

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SOCIETY FOR BIBLICAL STUDIES

Was Jesus Really Jewish? cont'd.

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The routine translation of the Greek words *Ioudaios/Ioudaioi* into *Jew/Jews* in biblical translation is not only unnecessary by any principle of translation, it is also historically inaccurate and misleading in a way that encourages modern ethnic stereotypes. The ethics of the Bible are susceptible to modern moral critique, e.g., when it endorses colonialism, genocide, slavery and the subjugation of women. In the case of modern translations, it is not the Bible that does damage to Jews, it is the translators, who incorrectly and insensitively equate modern Jews and Judaism with an ancient past. Modern Jews certainly trace their spiritual ancestry to the time of Jesus and earlier, but it is not correct to call Jesus a Jew any more than it is to

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America.

Some critics of the so-called ground zero mosque project recall the Holocaust when Jews were lured into concentration camps under the pretense that these were actually holiday camps. The implicit warning is that evil is usually disguised and the mosque project is actually a cover for a more sinister ambition. The essence of evil is indeed its disguise, which is why I object so strenuously to the pretensions of so many of the critics of the development of the community center. I also think it is absolutely right to recall the memory of the Holocaust, because the stereotyping of Muslims and Islam that is going on today in America and elsewhere strikes me as being eerily reminiscent of the stereotyping of Jews in the early 1930's in Nazi Germany, not only as "the other" but "other" in a seditious, sinister way.

I am writing this comment from a place where the words "Never again" have deep, personal meaning for a lot of

people. To me, never again means never again against anybody or any religion. Before there were gas chambers there were racial, religious and ethnic stereotyping that dehumanized and demonized the Jews. I am afraid this is happening in America today. This time, Muslims and Islam are the targets.

I too am concerned about religiously motivated violence. But my experience has taught me that Islam is far too complicated a religion and Muslim people far too diverse, just as much as Christians are, to characterize them in one rather negative way. Western suspicion and mistrust of peoples of the East is deeply rooted. It sees the peoples of the East as inimical to our way of life and determined to destroy us. It is ironic that this mistrust is mirrored by notorious expositors of violent jihad. Too many critics of the so-called ground zero mosque have too much in common with the likes of Osama bin Laden. The distance from Jihad to Crusade is not so great after all.

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Was Jesus Really Jewish?

Peter J. Miano

That Jesus and his contemporaries, such as Paul, were Jewish is almost uncontested in popular conversation. Preaching, Sunday school curricula and hymnody all reinforce this notion. Most scholars label Jesus *Jewish* as well, although it is a label that is attracting more and more critical scholarly attention, as it well should.

English translations of the Bible carelessly and misleadingly employ the term *Jew* to translate the Greek word *Ioudaios*, even though scholars know

full well that there are multiple meanings of the term *Ioudaios* that are thus lost in the misleading translation. In scholarship, the religion of Jesus and Paul is routinely referred to as Judaism. Jesus, Paul, their respective disciples and many of their enemies are routinely identified as Jews, as well. It has become axiomatic to say that Jesus was a Jew. Most scholars mechanically and uncritically repeat some variation of the theme that "The first Christians were Jews." (Owen Chadwick) Even a cursory examination of the literature on the subject of the historical Jesus,

the most popular subject in New Testament studies, reveals the frequency with which the terms *Judaism*, *Jewish* and *Jew* appear in the scholarly discussion about 1st Century issues. Geza Vermes' *Jesus the Jew: A Historian's Reading of the Gospels* and E.P. Sanders' *Jesus and Judaism* are illustrative examples of landmark scholarship that define the terms of discourse. Yet in neither of these or any other works is there any attempt at definition. It is rare to find any

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Negotiations Under False Pretenses

Gershon Baskin

Direct Israeli-Palestinian negotiations are likely to begin in the near future. The international community under the conductor's wand of the Obama Administration has applied considerable pressure to Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas to withdraw from all of his demands for setting the conditions for his participation in the negotiations.

Abbas's demands were not without logic. His main concern is that negotiations are not the problem – decision making is. After so many years of Israeli-Palestinian bilateral negotiations

it is quite clear where the gaps are, or more correctly, where they were each time the negotiations reached their breaking point. The only way, according to Abbas, to ensure that there would be a chance of progress is to make sure that the talks begin from the point they arrived to in the last round. Why should the talks have to begin from the zero point, as if nothing has happened in the past 20 years?

In times gone by this would have been called "constructive ambiguity," a diplomatic term devised by Henry Kissinger which enabled previous Israeli-Arab talks and understandings. Since that time, much water has flowed in the Jordan and one of the lessons

learned from the Oslo process is that there is no such thing – there is no such thing as constructive ambiguity in the Israeli-Palestinian process; it often has had deadly consequences.

The main point of concern of the Palestinians remains the continued building of settlements and their expansion. During the Oslo process the number of settlers more than doubled in the same territory that the Palestinians believe must be part of their state, so how can Israel be negotiating in good faith if the settlement drive continues? This point is shared by the international community. However, no

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The Essence of Evil

Peter J. Miano

Nothing so illustrates the deterioration of public discourse in America than the current flap about the so-called ground zero mosque. The cheapening of public debate by itself is cause enough for alarm, because there is no democracy without public information. Popular pundits such as Glen Beck, Sean Hannity and Rush Limbaugh, not to mention once and future politicians such as Newt Gingrich and Sarah Palin, generate heat but remarkably little light on a broad spectrum of issues, especially this one, which is obviously a sensitive one. Rather, they flaunt their ratings as if the number of viewers or listeners validates their opinions. After all, 10,000 flies can't be wrong can they? I believe that sincerely concerned individuals deserve better than the misleading rants of sensationalistic, journalistic bottom feeders and opportunistic politicians who want to capitalize on a hot button issue.

More alarming than the decibel levels of public discourse, however, is the casual disregard for accuracy in reporting and the nonchalance with which ethnic and religious stereotyping creeps into public debate. The popular debate about the so-called ground zero mosque seems to center on the propriety of developing a section of lower Manhattan as a mosque. Critics tend to ignore the simple reality that there was a mosque within three blocks of the World Trade Center site before the twin towers were even built and that that mosque has remained active in the thirty years since their construction. They tend to ignore that there are two churches and a synagogue within a 5 block radius of the site of the September 11 attack. How does discrimination against a particular development project on the basis that, among other

Bless the Baby Smashers?

David Foreman and Bert Gary

Do you want to claim all the blessings of the Bible? I've heard pastors telling their congregants to claim this very thing. But I have reservations. And I raise my reservations in order to question common assumptions about what the Bible is and how to interpret it.

Now I like this blessing: Blessed is he who has regard for the weak; the LORD delivers him in times of trouble. (Psalm 41:1)

But look at this one: Blessed shall he be who takes your little ones and dashes them against the rock! (Psalm 137:9 - ESV)

Do I really want to claim *all* the blessings in the Bible? I realize the Bible assures us, "For every one of God's promises are "Yes" in him; therefore also through him the

Do I really want to claim all the blessings in the Bible? ...obviously I can't claim the right to be a blessed baby smasher, can I? Houston, we have a problem.

"Amen" is spoken, to the glory we give to God." (2 Cor 1:20 - NET) But obviously I can't claim the right to be a blessed baby smasher, can I? Houston, we have a problem.

As I have grown to love and trust the Bible, I've come to understand that the Scriptures "plainly" say a lot of things. But, where I see us frequently getting off track is when we fail to realize that, if not

reverently cautious to read Scriptures in context, we can read the Bible saying a lot of things that the Bible "plainly" doesn't say.

Here are two ten-dollar words that all students of the Bible should learn: *exegesis* [pronounced ek-si-JEE-sis] and *eisegesis* [pronounced ahy-si-JEE-sis].

Exegesis means "a reading out." It's the faithful attempt to interpret the message of Scriptures in context. *Eisegesis* means "a reading into." It's the frequent and unfortunate practice of imposing external assumptions on Scriptures to the neglect of a serious attempt to search for meaning in context.

Eisegesis has an unfortunate result in the church. I've seen too many dear saints look down on themselves because they've

"claimed" some biblical promise plucked from its context, only to have God "fail to deliver on his 'word.'" Since the fault can't be with God, they conclude that it must be a lack of faith on their part. So how can we address this, maybe even fix this?

I now look at it like this. Just because God seems to promise a

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one has been able to apply significant pressure on the Israeli government to continue the full settlement building freeze beyond the initial 10 months. It appears that it is much easier to apply pressure on the Palestinian side.

The apparent compromise or "fudging" that the international community has connived is the issuing of a statement by the Quartet which will indicate the basic parameters of the negotiations without Israel having to state out loud that it accepts them. This, it is believed, will satisfy Abbas's need to turn to his people with a victory before he sits at the very table that he has refused to sit at since the election of the Netanyahu government. The main problem with this is that both parties are essentially entering into negotiations under false pretenses.

Abbas probably didn't have a choice. He was surely told that the only way that the international community could persuade Netanyahu into continuing the settlement freeze, even partially, is if real negotiations were taking place. But soon the reality will sink in when the two sides are sitting at the table and there is no agreed starting point.

I had advised the Mitchell team to use the proximity talks in a very different way than they did. Proximity talks could have been intensive, they could have been held in the United States continuously. The proximity talks

created the position of mediator which has not existed until now in the process. The process could have empowered the mediator to conduct the talks on the basis of "single text negotiations" where the mediator is the author of the text and the point of reference in the negotiations is that text. The proximity talks could have been used to advance agreement on issues of substance and not on process.

From the outset of the proximity talks, "success" was defined as getting to direct negotiations. So, we can declare that we have success, but what now?

The direct talks must have a place at the table for the US mediator – direct talks, yes, but with Senator Mitchell there guiding the process, like he did in Northern Ireland. The mediator must be the one setting the agenda and when necessary, which will be from the very outset, offering the bridging proposals.

The mediator must be frank and direct with both sides, both when sitting together and when in private. Neither side has a BATNA (a term used in negotiations theory which stands for "the best alternative to a negotiated agreement"). Both parties might live in some kind of delusory reality which feels like the

status quo is alright. There may not be any sense of urgency on the ground in Israel and Palestine, as public opinion research demonstrates on both sides of the conflict line. But reality is significantly more complex. Failure to reach a

permanent status agreement in this round is dangerous for both peoples. Leading us to another dead-end in this process is no less than criminal negligence and an abuse of power and responsibility by both leaders.

Netanyahu and Abbas are the obstacle and the key to an agreement at the same time. Senator Mitchell and the Obama Administration will be there to help, but the agreement must be reached between the Israeli and Palestinian leaders.

Can the weight of responsibility and the small window of opportunity enable these two men to go where they have never gone before? Will Abbas be able to make the deal that will liberate his people and enable them to be free in their own land? Will Netanyahu be able to let go of the dream of greater Israel and let loose the shackles of control over the Palestinians that Israel has held since 1967?

The answer is yes if the two will stop lying to their people and face up to the reality that the mutual survival of both peoples resides in an agreement that partitions the land between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean sea into two states, for two peoples, on the basis of the 1967 lines, with Jerusalem as the capitals of both states, and the right of return for both peoples to their own nation-states.

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During the Oslo process the number of settlers more than doubled, so how can Israel be negotiating in good faith if the settlement drive continues?

Bless the Baby Smashers?, *cont'd.*

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blessing? There are a few Scriptures about it (2 Kgs 8:12; Isa 13:16; Hos 13:16; Nah 3:10). Amazingly, thanks to *eisegesis*, hardcore doctrines have been established on less! We've seen great misuses with New Age fads, for example, like "prosperity teaching." We then judge the faith of others by how nice of a car they drive. And if we drive a clunker, we judge ourselves as faith-deficient. Let's not let these abuses slide. Yes, the Bible is "good for doctrine," but this doesn't mean that we can skim, pluck something out, and twist it to fit our whims.

"Passing children through the fire" was the Ammonite's practice of pagan child sacrifice to the calf-headed man-god named Molech (2 Kings 16:3; 2 Chronicles 28:3, 33:6; Jeremiah 7:31; 19:2-6), and this practice was prohibited by the Old Testament as idolatrous (not to mention abhorrent). Parallel-ing this pagan worship barbarism was the gruesome military practice employed by some of Israel's enemies of dashing captured children on rocks, even opening up the wombs of captured pregnant women to accomplish this.

These practices were despised by the biblical writers. Yet in Psalm 137, baby smashing is given a painful twist. The psalmist bemoans Israel's captivity in Babylon. There is weeping and unimaginable hardship. He calls his captors tormentors. He calls Babylon a devastator. With very honest, human

frustration, the writer dreams of pay-back. He can't help it. He expresses his desire in verse 9 that the tables might one day be turned on his captors. While Israelites usually avoided the barbarism of foreign powers, like baby smashing, he cries out a blessing on someone, anyone, who might one day smash *Babylon's* babies on rocks. *Let them one day feel our pain.*

Context is everything in biblical *exegesis*, and in the Old Testament there is an intentional contrast between the atrocities of war and idolatrous child sacrifices of her neighbors, and the practices of Israel, the people chosen of God.

Idolatry, of course, is when we worship something other than God. Today, too many Christians treat the Bible as an object of worship, almost as if it's a fourth member of the Holy Trinity. But his Word (Jesus is the Word of God—John 1:1-4, 14; Rev 19:13) is a person who is alive, active, more powerful than a double-edged sword, and *not* confined to a book, not even the Holy Bible.

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object to fear mongering and deliberate distortions. I also object to religious slurs which infiltrate civic discourse in America more and more each day.

Critics of the so-called ground zero mosque project rely on and promote a perception of Muslims and Islam in general that is as misinformed as it is repugnant. One way or another, they claim that Islam is particularly prone to violence. We know all too well of Islamic groups that promote violence. Do we really know how many of the 1 billion Muslims around the globe who agree with such violent actions? Why is there such a rush to characterize all Muslims based on the actions of an extreme minority? My experience over twenty years of living and working throughout the Middle East with Muslims does not allow me think like that. But really though, has any religion generated more violence than Christianity? Do we characterize Christianity as intrinsically violent, because of the actions of extremists like Timothy McVeigh, not to mention to more lethal episodes of the Crusades, the Inquisition, etc? Historically, the Bible has been employed to legitimate colonialism, slavery, and, among other not so noble endeavors, the subjugation of women. Maybe it would be well for more Christians to recall the words of Jesus when he said, "First take the log out of your own eye so you can see to take the spec out of your brother's" Here in Israel, I see Jewish extremists up close and first hand as much as I have seen Islamic extremists, but would that entitle me to characterize Judaism as purely violent? No religion is so simple to be characterized this way. To do so is the essence of bigotry and it is inconsistent with American religious values, or at least it should be. But I see this happening in

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suggestion that such labels are problematic. But yes, there is a problem with our modern translations of the Bible and the contemporary application of these modern terms to an ancient group.

My contention is that the terms *Jew* and *Judaism* are inappropriate when they are used for the first century or earlier. So, by the way is the term *Christian*. Not only are they historically inaccurate and

misleading, their use is morally irresponsible. If Jesus, his disciples, his friends, his family and his people were Jewish, then so were at least some of his enemies, because the biblical testimony is clear that Jesus was opposed, rejected, denied, betrayed and framed by his own people. The biblical testimony is just as clear that Jesus was crucified by the Romans, but at no place in the Gospels does Jesus betray any anti-Roman sentiment. Jesus' most

pointed remarks and most scathing critique is reserved for his own people. His enemies, i.e., those who opposed him, were his fellow Israelites. His friends and followers, i.e., those who also denied him, deserted him and betrayed him, were also his fellow Israelites. They are almost always called Jews in modern biblical scholarship.

I raise this issue not out of simple academic curiosity, but

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blessing, like the promise of blessings on baby smashers, does not mean we can "claim" that biblical promise for ourselves willy-nilly. Context matters to faithful interpretation. And most Christians would quickly agree, I think, that something is just wrong in randomly claiming promises that may mean something vastly different in context, and promises that may not even apply to them.

Look, brothers and sisters. What if it's not that God has failed on his promises or that you lacked faith? What if sound *exegesis* reveals that he never made those promises to you in the first place?

Jesus blessed a variety of people in what is called The Beatitudes recorded in his Sermon on the Mount. Here's one: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 5:3) This blessing is widely interpreted as: *I have to be poor in spirit to get the kingdom of heaven.* But who wants to be poor in spirit?

I don't! I've been there, and I wanted out. No one in their right mind, it seems to me, wants "the dark night of the soul." We are doing *eisegesis*, a reading into the Scripture our own false assumption. We are reading into Jesus' words something that's not there.

It takes nothing away from me and you that Jesus blesses those who at that moment (or any moment) may be walking through the valley of the shadow of death. This misreading is so human. We turn Jesus' beautiful blessing on those who are in deep despair into a "how to" formula for earning his blessing! Why can't we just celebrate that Jesus blesses people in spiritual meltdown, knowing that the time may come, sooner that we might wish, when one of those unfortunates may be one of us?

I believe, as Scripture says, all of God's promises are Yes and Amen. When God really makes you a promise, he will really keep it. But just because you make a quick reading (or misreading) of a verse, doesn't mean you can pre-

sume a personal promise from God. Sometimes you can, admittedly. Good *exegesis* bears it out. Here's an example, again from the Sermon on the Mount. "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me." (Matthew 5:11) Context and content both promise something straightforward and simple. It doesn't mean that you should go out trying to make people hate you and lie about you so you can earn the blessing! It means that when your love and loyalty to Jesus results in the deep hurt that comes from people hating you and lying about you, know deep in your heart that you are blessed personally by that same Lord. That's a biblical promise you can bank on when such a situation arises.

We can avoid misusing the Scriptures by the very way we approach them in the first place. Yes, Scripture is good for training, doctrine, etc. But (and I'm sure some "fundies" will crucify me for this)

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Scripture is not the “end all” in knowing God. This is not my opinion. Jesus said it. “You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me,⁴⁰ yet you refuse to come to me to have life.” (John 5:39-40)

He has life, not the paper and ink. The purpose of the Scriptures is to point us to life in *him*. Scriptures invite us to draw near to him, and let him reveal himself to us personally. Let him reveal truth to us personally. Scriptures are for our aid and guidance in getting to him. To make Scriptures more than that, biblically speaking, is idolatry. The Bible isn’t God. It points us to him and leads us to life abundant in a close personal relationship with him.

I have come to trust that the Bible is divinely inspired by God. But there is a difference between divine inspiration and divine "dictation." It was, after all, God who completely trusted the imperfect human beings who wrote and collected the documents in our Bible. He created these people, endowed them with intelligence and talent and skill, and employed them by the power of his Holy Spirit to write those things which lead us to knowledge of God.

This is why I cannot label the Bible, as it is often labeled, as an “owner’s manual,” a “playbook,” a “rulebook,” or a “how to guide.” These smack to me of marketing gimmicks. I see the Bible as the inspired story of God’s love for his people, and his determination to have a relationship of utter union with them. We are invited by Scripture to abide in him, even as he abides in us.

So what about the baby smashing

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because the common belief that Jesus, his people and by extension his enemies were Jews, which seems benign on the surface, lies at root of one of the more repugnant canards of Christian anti-Semitism, specifically the belief that *the Jews* killed Jesus. Such a canard deserves the moral disdain it has earned, but all the evidence suggests that it is historically incorrect too.

Even though modern scholarship routinely and uncritically refers to *Judaism* as a phenomenon with distinct religious, cultural and ethnic dimensions in the 1st Century, in extant 1st Century literature a term that can be loosely translated as *Judaism* occurs only one time (Gal. 1:13-14). This deficit is telling. Even more telling, however, is the simple fact that there is no place in scripture or any other extant 1st Century literature about Jesus where Jesus

refers to himself as a *Jew*. He does not use that label for himself. In the two locations in Paul’s letters where Paul identifies himself with labels, it is significant that he does not refer to himself as a *Ioudaios*. If Jesus or Paul were to self identify as *Jews*, they would use the Greek term *Ioudaios*. There are only two places in Scripture where Jesus is defined by the Greek term *Ioudaios* (Judean or Jew). In both instances, the term *Ioudaios* is employed by people who are not

members of the group to which Jesus and Paul both belong, which, by the way, they refer to as *Israel*. When the magi come from the East, they inquire of Herod, “Where is he who has been born king of the *Ioudaioi*?” (Mt. 2:2) When Jesus stands before Pilate, Pilate asks him, “Are you the king of the *Ioudaioi*?” (Mt. 27:11) Interestingly, neither Pilate nor the magi are Israelites. Moreover, when in the gospels, Israelites do label Jesus, they refer to him not as a *Ioudaios*, but as a *Galilean*. (*Galilaiou*, Mt. 26:69)

As I said, the mechanical, uncritical identification of Jesus and his people—including his enemies—as Jews is at the root of at least one of the repugnant canards of Christian anti-Semitism.

The noble efforts of scores of scholars and clergy to eradicate Christian anti-Semitism has not succeeded. Curiously, though, those same scores of clergy and scholars are among those most eager to label Jesus and his people—including his

enemies—as Jews. Are they or we required by any principle of biblical translation to render the Greek word *Ioudaios* with the English word *Jew*? The answer is an emphatic NO! The

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modern English word *Jew* derives from the ancient Greek word *Ioudaios*, but it does not correctly translate it. Forcing such a translation does damage to the meaning of the ancient biblical texts. Scholars know that the Greek word *Ioudaios*, as it is employed in the New Testament, has at least four distinct meanings. It was used in Roman society to refer to the group of people who were loosely related to the cult of Yahweh with its center in Jerusalem. This is the sense in which Tacitus uses it. Paul and Josephus

also use the term *Ioudaios*, but only when their audiences are composed of non-Israelites as it is in many of Paul’s letters. The term was also used to connote members of the ruling class in Jerusalem who administered the Temple cult. A third definition is a geographical one—it refers to the region of Judea and those who lived there. A fourth meaning, found especially in John’s gospel, refers to Jesus’ enemies, who in that gospel are always *Ioudaioi*, better translated as Judeans, than Jews. The terms *Ioudaios* and its plural version occurs frequently in John, almost 60 times compared with fewer than ten times in the other three canonical gospels combined. This disproportionate frequency in John points to a definition for a stipulative definition for a specifically Johannine context. It is our job as biblical scholars to identify that context and prevent the cavalier translation of ancient terms into modern ones, especially when this causes real damage.

Employing the term *Jew/Jews* to translate ancient Greek words ignores the obvious and sharp distinctions between the modern Jewish people and their ancient

forebears. Modern Judaism is a broad and rich experience just as its ancient predecessors were. Scholars do not agree on what defined the ancient group of people who called themselves Israel and were called Judeans by the Romans and other outsiders. We know, however, that animal

sacrifice was the principle ritual act performed by people of the house of Israel, as Jesus knew it. We also know that no modern Jewish groups practice animal sacrifice—quite a distinct disparity. Modern Jews trace their ancestry through the mother’s blood line. In the time of Jesus, lineage was traced through the father’s blood line. Modern Judaism is based on the Talmuds. Jesus and Paul never even heard of these. Israelite religion is easily distinguished from modern Rabbinic Judaism. So easily distinguishable are the two that modern Jewish scholars are increasingly candid about the issue. Jacob Neusner distinguishes between the two by use of the terms *formative Judaism* vs. *normative Judaism*. Paul Fredriksen prefers to speak of *Judaisms* in order to acknowledge the distinctions. Some, like the Israeli historian Schlomo Sand, insist that there never was anything like a Jewish “people” in the time of Jesus.

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things, it will house a Mosque square with American religious and democratic values? The answer that no one would be allowed to build a church in Mecca is peculiar in that it seems to suggest that we should model our democratic values after those of a feudal monarchy. Since when does American democracy imitate Saudi Arabia? By the way, it is not just Muslim societies that restrict religious freedoms. We would not be allowed to build a church anywhere in “democratic” Israel either. Why would any flag loving American want to degrade American democratic values by undermining a constitutional right?

Critics of the so-called ground zero mosque, including pundits and politicians, also tend to ignore the fact that the neighborhood within five blocks of the site of the World Trade Center is not a particularly wholesome one to begin with. They argue that building a mosque there would be insulting to the memory of the September 11 disaster. Am I to understand that the Pussycat Lounge, located within five blocks of ground zero and where they proudly advertise that they can arrange private lap dances, somehow honors the memory of September 11?

Most importantly, however, my concern over the debate about the ground zero mosque centers on the atmosphere of bigotry in which it occurs. Consult your dictionary of choice and you will find that bigotry is defined as religious intolerance or intolerance and hatred of a particular group. Thanks to 24 hour cable news stations and talk radio in which ratings are more important public information, bigotry is the suffocating atmosphere in which all public discussion of the so-called ground zero mosque takes place in America today. I don’t object to sincere concern about public issues. I do

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