year-old protégé is his right-hand man in the White House."

51 Michael Sebastian, "A Close Look at Donald Trump's Cabinet," *Marie Claire*, July 28, 2017, <https://www.marieclaire.com/politics/a23922/donald-trump-cabinet-appointments/>.

52 Michael Wolff, *Ateş ve Öfke*, trans. Cesi Mizrahi (Doğan Kitap, 2018), 49, 91-92, 164-169. Ward, "Trump's top Middle East."

53 Samuel Smith, "Jared Kushner Is a 'Great Gift,' 'Key Liaison' to the Evangelical Community, Christian Leaders Say," <https://www.christianpost.com/july-25-2017-jared-kushner-great-gift-key-liaison-evangelical-community-christian-leaders.html>. Jill Colvin, "Evangelical leaders rally around Kushner amid Russia probe," *AP News*, July 25, 2017, <https://apnews.com/article/b9b57fb0a2bc43a8bc85538532e28bb0>.

to the White House during the Reagan and George W. Bush administrations, offering similar compliments at that time. However, it's important not to overstate this access. The heart of the new Middle East and Israel policy, championed by Kushner and his team, was grounded in the cultivation of personal relationships and the vision of a redefined geopolitical landscape. Kushner himself noted that the Iranian threat had unlocked remarkable opportunities. In this complex environment, Christian Zionists found themselves ready to seize these opportunities and forge powerful new alliances.⁵⁴

The Iranian Threat and the New Geopolitics

At the center of the Trump administration's Middle East policy was the security of Israel, framed within the broader context of the Iranian threat. These new geopolitics naturally led to cooperation between Israel and the member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) against Iran. It was within this environment that the administration built its policy. Christian Zionists adapted well to this situation, legitimizing the administration's approach by developing a religious and political understanding that 'Israel's enemies are now friends.'

During Obama's presidency, tensions with Netanyahu were widely recognized, and his exclusionary stance toward Saudi Arabia was also apparent. This situation was further complicated by the nuclear deal with Iran and the events of the Arab Spring, leading both sides to develop shared perceptions of common threats. The rise of Islamic movements and Iran's efforts to expand its influence across the region contributed to a new geopolitical landscape in 2012. Netanyahu emphasized the significance of the Iranian threat as a means to overcome historical animosities and highlighted new opportunities for cooperation.⁵⁵

During the election period, Trump criticized the Iran Nuclear Deal, labeling it a "nuclear betrayal," and targeted the Iranian regime. He stated that he would be willing to negotiate if Iran immediately ended its nuclear program, emphasizing that he would never allow Iran to produce nuclear weapons. He viewed a nuclear-armed Iran as a threat to both Israel and the U.S.⁵⁶

54 Opening Ceremony of the US Embassy in Jerusalem, Posted 2018, by Guardian, Youtube, 1 hour., 35 min., 21 sec., <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p9jXnQBObxw>.

55 Tural Aliyev, "The Evaluation of the Nuclear Weapon Agreement with Iran in the Perspective of the Difference between Obama and Trump's Administration," *Research Studies Anatolia Journal* 4, no. 1 (2021): 33-36. Onur Mert Özçelik and Mehmet Akif Okur, "The evangelical effect over Donald Trump's policies toward Israel and Iran," *Yıldız Social Sciences Institute Journal* 5, no. 1 (2021): 18-20.

56 Trump, *Yeniden Büyük Amerika*, 20-28, 58-59

In response to this perceived threat, and in an effort to address the Palestinian issue, the administration attempted to implement a new strategy. According to the administration, the key players in the region were Israel, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Iran. They believed that other nations could be encouraged to cooperate against Iran in exchange for efforts to facilitate a peace agreement between the Palestinians and Israel. Trump was confident that his business experience would help bring order to the Middle East.⁵⁷ In this context, Kushner, the architect of Trump's Middle East policy, and Mohammed bin Salman, the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, developed a strong partnership. Both sought to unify their opposition to Iran. Trump made his first foreign visit to Saudi Arabia from May 19–27, 2017, where, in addition to securing lucrative arms deals, the Palestinian issue was also a primary focus. He considered this visit to be a significant step towards peace and noted that Kushner had successfully garnered support from various Arab leaders.⁵⁸ As a result, in the lead-up to the decision regarding Jerusalem, a U.S.-led deal began to materialize between the Gulf states and Israel. With the Palestinian issue becoming less prominent, officials from Saudi Arabia and Egypt even chose not to attend meetings of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation focused on the matter.⁵⁹

Christian Zionists were aware of the shifting geopolitical landscape but remained outside the decision-making process. The alignment of the administration's goals with the politics of strengthening Israel created the impression that all objectives were in sync. This overlap blurred the distinction between the traditional American perspective, which supported Israel based on shared values and national interests, and Christian Zionism, which supported Israel due to religious prophecy. As a result, there was a perception that Christian Zionists were in a powerful position.

The administration aimed to establish a new order in the Middle East with Israel at its center before shifting its focus to China. In contrast, Christian Zionists sought to instigate an immediate war between Israel and Iran. Despite their differing goals, Christian Zionists aligned themselves with the government's agenda and seized opportunities to become influential power brokers in international politics. This not only brought them into the media spotlight but also contributed to the perception that they played a crucial role in shaping U.S. policy toward Israel. However, this situation also illus-

57 Wolff, *Ateş ve Öfke*, 252–54.

58 Ian Black, "Donald Trump and the Middle East," *Political Studies Association* 9, no. 1 (February 28, 2018): 23–24; Wolff, *Ateş ve Öfke*, 255–59.

59 Mehmet Öztürk, "Trump'ın Kudüs Kararının Bir Analizi," *İnsan ve Toplum Bilimleri Araştırmaları Dergisi* 8, no. 4 (2019): 2896–97.

trated how far they could stray from their core principles and legitimize actions in pursuit of political power.

The Jerusalem Decision and the Christian Zionist Lobby

The recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel in U.S. history is rooted in the *Jerusalem Embassy Act*,⁶⁰ which Congress passed in October 1995. The law, approved with overwhelming support – 93 to 5 in the Senate, and 374 to 37 in the House – underscores the strong bipartisan backing for Israel.⁶¹ Every presidential candidate pledged to sign the law, but each ultimately backed out, citing national security and the pursuit of peace, up until the time the Trump administration took office. In his September 2016 meeting with Netanyahu, Trump declared that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel and vowed to move the U.S. embassy there.⁶² According to Trump, all previous initiatives and political approaches regarding Jerusalem ran counter to American interests.⁶³

Christian Zionists advocated for relocating the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem both before and after the 2016 elections. Over 660 religious leaders participated in a letter-writing campaign in support of Israel. They highlighted Israel's security, its strategic importance to the West, and the threat posed by Iranian expansionism. For these leaders, officially recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital would strengthen a democratic ally that shares American values and demonstrates a commitment to combating Islamic extremism. In this regard, Christian Zionists effectively echoed the rhetoric of the administration.⁶⁴

In May 2017, 59 religious leaders launched a second letter campaign to remind the administration of its election campaign promise. They argued that the U.S. must end its hypocrisy and reinforce its commitment to its democratic ally. John Hagee, a prominent Christian Zionist leader, claimed that Trump's election victory was a result of their support, asserting that he had

60 The law states that each sovereign nation may determine its own capital in accordance with international law, that Jerusalem has been the capital of Israel since 1950 and that the city was united in 1967, and that the relocation should not take place later than 1999.

61 Célia Belin, "Trump's Jerusalem decision is a victory for Evangelical politics," *The Brookings Institution*, December 15, 2017, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/trumps-jerusalem-decision-is-a-victory-for-evangelical-politics/>.

62 Stephen Spector, "This Year in Jerusalem: Prophecy, Politics, and the U.S. Embassy in Israel," *Journal of Church and State* 61, no. 4 (November 2019): 3-6. Özçelik and Okur, "The evangelical effect," 10.

63 Ali Çobanoğlu, "Din Unsurunun Dış Politika Etkileri," *Filistin Araştırmaları Dergisi*, no. 11 (June 2022): 92.

64 Spector, "This Year in Jerusalem," 8-9.

won office as a candidate who favored Israel, and that 60 million Evangelical voters were eager to see this promise fulfilled. However, when the law was first presented to Trump on June 1, 2017, he did not sign it. Like previous presidents, he cited concerns over national security and peace negotiations. Even before making a decision, Israeli officials reiterated their call for action in May. During his visit to Israel, Trump remained hesitant to make a public commitment. He stated that he believed a peace deal was possible and expressed his willingness to mediate the negotiations.⁶⁵

After the decision, Vice President Pence, speaking at the Christians United for Israel (CUFI) event, praised President Trump as a man of faith and a steadfast friend of Israel.⁶⁶ He credited Trump's election to the prayers and support of over 3.3 million believers advocating for Israel. Pence reaffirmed that the U.S. embassy would be moved to Jerusalem and expressed optimism that peace would eventually be achieved. However, he acknowledged that concessions would be necessary for this peace. No one at the event, including Pence, knew what those concessions would involve, as only Kushner and his team had that information. The only assurance Pence provided was that Israel's security would remain uncompromised.⁶⁷

The administration sought to foster a relationship with Evangelicals that mirrored those cultivated by past presidents. In July 2017, the White House welcomed a significant gathering of predominantly White and Conservative Evangelicals. As they filled the grand hall, Trump greeted them with enthusiasm, declaring, "This is the group that now has real power", and proudly asserting, "They have influence with God." This moment was marked by a solemn ritual, as members of the group laid their hands on Trump, offering heartfelt prayers for his leadership. Christian Zionists hailed Trump as the most faith-friendly president in recent memory, despite his lack of substantial policy actions that aligned with their beliefs. Such expressions were part of a familiar narrative, often echoed in the rhetoric surrounding each president throughout history.⁶⁸

65 Spector, "This Year in Jerusalem," 8-9. Eric Cortellessa, "Trump signs waiver, won't move US embassy to Jerusalem," *Times of Israel*, June 1, 2017, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/trump-signs-waiver-to-keep-us-embassy-in-tel-aviv/>.

66 Mike Pence, "Remarks by the Vice President at the Christians United for Israel Washington Summit," July 17, 2017, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-the-vice-president-the-christians-united-for-israel-washington-summit>.

67 Mike Pence, "Remarks by the Vice President."

68 Emily McFarlan Miller, "All the president's clergymen: A close look at Trump's 'unprecedented' ties with evangelicals," <https://religionnews.com/>, September 5, 2017, <https://religionnews.com/2017/09/05/all-the-presidents-clergymen-a-close-look-at-trumps-unprecedented-ties-with-evangelicals/>.

A year after the election, they launched a third letter campaign, warning that Trump's time was running out. Emphasizing the impossibility of peace, they continued the rhetoric of a democratic Israel. The International Christian Embassy Jerusalem argued that Islamic extremists were targeting Christians in the region, and that Israel could restore order in the holy sites. Led by CUFI, 135,000 people sent emails to the White House. On December 6, 2017, Trump finally approved the law, marking the second time the decision came before him. Christian Zionist leaders credited the decision to their own pressure.⁶⁹ As often happens in American political history, they exaggerated their influence. However, the decision was the result of a series of events that unfolded over time. Russia's interference in the 2016 presidential election, and allegations that the administration contacted Russia in December 2016 to block the Obama administration's resolution against Israel at the UN Security Council, eventually led to a court case, threatening both the administration and Trump himself. In this context, Trump's frequent blame of the intelligence services only complicated matters. Consequently, Trump's National Security Advisor, Flynn, was questioned by the FBI and found guilty on December 1, 2017.⁷⁰ The next targets of the investigation were Kushner and then Trump. In this charged environment, on December 6, 2017, Trump recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. Trump aimed to shift the agenda in case the investigation expanded to include him, while also trying to rally his supporters by creating the perception that he was being condemned for defending Christian values. When Kushner testified in the Russia investigation, Christian Zionist leaders spoke to Congressional investigators. They issued a joint statement led by Johnnie Moore. Falwell Jr. described the situation as "endless attempts by the media to keep the fake Russia collusion story alive, solely to obstruct the president's agenda."⁷¹

Trump aimed to transform the crisis into an opportunity to rally not only Christian Zionists but also all Christians and Jews. His sharp criticism of Jews, after they did not support him following a particular decision, was no-

69 Spector, "This Year in Jerusalem," 7-9.

70 Wolff, *Ateş ve Öfke*, 59-61. Chad Day, "Key events in Michael Flynn's interactions with Russia," AP News, December 2, 2017, <https://apnews.com/9e1bab6d398c42b7a35d133588b369cd>. Margaret Hartmann and Nick Tabor, "Everything We've Learned From Robert Mueller's Investigation," <https://nymag.com/>, April 17, 2019, <https://nymag.com/intelligencer/article/robert-mueller-investigation-what-we-know.html>.

71 Black, "Donald Trump and the Middle East," 24-25; Spector, "This Year in Jerusalem," 14-16. Sean Durbin, "From King Cyrus to Queen Esther: Christian Zionists' discursive construction of Donald Trump as God's instrument," *Critical Research on Religion* 8, no. 2 (May 13, 2020): 14-15.

table.⁷² In this context, claims that Sheldon Adelson, a prominent Republican donor and supporter of Netanyahu, secured Trump's promise to recognize Jerusalem as the capital in exchange for millions of dollars in campaign contributions were particularly significant. Unlike the Christian Zionists, Adelson wielded substantial influence.⁷³ During meetings in the first year of the administration, he emphasized that the disaster scenarios arising from the Jerusalem decision were exaggerated.⁷⁴ He also offered to cover the difference between the total cost of the embassy and what the administration could afford. Following the embassy move and ahead of the November 2018 elections, he purchased the U.S. ambassador's official residence in Tel Aviv.⁷⁵ When Adelson passed away in January 2021, Trump's statement underscored his consistent pressure. He referred to Adelson as a staunch supporter of Israel who tirelessly advocated for the relocation of the US embassy to Jerusalem, and for peace between Israel and its neighbors.⁷⁶

There were also administrative reasons for the Kushner team to capitalize on the evolving international environment. Saudi Arabia and Egypt were significant players; Kushner believed they would suppress any opposition and that the backlash would be limited. Following the decision, both Riyadh and Cairo remained silent, as their primary concerns were militancy and Iran.⁷⁷ As a result of Kushner's personal visits, Arab leaders began ad-

72 Mimi Kirk, "Countering Christian Zionism in the Age of Trump," <https://merip.org/Middle-East-Report-Online>, August 8, 2019. <https://merip.org/2019/08/countering-christian-zionism-in-the-age-of-trump/>.

73 Öztürk, "Trump'ın Kudüs Kararının Bir Analizi," 2889-2990. Robert D. McFadden, "Sheldon Adelson, Billionaire Donor to G.O.P. and Israel, Is Dead at 87," *The New York Times*, January 12, 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/12/business/sheldon-adelson-dead.html#:~:text=12%2C%202021-,Sheldon%20G.,He%20was%2087>. Rosie Gray, "What Does the Billionaire Family Backing Donald Trump Really Want?," *The Atlantic*, January 27, 2017, <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2017/01/no-one-knows-what-the-powerful-mercurs-really-want/514529/>. Ofer Aderet, "Sheldon Adelson Laid to Rest on Jerusalem's Mount of Olives," *Haaretz*, January 15, 2021, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2021-01-15/ty-article/premium/sheldon-adelson-laid-to-rest-on-jerusalems-mount-of-olives/0000017f-e4d7-d804-ad7f-f5ff61a10000>.

74 Maggie Haberman, *Confidence Man: The Making of Donald Trump and the Breaking of America* (Penguin Press, 2022), 348.

75 "AP: Adelson offers to help pay for Jerusalem embassy," *Politico*, February 23, 2018, <https://www.politico.com/story/2018/02/23/sheldon-adelson-pay-jerusalem-embassy-422732>; Lisa Mascaro and Josef Federman, "Congress questions sale of US residence in Israel to Adelson," *Washington Post*, September 9 2020, https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/congress-questions-sale-of-us-residence-in-israel-to-adelson/2020/09/09/a1c5a414-f2f6-11ea-8025-5d3489768ac8_story.html.

76 "Trump: Adelson 'tirelessly advocated' for embassy move to Jerusalem," *The Times of Israel*, January 12, 2021, https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/trump-adelson-tirelessly-advocated-for-embassy-move-to-jerusalem/.

77 Shibley Telhami, "Why is Trump undoing decades of U.S. policy on Jerusalem?," <https://www.brookings.edu/>, December 5, 2017, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/why-is-trump-about-to-declare-jerusalem-the-capital-of-israel/>.

vocating for an outside-in solution for the Palestinians. In this context, in November 2017, bin Salman summoned Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas to Riyadh. According to leaked U.S. plans, the Saudis were pressuring Abbas to designate the East Jerusalem suburb of Abu Dis as the capital of a future Palestinian state.⁷⁸ With the gradual consolidation of this external alliance under Kushner's leadership, a foundation was laid for the Jerusalem decision. The Russian investigation also acted as a catalyst. The lack of vocal opposition following the decision indicated that it had been negotiated among the involved parties beforehand, with pressure on Abbas regarding Abu Dis serving as a clear signal of this agreement. In summary, this move marked the beginning of a new geopolitical strategy that the administration had envisioned from the outset.

Following the decision, the belief that Trump resembles Cyrus the Great gained traction among Christian Zionist circles. Christian Zionist leader Paula White noted that Evangelicals were ecstatic about Trump's decision regarding Jerusalem. Hagee stated that this decision fulfilled biblical promises and suggested that it strengthened democracy, which in turn allowed them to receive God's blessings.⁷⁹ However, a poll conducted by the University of Maryland between November 1 and 6, prior to the decision, indicated that 63% of Americans and 44% of Republicans opposed it. Support among the general Evangelical population was only 53%, with 40% against the decision.⁸⁰ Despite this, the Jerusalem decision created a new environment that continued to evolve.

Withdrawal from the Iran Nuclear Deal

On May 8, 2018, President Trump announced the U.S. withdrawal from the nuclear deal with Iran, citing Iran's support for terrorism, its potential to develop nuclear weapons, and its threat to regional allies. The move also signaled a further strengthening of Israel-Gulf relations.⁸¹ Trump's goal was to isolate Iran in line with his negotiating strategy, and to hurt Iran through sanctions, and pressure until he got Iran to the negotiating table. In Trumpian thinking, this meant rewarding friends and punishing enemies who oppose U.S. hegemony, as in the case of the Palestinian issue. As a result, sanctions on Iran grew increasingly stringent starting in November 2018.⁸²

⁷⁸ Black, "Donald Trump and the Middle East," 24.

⁷⁹ Spector, "This Year in Jerusalem," 1, 14-16. Durbin, "From King Cyrus to Queen Esther: Christian Zionists' discursive construction of Donald Trump as God's instrument," 14-15.

⁸⁰ Telhami, "Why is Trump undoing"

⁸¹ Mehmet Akif Okur and Onur Mert Özçelik, "Trump Yönetimi Döneminde ABD'nin İsrail ve İran Politikası: Köktenci Evanjeliklerin Etkisi," *Akademik İncelemeler Dergisi* 16, no 2 (October 15, 2021): 12-13.

⁸² Trump, *Yeniden Büyük Amerika*, 57.

Iran was central to the Christian Zionists' Israel policy, and they were behind the administration. With the withdrawal from the nuclear deal, and the assassination of Qassem Soleimani – an Iranian commander perceived as a threat to Israel – Trump came to be seen by some Christian Zionists as a modern-day Queen Esther, the biblical figure credited with saving the Jews from destruction in ancient Persia (modern-day Iran).⁸³ CUFI stated that the U.S., Israel, and the world were safer now that the flawed Iran Deal had been abandoned. CUFI founder Hagee expressed his support for Trump's hardline stance, saying he looked forward to the administration's confrontation with Iran.⁸⁴ Despite the marginal role Christian Zionists played in shaping Trump's decision to withdraw from the Iran Deal, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo subsequently legitimized the move using rhetoric tailored to Evangelical sensibilities. Pompeo adopted rhetoric that resonated with this audience, stating that Iran sought to undermine Western civilization and destroy the democratic, biblically inspired state of Israel, even referring to Iran as a "cancer" in the Middle East.⁸⁵

The Gulf countries also expressed satisfaction with Trump's decision. Arab support for Israel in its stance against Iran was also significant for Christian Zionists. These groups aimed to strengthen their influence in international politics by aligning with the administration's policies. Historically, Christian Zionists viewed all Muslims as adversaries; however, the shifting political landscape led them to recognize that supporting Arab countries against Iran could enhance their global standing. In 2018, Christian Zionists, led by Joel Rosenberg, visited the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to hold various meetings aimed at securing Arab backing for Israel. Their discussions focused on the Israeli-Palestinian issue, the Iranian threat, and religious freedom. The following October, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed gained special attention from Christian Zionists when he expressed a willingness to pursue peace with Israel. Consequently, Christian Zionist organizations presented the UAE to the media as a beacon of religious freedom. This was a strategy for image rehabilitation, similar to what they had done with Trump. In their pursuit of international legitimacy, they sought to enhance the religious image of their adversaries while obtaining the global recognition that Trump had given them domestically.⁸⁶

83 Durbin, "From King Cyrus to Queen Esther," 15.

84 Okur and Özçelik, "Trump Yönetimi Döneminde," 13. Mimi Kirk, "American Evangelicals, the Gulf States, and Israel: A Cynical Covenant," <https://arabcenterdc.org/>, August 24, 2022, <https://arabcenterdc.org/resource/american-evangelicals-the-gulf-states-and-israel-a-cynical-covenant/>.

85 Okur and Özçelik, "Trump Yönetimi Döneminde," 13. Murat Ülgül, "Faith abroad: how religion shapes Trump administration's foreign policy," *International Relations* 35, no. 4 (March 2021): 10-12. Durbin, "From King Cyrus to Queen Esther," 15.

86 Okur and Özçelik, "Trump Yönetimi Döneminde," 17.

On September 11, 2019, a similar delegation engaged in discussions with bin Salman in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. The group, comprised of Christian Zionists, sought to shape international political dynamics through interfaith dialogue and to bolster Arab support for Israel in its opposition to Iran. The timing of these talks, occurring in the context of heightened international scrutiny following the assassination of journalist Jamal Khashoggi, underscores the efforts of Christian Zionists to enhance their political influence. Prior to these meetings, representatives of the Christian Zionist movement had articulated criticisms of Saudi Arabia, particularly concerning issues of religious intolerance and human rights violations. However, in the aftermath of the discussions, such critiques largely diminished. Instead, the narrative promoted by Christian Zionists began to frame Saudi Arabia in a more favorable light, suggesting a misperception of the kingdom within the U.S.⁸⁷

After December 19, 2019, secret trilateral meetings were held between the US, Israel, and the UAE to coordinate efforts against the Iranian threat. This growing threat served to align their interests and strengthen cooperation. The next phase of this collaboration was the “Deal of the Century,” which shifted focus away from Palestine and towards regional integration, and countering Iran’s influence in the region.⁸⁸

Deal of the Century

The Trump administration’s Deal of the Century, designed to address the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, was central to its approach to the region. The team, led by Kushner and Jason Greenblatt, played a key role in shaping and executing Trump’s Middle East policy.⁸⁹

In March 2019, Greenblatt briefed Christian Zionists on the peace plan at the White House, attempting to reassure them. However, their concerns persisted both before and after the U.S. recognition of Jerusalem as Israel’s capital. In 2018, Christian Zionist leader Robert Stearns had already emphasized that they would not support a peace plan that compromised Jerusalem. The unrest among Christian Zionist leaders stemmed from the interpretation of

87 Aya Batrawy, “US Christian evangelical delegation meets Saudi crown prince,” AP News, September 11, 2019, <https://apnews.com/article/e7f10269e60b46dabe31c455fa04017e>. Okur and Özçelik, “Trump Yönetimi Döneminde,” 17-18. Johnnie Moore and Joel C. Rosenberg, “We visited Saudi Arabia on the eve of 9/11. The Kingdom is changing for good,” *Al Arabiya*, September 19, 2019, <https://english.alarabiya.net/views/news/middle-east/2019/09/19/We-visited-Saudi-Arabia-on-the-eve-of-9-11-the-Kingdom-is-changing-for-good>.

88 Özçelik and Okur, “The evangelical effect,” 18.

89 Colum Lynch, “What’s Next for Christian Zionists?,” *Foreign Policy*, July 19, 2021, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/07/19/christian-zionists-israel-trump-netanyahu-evangelicals/>.

Luke 21:24, which held that any transfer of Jerusalem to non-Jews would reverse biblical prophecy. At the meeting, Christian Zionists expressed their concerns about the prospect of giving Palestinians a capital in part of East Jerusalem. They were provided with few details about the peace plan, as the administration was more focused on hearing their concerns and red lines. However, it remains uncertain how much attention was given to these concerns. The fear of reversing biblical prophecy loomed large. Greenblatt reassured them, stating that the peace plan would be fair and mutually beneficial, though both sides would need to make concessions. Rosenberg, addressing the other religious leaders, pointed out that despite the administration's efforts, the Palestinians were unlikely to agree to a deal. He advised them not to worry too much about Jerusalem being compromised, urging them to allow President Trump the freedom to move forward with the peace plan.⁹⁰ As these words suggest, these groups had no choice but to comply with the existing plan, rather than to shape it.

As a component of his negotiating strategy, President Trump implemented a reduction in US assistance to the UN in 2017, a program that had been established in 1950, prior to the introduction of his peace plan. His objective was to place Palestine in a precarious position and to isolate it by severing financial support. Additionally, he closed the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) office in Washington, citing a lack of meaningful progress in the peace process as well as the organization's diplomatic activities perceived as antagonistic towards Israel.⁹¹ By abandoning a stance of neutrality, Trump exerted increased pressure on the Palestinians, accusing them of failing to make necessary concessions. Concurrently, he sought support from Arab states to compel their leaders to actively participate in negotiations.⁹² When these coercive tactics did not yield the desired results, the administration modified its approach, anticipating that the Palestinians would be willing to negotiate in exchange for financial incentives. This blend of pressure tactics and economic inducements to achieve foreign policy objectives became a defining characteristic of Trump's diplomatic strategy.⁹³ In this context, in June 2019, Kushner presented the economic component of the peace plan at

90 Barak Ravid, "White House working to reassure Evangelicals on Middle East peace plan." *Axios*, June 29, 2020, <https://www.axios.com/2019/03/09/trump-kushner-middle-east-peace-plan-evangelicals>. Spector, "This Year in Jerusalem," 11.

91 Ceren Gürseler, "Filistin-İsrail Sorununda Trump'ın Fait Accompli Girişimi: 'Yüzyılın Planı,'" *Barış Araştırmaları ve Çatışma Çözümleri Dergisi* 9, no. 2 (July 31, 2021): 381-83.

92 Karel Valansi, "İsrail – Filistin Çatışmasına Bir Bakış: Barış Planlarının Rolü ve Geleceği," *İstanbul Politik Araştırmalar Enstitüsü*, November 16, 2020, 1-3.

93 "Peace to Prosperity," *The White House*, January, 2020; 4, 19-20, <https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Peace-to-Prosperity-0120.pdf>.

a conference in Bahrain. The plan, titled “Peace for Prosperity,” promised a prosperous future for the Palestinian people.⁹⁴

On January 28, 2020, Trump announced what he referred to as the Deal of the Century, officially titled “Peace for Prosperity: A Vision for Improving the Lives of the Palestinian and Israeli Peoples.”⁹⁵ The plan established basic guidelines for future negotiations but departed significantly from the principles underlying previous peace efforts, such as Camp David, Oslo, and Annapolis. It also diverged from core UN peace principles, including Resolutions 242 and 338, which called for Israel to return to the 1967 borders.⁹⁶ Although the plan emphasized that it was based on a two-state solution, it aimed to establish a Palestinian state while prioritizing Israel’s security. The plan limited Palestinian sovereignty to ensure that the state would not pose a threat to Israel. It also outlined specific conditions for the establishment of a Palestinian state, including the recognition of Israel as a Jewish state, “the rejection of terrorism,” and the fulfillment of Israel’s security needs, as well as those of the broader region.⁹⁷ In terms of borders, the Palestinians were not granted their pre-1967 borders. Israel would retain its settlements within its territory, and Jerusalem would remain undivided. Trump reinforced this stance on December 6, 2017, when he declared Jerusalem the undivided capital of Israel. Palestine was allocated the Abu Dis neighborhood, located outside the security barrier, as its designated part of East Jerusalem.⁹⁸

Regarding the status of Jerusalem, Kushner emphasized during a CNN interview that the city would remain unified under Israeli sovereignty, underscoring its designation as the “ancient Jewish capital.” He further noted that both Prime Minister Netanyahu and General Benny Gantz endorsed his vision and expressed a shared commitment to achieving peace.⁹⁹ Nonetheless, the proposed plan was markedly unilateral, having been formulated in close collaboration with Israeli officials. The composition of the drafting team – entirely Jewish and closely aligned with Israeli policy positions – reinforced the perception that the initiative was developed within a narrowly defined circle, with minimal engagement from external stakeholders. According to a senior White House official, the plan, which remained secret

94 Ward, “Trump’s top Middle East peace envoy is quitting. There’s still no Israel-Palestine deal.”

95 “Peace to Prosperity.”

96 Valansi, “İsrail – Filistin Çatışmasına,” 1-3; Gürseler, “Filistin-İsrail Sorununda” 394-96.

97 “Peace to Prosperity,” 4-10, 33-35.

98 “Peace to Prosperity,” 11-13, 14-17.

99 Jared Kushner “Jared Kushner: A pivotal moment in the Middle East” CNN, January 29, 2020, <https://edition.cnn.com/2020/01/29/opinions/jared-kushner-pivotal-moment-middle-east-peace-plan/index.html>.

until its public reveal, was accessed from start to finish by just four people – the two main figures, U.S. Ambassador to Israel David Friedman, and Kushner's aide, Avi Berkowitz. Even Trump was not fully briefed on the details. Although Secretary of State Pompeo, Vice President Pence, and National Security Advisor John Bolton were initially apprised of the initiative, they did not participate in its formulation, effectively delegating authority to Kushner and his immediate team.¹⁰⁰ Both Christian Zionist groups and Palestinian representatives were largely excluded from the planning process. While Christian Zionists were occasionally afforded opportunities to express their perspectives and receive limited information, their involvement remained peripheral.

Despite earlier claims that the group was on the verge of distancing itself from Trump, Rosenberg's statement – expressing their trust in Trump on Israel and that he is not an enemy of Israel like Obama – suggested that they were ultimately leaving all decision-making to Kushner's team.¹⁰¹ The group, which believes that no land should be compromised, welcomed the peace plan due to their trust in Trump, even though the plan proposed making a portion of East Jerusalem the Palestinian capital, potentially contradicting prophecy. Hagee, who views a peaceful resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict before the second coming of Jesus as a challenge to God's plan, called it the best peace proposal ever put forward by any U.S. administration. They viewed the plan as a step closer to realizing the biblical map of Israel. Some argued that Trump's actions were in line with biblical recognition, asserting that the plan was not a true two-state solution, because it already assigned security responsibilities to Israel. Christian Zionists legitimized the situation by referencing the biblical example of Abraham dividing his property after a dispute with Lot. One of the defining traits of Christian Zionists, which contributed to the perception that they influenced Israel policy, was their ability to justify any decision through religious reasoning, even when it was independent of their direct involvement.¹⁰²

In unveiling the plan, Trump underscored the U.S. withdrawal from the nuclear deal, the assassination of Soleimani, and Arab-Israeli cooperation, suggesting that the Palestinian issue had taken a backseat.¹⁰³ The signifi-

100 Steve Holland, "In leaky White House, Trump team keeps Middle East peace plan secret," *Reuters*, April 11, 2019, <https://www.reuters.com/article/world/in-leaky-white-house-trump-team-keeps-middle-east-peace-plan-secret-idUSKCN1RM2GX/>.

101 Yonat Shimron, "Evangelicals embrace Trump's peace plan, saying it recognizes the Bible 'as legal'," <https://religionnews.com/>, January 29, 2020, <https://religionnews.com/2020/01/29/evangelicals-embrace-trumps-peace-plan-sayingit-recognizes-the-bible-as-legal/>.

102 Shimron, "Evangelicals embrace Trump's". Aldrovandi, "Theo-Politics in the Holy," 118.

103 Valansi, "İsrail – Filistin Çatışmasına," 1-2.

cance of the plan lay in its emphasis on US-led regional cooperation and an alliance against Iran, which it framed as “dramatic changes.” The administration aimed to separate the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from Israeli-Arab and Israeli-Muslim relations, facilitating integration between the two sides. The conflict was seen as benefiting Iran, and establishing close relations between Israel and the Gulf states was deemed essential to counter that influence as quickly as possible.¹⁰⁴

The Abraham Accords

Diplomatic efforts to cooperate against Iran continued with meetings between the U.S., Israel, and the UAE in February and December 2019. With the treaty, the Palestinian issue was taken off the table, removing a major obstacle to forming an alliance between the Arab states and Israel.¹⁰⁵ On August 13, 2020, President Trump publicly announced the agreement establishing official relations between the UAE and Israel, marking the culmination of years of diplomatic efforts between Israel and the Gulf states. Shortly afterward, Bahrain also agreed to normalize relations with Israel. On September 15, 2020, the Abraham Accords Peace Agreement was signed at the White House by Bahrain, the UAE, and Israel.¹⁰⁶

The agreement emphasized the promotion of interfaith dialogue, economic and cultural cooperation, and the advancement of diplomatic relations. Although Iran was not explicitly mentioned, the perceived Iranian threat played a significant role in the lead-up to the agreement. The threat Iran posed to the national security and territorial integrity of these countries necessitated a unified response. The parties aimed to coordinate their efforts with those of the U.S. The stated goal was to establish a “stable, peaceful, and prosperous Middle East” that would extend across the region. This framing also served to further marginalize and isolate both Palestine and Iran, while facilitating Israel’s integration into the regional order.¹⁰⁷

Kushner stated that regional leaders had become increasingly impatient with the Palestinian issue and were now prepared to accept the reality of Is-

104 “Peace to Prosperity,” 2-4, 36-37.

105 Okur and Özçelik, “Trump Yönetimi Döneminde,” 14-16; Gürseler, “Filistin-İsrail Sorununda,” 403-5. Polen Bayrak, “Abraham Accords: Palestine issue should be addressed for a peaceful Middle East,” *Cappadocia Journal of Area Studies* 3, no. 1 (June 2021): 107-9.

106 “Abraham Accords Peace Agreement: Treaty of Peace, Diplomatic Relations and Full Normalization Between The United Arab Emirates and The State of Israel,” United States Department of State, September 15, 2020, https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/UAE_Israel-treaty-signed-FINAL-15-Sept-2020-508.pdf.

107 “The Abraham Accords Declaration,” 1-3; Kirk, “American Evangelicals, the Gulf.”

rael's presence. He described the agreements as a strategic effort to reshape the region and enhance U.S. national security. The most influential figure was Jared Kushner, who was so confident in his vision that he established a think tank – *the Abraham Accords Institute for Peace* – alongside his close aide Avi Berkowitz, to further his efforts and promote increased normalization between Israel and the Arab states.¹⁰⁸

As for Christian Zionists, CUFI welcomed the Abraham Accords, stating that Iran poses a threat to all nations in the region.¹⁰⁹ Rosenberg contended that the Abraham Accords were a much more strategic initiative than annexation, and emphasized that they exerted pressure on the administration to maintain this direction. Yet, this was typical of their approach, as they were skilled at taking credit for successes.¹¹⁰

Conclusion

In discussions about U.S.-Israel relations, the influence of Evangelical groups is often portrayed as a primary driver behind U.S.'s strong support for Israel. This narrative, particularly prominent during the Trump era, has significantly shaped perceptions. However, it increasingly diverges from reality, as several factors contribute to this widespread misconception.

Firstly, Christian Zionists typically present Evangelicalism as a cohesive and unified bloc. Much of the research in this area fails to capture the nuanced distinctions within this religious ideology, often relying on definitions provided by Christian Zionists themselves. Therefore, the notion persists that those who adhere to Christian Zionism constitute a substantial segment of the U.S. population. This mischaracterization further contributes to the erroneous belief that all Evangelicals are aligned in their support for Israel.

Moreover, Christian Zionists assert that any decisions regarding Israel – which occur independently of their influence – are ultimately shaped by their pressure. Their ability to frame political actions within a religious context creates the illusion of significant influence over Israel policy. The intricate relationship between religion and politics in the U.S. amplifies this perception. Occasionally, officials employ rhetoric that resonates with Christian Zionism to legitimize their choices and mobilize public support. However, it is crucial to recognize that this rhetorical emphasis often stems

108 Bess Levin, "Jared Kushner, Foreign Policy Genius in His Own Mind, Is Founding an 'Institute for Peace'," *Vanity Fair*, May 5, 2021, https://www.vanityfair.com/news/2021/05/jared-kushner-peace-institute?srltid=AfmBOoq0o_X5MCBjI3oFh_jV8W50EwG-CjQNgvKfn83RHNFB-Chhc3Yx0.

109 Kirk, "American Evangelicals, the Gulf."

110 Levin, "Jared Kushner, Foreign," Okur and Özçelik, "Trump Yönetimi Döneminde," 16.

from deeper identity values. While such rhetoric may be utilized by political leaders, it is strategically embraced by Christian Zionists to advance their agenda.

Additionally, the consensus between U.S. administrations and Christian Zionists regarding support for Israel obscures the varying motivations involved. American administrations typically advocate for Israel based on shared values and strategic interests, whereas Christian Zionists are motivated by a vision rooted in biblical prophecy. In essence, a clearer understanding of these dynamics reveals the complexities of U.S.-Israel relations, encouraging a more nuanced dialogue that goes beyond simplistic narratives.

The perception of Christian Zionists as a powerful force is misleading; in reality, the group is relatively weak. The reasons for their ineffectiveness can be divided into internal and external factors. The primary internal factor is that Evangelicalism does not constitute a monolithic faith but rather represents an umbrella term that encompasses a diverse array of fragmented beliefs. While a substantial number of individuals identify with this broad category, the theological differences among them hinder their ability to unite around common political objectives or to function as a cohesive advocacy group. Even within White Conservative Evangelicalism, different factions are centered around various charismatic leaders, and their differing ideas often lead to internal strife and factionalism. This power struggle, coupled with the leaders' mutual disaffection, weakens the overall structure.

A second intrinsic reason for the ineffectiveness of Christian Zionists is that, although they outnumber Jews, they are markedly disadvantaged in terms of education and income. This disparity diminishes their potential to exert influence over the American political landscape. For instance, during the Trump administration, individuals with close ties to the Israel Lobby occupied significant roles in the cabinet and played crucial roles in shaping U.S. policy toward Israel. In contrast, Christian Zionists remain an external influence, lacking the same degree of direct impact on policymaking.

The third internal factor is the decreasing size and influence of this group. White Evangelicals have become increasingly fragmented, both within the U.S. in general and the Republican Party in particular. The number of marginal Christian Zionists is steadily declining, and support for Israel among younger generations is waning. Instead of viewing Evangelicals as a formidable political force, it is more accurate to interpret their political engagement and alignment with authority as a means of 'survival.' Furthermore,

their ability to bolster their position through collaboration with other groups is undermined by rhetoric that is often perceived as threatening and contains elements of significant racism. Consequently, their influence remains confined to a very narrow scope.

When examining the external factors, the only place where Christian Zionists can exert influence is the Republican Party. Even if these groups' concerns are understood within the party, particularly by the presidents, the presidents are not part of them. While administrations offer rhetorical support to these groups, they do so primarily to address a broader conservative base.

Another factor is that foreign policy decision-making in the U.S. occurs at a level where these groups are not directly involved, and the pluralist system prevents any single group from capturing the apparatus of power. Since power is divided and distributed at the constitutional level, structures aiming to seize power must succeed on multiple fronts. In American political culture, religious groups have the opportunity to assert themselves in the political arena, but they cannot achieve absolute supremacy on their own.¹¹¹

When we view Christian Zionism as a subset of White Conservative Evangelicalism, rather than focusing solely on Israel, and consider what they have achieved in domestic politics, the limits of their power become clearer. It would be highly misguided to claim that a group with no tangible success, or influence in domestic politics can exert significant influence in international politics.

Citation/Atıf / الاقتباس

Mandacı, Yasin. "Christian Zionism and Its Influence on Trump's Israel Policy." *Ortadoğu Etütleri* 16, no. 2 (2025): 231–264.

<https://doi.org/10.47932/ortetut.1696777>.

111 Robert B. Fowler, Alan D. Hertzke, and Laura L. Olson, "Amerika'da Din ve Siyasal Kültür," trans. Talip Küçükcan, *Avrasya Dosyası* 6, no. 2 (2000): 185–86.

Bibliography

- Abadan, Nermin. "Devlet İdaresinde Menfaat Gruplarının Rolü." *Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi* 14, no.1 (1959): 233-248.
- United States Department of State. "Abraham Accords Peace Agreement : Treaty Of Peace, Diplomatic Relations and Full Normalization Between The United Arab Emirates and The State of Israel." September 15, 2020. https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/UAE_Israel-treaty-signed-FINAL-15-Sept-2020-508.pdf.
- Aderet, Ofer. "Sheldon Adelson Laid to Rest on Jerusalem's Mount of Olives." *Haaretz*, January 15, 2021. <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2021-01-15/ty-article/.premium/sheldon-adelson-laid-to-rest-on-jerusalems-mount-of-olives/0000017f-e4d7-d804-ad7f-f5ff61a10000>
- Albayrak, H Şule. "ABD'de Hıristiyan Siyonizmi: Kökeni, İnanç Esasları ve Günümüz Amerikan Siyasetine Etkisi." *Darülfünun İlahiyat* 30, no. 1 (2019): 141-69.
- Aldrovandi, Carlo. "Theo-Politics in the Holy Land Christian Zionism and Jewish Religious Zionism." *Religion Compass* 5, no.4 (2011): 114-128
- Aliyev, Tural. "The Evaluation of the Nuclear Weapon Agreement with Iran in the Perspective of the Difference between Obama and Trump's Administration." *R&S - Research Studies Anatolia Journal* 4, no. 1 (2021): 30-40.
- Armstrong, Karen. *Tanrı Adına Savaş*. Translated by Murat Erdem. Alfa, 2017.
- Ataman, Muhittin. "Değerler ve Çıkarlar: ABD'nin Ortadoğu Politikasını Belirleyen Temel Unsurlar ve İlkeler," in *Ortadoğu Yılığ*, edited by Kemal İnat, Muhittin Ataman Nobel Yayın, 2008.
- Batrawy, Aya. "US Christian evangelical delegation meets Saudi crown prince." *AP News*, September 11, Eylül 2019. <https://apnews.com/article/e7f10269e60b46da-be31c455fa04017e>.
- Bayrak, Polen. "Abraham Accords: Palestine issue should be addressed for a peaceful Middle East." *Cappadocia Journal of Area Studies* 3, no. 1 (June 2021).
- Bedir, Şener Faruk. "Reformasyon'dan Günümüze Evanjelik Hristiyanlık." *Birey ve Toplum Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 3, no. 2 (2013): 73-98.
- Belin, Célia. "Trump's Jerusalem decision is a victory for Evangelical politics." *The Brookings Institution*, December 15, 2017. <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/trumps-jerusalem-decision-is-a-victory-for-evangelical-politics/>.
- Ben Barka, Mokhtar. "The New Christian Right's Relations with Israel and with the American Jews: The Mid-1970s Onward." *E-Rea*, no. 10.1 (December 20, 2012).
- Black, Ian. "Donald Trump and the Middle East." *Political Studies Association* 9, no. 1 (February 28, 2018).
- Buhari, Ömer Kemal. "(Dost) Düşmanlar: Hıristiyan Siyonizmde Antisemitizm ve Anti-İslamizm." *Cumhuriyet İlahiyat Dergisi* 23, no. 3 (2019): 1315-30.
- Colvin, Jill. "Evangelical leaders rally around Kushner amid Russia probe." *AP News*, July 25, 2017. <https://apnews.com/article/b9b57fb0a2bc43a8bc85538532e28bb0>.

- Cortellessa, Eric. "Trump signs waiver, won't move US embassy to Jerusalem." *Times of Israel*, June 1, 2017. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/trump-signs-waiver-to-keep-us-embassy-in-tel-aviv/>.
- Çoban, Filiz. "Amerikan Kimliği ve Dış Politikasında Evanjelizmin İzleri: Sosyal-İnşacı Perspektiften ABD-İsrail İlişkileri." *İnsan ve Toplum Bilimleri Araştırmaları Dergisi* 6, no. 3 (2017): 2019-2037.
- Çobanoğlu, Ali. "Din Unsurunun Dış Politika Etkileri." *Filistin Araştırmaları Dergisi*, no. 11 (2022): 70-103.
- Dart, Ron, ve Colter Louwerse. "Donald Trump and the Christian Zionist Lobby: Letter from Canada." *Journal of Holy Land and Palestine Studies* 16, no. 2 (November 2017): 237-43.
- Day, Chad. "Key events in Michael Flynn's interactions with Russia." *AP News*, December 2, 2017. <https://apnews.com/9e1bab6d398c42b7a35d133588b369cd>.
- Durbin, Sean. "From King Cyrus to Queen Esther: Christian Zionists' discursive construction of Donald Trump as God's instrument." *Critical Research on Religion* 8, no. 2 (2020): 115-37.
- Fowler, Robert B., Alan D. Hertzke, and Laura L. Olson. "Amerika'da Din ve Siyasal Kültür." Translated by Talip Küçükcan. *Avrasya Dosyası* 6, no.2 (2000): 154-186.
- Fox, Ben. "Tillerson says Kushner conducted foreign policy without him." *AP News*, June 28, 2019. <https://apnews.com/article/7fa3d3e354014e0a864601fc8f6f24ff>.
- Gray, Rosie. "What Does the Billionaire Family Backing Donald Trump Really Want?" *The Atlantic*, January 27, 2017. <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2017/01/no-one-knows-what-the-powerful-merciers-really-want/514529/>.
- Güleç, Cansu. "Dış Politika Analizinde Karar Verme Süreci ve Karar Verme Modelleri." *Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart Üniversitesi Uluslararası Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 3, no. 1 (2018): 79-102.
- Gündüz, Şinasi. "Evanjelizm: Hristiyan Fanatizmi," *Hikav*, September 20, 2018. <https://hikav.org/makaleler/evanjelizm-hiristiyan-fanatizmi/>.
- Güngör, Ali İ. *Evanjellikler. İlgi Kültür Sanat Yayınları*, 2016.
- Güngör, Ali İ. "Hristiyanlıkta Püriten Anlayış ve Etkileri." *Dini Araştırmalar* 7, no.21 (2005): 7-26.
- Gürseler, Ceren. "Filistin-İsrail Sorununda Trump'ın Fait Accompli Girişimi: 'Yüzyılın Planı.'" *Barış Araştırmaları ve Çatışma Çözümleri Dergisi* 9, no. 2 (2021): 378-415.
- Haberman, Maggie. *Confidence Man: The Making of Donald Trump and the Breaking of America*. Penguin Press, 2022.
- Hadden, Jeffrey K. "Religious Broadcasting and the Mobilization of the New Christian Right." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 26, no. 1 (1987): 1-24.
- Halsell, Grace. *Tanrıyı Kıyamete Zorlamak*. Translated by Mustafa Acar. Serbest Kitaplar, 2021.

- Hartmann, Margaret and Nick Tabor. "Everything We've Learned From Robert Mueller's Investigation." <https://nymag.com/>, April 17, 2019. <https://nymag.com/intelligencer/article/robert-mueller-investigation-what-we-know.html>.
- Holland, Steve. "In leaky White House, Trump team keeps Middle East peace plan secret." *Reuters*, April 11, 2019. <https://www.reuters.com/article/world/in-leaky-white-house-trump-team-keeps-middle-east-peace-plan-secret-idUSKCN1RM2GX/>.
- The White House, "Peace to Prosperity," January, 2020, <https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Peace-to-Prosperity-0120.pdf>.
- İncil. Kitab-ı Mukaddes Şirketi, 2020.
- Karlsson, Ingmar. Din, Terör ve Hoşgörü. Translated by Turhan Kayaoğlu. Homer Yayınları, 2005.
- Kauppi, Mark V. and Paul R. Viotti. *International Relations Theory*. 6th Edition. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2020.
- Kirk, Mimi. "American Evangelicals, the Gulf States, and Israel: A Cynical Covenant." *Arab Center*, August 24, 2022. <https://arabcenterdc.org/resource/american-evangelicals-the-gulf-states-and-israel-a-cynical-covenant/>.
- Kirk, Mimi. "Countering Christian Zionism in the Age of Trump." <https://merip.org/Middle-East-Report-Online>, August 8, 2019. <https://merip.org/2019/08/countering-christian-zionism-in-the-age-of-trump/>.
- Koehler, Walter J. "A look at the positive side of neo-evangelicalism." *Consensus* 13, no. 1 (1987): 81-88.
- Kushner, Jared. "Jared Kushner: A pivotal moment in the Middle East." *CNN*, January 29, 2020. <https://edition.cnn.com/2020/01/29/opinions/jared-kushner-pivotal-moment-middle-east-peace-plan/index.html>.
- Levin, Bess. "Jared Kushner, Foreign Policy Genius in His Own Mind, Is Founding an 'Institute for Peace.'" *Vanity Fair*, May 5, 2021. https://www.vanityfair.com/news/2021/05/jared-kushner-peace-institute?srsId=AfmBOoq0o_X5MCBjI3oFh_jV8W50EwG-CjQNgvKfn83RHNFbChhc3Yx0.
- Lynch, Colum. "What's Next for Christian Zionists?" *Foreign Policy*, July 19, 2021. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/07/19/christian-zionists-israel-trump-netanyahu-evangelicals/>.
- Mascaro, Lisa and Federman, Josef. "Congress questions sale of US residence in Israel to Adelson." *Washington Post*, September 9, 2020. https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/congress-questions-sale-of-us-residence-in-israel-to-adelson/2020/09/09/a1c5a414-f2f6-11ea-8025-5d3489768ac8_story.html.
- McFadden, Robert D. "Sheldon Adelson, Billionaire Donor to G.O.P. and Israel, Is Dead at 87." *The New York Times*, January 12, 2021. <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/12/business/sheldon-adelson-dead.html#:~:text=12%2C%202021-,Sheldon%20G.,He%20was%2087.>
- Miller, Emily McFarlan. "All the president's clergymen: A close look at Trump's 'unprecedented' ties with evangelicals." *Religion News*, September 5, 2017. <https://religionnews.com/2017/09/05/all-the-presidents-clergymen-a-close-look-at-trumps-unprecedented-ties-with-evangelicals/>.

- Moore, Johnnie, and Joel C. Rosenberg. "We visited Saudi Arabia on the eve of 9/11. The Kingdom is changing for good." *Al Arabiya*, September 19, 2019. <https://english.alarabiya.net/views/news/middle-east/2019/09/19/We-visited-Saudi-Arabia-on-the-eve-of-9-11-the-Kingdom-is-changing-for-good>.
- Okur, Mehmet Akif, and Onur Mert Özçelik. "Trump Yönetimi Döneminde ABD'nin İsrail ve İran Politikası: Köktenci Evanjeliklerin Etkisi." *Akademik İncelemeler Dergisi* 16, no. 2 (2021): 1-25.
- Okur, Mehmet Akif, and Onur Mert Özçelik. "The evangelical effect over Donald Trump's policies toward Israel and Iran." *Yıldız Social Sciences Institute Journal* 5, no. 1 (2021): 12-25.
- "Opening Ceremony of the US Embassy in Jerusalem," Posted May 14, 2018, by Guardian News, Youtube, 1 hour., 35 min., 21 sec., <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p-9jXnQBObxw>.
- Özkan, Ali R. "Amerikan Fundamentalizminin Dünü Bugünü." *Atatürk Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 1, no. 18 (2002): 33-47
- Öztürk, Mehmet. "Trump'ın Kudüs Kararının Bir Analizi." *İnsan ve Toplum Bilimleri Araştırmaları Dergisi* 8, no. 4 (2019): 2876-2905.
- Pazzanese, Christina. "Tillerson's exit interview." *The Harvard Gazette*, September 18, 2019. <https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2019/09/rex-tillerson-details-his-frustrations-on-iran-israel-russia-and-his-revamp-of-the-state-department/>.
- Pence, Mike. "Remarks by the Vice President at the Christians United for Israel Washington Summit," July 17, 2017. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-the-vice-president-the-christians-united-for-israel-washington-summit>.
- Politico. "AP: Adelson offers to help pay for Jerusalem embassy." February 23, 2018. <https://www.politico.com/story/2018/02/23/sheldon-adelson-pay-jerusalem-embassy-422732>.
- Ravid, Barak. "White House working to reassure Evangelicals on Middle East peace plan." *Axios*, June 29, 2020. <https://www.axios.com/2019/03/09/trump-kushner-middle-east-peace-plan-evangelicals>.
- Relman, Eliza. "Jared Kushner's 28-year-old protégé is his right-hand man in the White House." *Business Insider*, April 5, 2017. <https://www.businessinsider.com/jared-kushner-avi-berkowitz-trump-2017-3>.
- Robertson, Pat. "Why Evangelical Christians Support Israel." Accessed March 5, 2025, <https://www.patrobertson.com/Speeches/IsraelLauder.asp>.
- Scott, Donald M. "The Religious Origins of Manifest Destiny." Accessed February 2, 2025, *National Humanities Center*, <https://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/tserve/nineteen/nkeyinfo/mandestiny.htm>.
- Sebastian, Michael. "A Close Look at Donald Trump's Cabinet." *Marie Claire*. July 28, 2017. <https://www.marieclaire.com/politics/a23922/donald-trump-cabinet-appointments/>.
- Shimron, Yonat. "Evangelicals embrace Trump's peace plan, saying it recognizes the Bible 'as legal'." *Religion News*. January 29, 2020. <https://religionnews.com/2020/01/29/evangelicals-embrace-trumps-peace-plan-saying-it-recognizes-the-bible-as-legal/>.

- Smith, Samuel. "Jared Kushner Is a 'Great Gift,' 'Key Liaison' to the Evangelical Community, Christian Leaders Say." *The Christian Post*, July 25, 2017. <https://www.christianpost.com/news/jared-kushner-great-gift-key-liaison-evangelical-community-christian-leaders.html>.
- Spector, Stephen. *Evangelicals and Israel: The Story of American Christian Zionism*. Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Spector, Stephen. "This Year in Jerusalem: Prophecy, Politics, and the U.S. Embassy in Israel". *Journal of Church and State* 61, no. 4 (2019): 551-71.
- Stasson, Anneke. "The Politicization of Family Life: How Headship Became Essential to Evangelical Identity in the Late Twentieth Century." *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation* 24, no. 1 (2014): 100-138.
- Swartz, David R. "The Evangelical Left and the Politicization of Evangelicalism" In *American Evangelicalism: George Marsden and the State of American Evangelicalism*, ed. Darren Dochuk, Thomas S. Kidd, and Kurt W. Peterson, (University of Notre Dame Press, 2014), 446-49.
- Telhami, Shibley. "Why is Trump undoing decades of U.S. policy on Jerusalem?" <https://www.brookings.edu/>, December 5, 2017. <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/why-is-trump-about-to-declare-jerusalem-the-capital-of-israel/>.
- The Times of Israel. "Trump: Adelson 'tirelessly advocated' for embassy move to Jerusalem," January 12, 2021. https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/trump-adelson-tirelessly-advocated-for-embassy-move-to-jerusalem/.
- Trump, Donald J. *Yeniden Büyük Amerika*. Translated by İrem Sağlam. Pegasus Yayınları, 2017.
- Ülgül, Murat. "Faith abroad: how religion shapes Trump administration's foreign policy." *International Relations* 35, no. 4 (2021): 551-573.
- Ürek, Markus and Nejat Doğan. *Lobicilik ve Baskı Grupları : Devlet Sivil Toplum ve Demokrasi*. 2011. İnkılap, 2011.
- Valansi, Karel. "İsrail – Filistin Çatışmasına Bir Bakış: Barış Planlarının Rolü ve Geleceği." *İstanbul Politik Araştırmalar Enstitüsü*, November 16, 2020.
- Wagner, Donald. "Reagan and Begin, Bibi and Jerry: The Theopolitical Alliance of the Likud Party with the American Christian Right." *Arab Studies Quarterly* 20, no. 4 (1998): 33-51.
- Ward, Alex. "Trump's top Middle East peace envoy is quitting. There's still no Israel-Palestine deal.," <https://www.vox.com>, September 6, 2019. <https://www.vox.com/2019/9/5/20851230/jason-greenblatt-israel-palestine-middle-east-trump>.
- Wolff, Michael. *Ateş ve Öfke*. Translated by Cesi Mizrahi. Doğan Kitap, 2018.