

# JOHN C. HAGEE

The past 24 hours have been extremely disappointing ones to me. My disappointment has nothing to do with the fact that I parted company with John McCain – this was best for both of us and for the country. It is time the candidates and the media turn their attention back to the pressing issues of our day and stop focusing on what I did or did not say decades ago.

But what has been disappointing has been to see my life's work – the great passion of my life – mischaracterized and attacked. I have dedicated my life to combating anti-Semitism and supporting the State of Israel. In taking a stand for Israel I have received death threats from anti-Semites and neo-Nazis, and I've had the windows of my car blown out beneath the windows of the rooms in which my children slept. To hear people who know nothing about me or my life's work claim that I somehow excuse the Holocaust is simply heartbreaking.

Let me be clear -- to assert that I in any way condone the Holocaust or that monster Adolf Hitler is the worst of lies. I have always condemned the horrors of the Holocaust in the strongest of terms. But even more importantly, my abhorrence of the Holocaust and anti-Semitism has never stopped with mere words.

I have devoted most of my adult life to ensuring that there will never be a second Holocaust. I have worked tirelessly to eliminate the sin of anti-Semitism from the Christian world and to ensure the survival of the State of Israel.

I have traveled the country teaching Christians to love the Jewish people and stand with Israel. Our ministry has given over \$30 million for humanitarian causes in Israel. I founded Christians United for Israel to bring together all pro-Israel Christians into a movement that can support Israel during these very challenging times.

The fact is that all people of faith have had to wrestle with the question of why a sovereign God would allow evil in the world. After Auschwitz, this question became more urgent than ever.

Many people simply could not explain how a loving God would permit such horrors. After the Holocaust, they abandoned their faith in a sovereign God who intervenes here on earth. While I disagree with this conclusion, I would never denigrate those who arrived at such a conclusion.

But I and many millions of Christians and Jews came to a different conclusion. We maintained our faith in a sovereign God who allows both the good and the evil that is in the world. We therefore search the scriptures for an explanation for that evil. We believe that the words of the Hebrew prophets such as Jeremiah may help us understand the mind of God. But our search for an explanation for evil must never be confused with an effort to excuse it.

What is more important than how we answer the question of where was God during the Holocaust is what we as men and women do here on earth to make sure that there will never be another Holocaust. We must give meaning to the words “Never Again” through our actions. It is to this effort – this effort to fight anti-Semitism and to support Israel – that I now return. Thank you.

Congregation  
**Rodfei Sholom**  
Synagogue

I have known Pastor John Hagee for close to 30 years. Pastor Hagee is a man of G-d, a visionary leader, a person of courage and integrity, a lover of people of all faiths, an embodiment of truth, justice and kindness.

I met him in 1981, when he stood almost alone in the defense of Israel, after Israel destroyed Iraq's nuclear reactor in 1981. At that time, while the majority of world leaders criticized Israel, Pastor Hagee declared: "Israel we are with you." He was then as today a courageous Christian, guided by an unparalleled moral compass who distinguished right from wrong, good from evil.

The same zeal and vision that moved Pastor Hagee in 1981 to stand in the defense of Israel, has moved him to strongly condemn anti-Semitism and bigotry in its forms. Pastor Hagee is a world leader in his support of Israel. For he understands that Israel is the only nation of the world who faces extermination for being a Jewish nation, for being a democracy, for being America's most trusted and loyal friend among the nations, He understands that no other nation in the world has yearned so much, nor given so much, nor risked so much, nor suffered so much for the cause of peace, as Israel and yet has been so criticized.

It is ironic and absurd that when Pastor was lecturing on one of the Jewish perspectives of the Holocaust that his words were twisted and used to attack him for being anti Semitic. Pastor Hagee said nothing of the kind. Pastor interpreted a Biblical verse in a way not very different from several legitimate Jewish authorities. Viewing Hitler as acting completely outside of God's plan is to suggest that God was powerless to stop the Holocaust, a position quite unacceptable to any religious Jew or Christian.

No less an authority than the author of the Eim Habanim Semaichah, Rabbi Yisachar Shlomo Teichtal of blessed memory wrote these words while cowering in a Budapest cellar in the very midst of Hitler's Holocaust: "Furthermore, the sole purpose of all the afflictions that smite us in our exile is to arouse us to return to our Holy Land."

I have seen Pastor's tears and Diana's tears at Yad Vashem. They identify and feel the pain of our people, therefore I know that of all the criticisms that Pastor has been subjected to when he stepped into a political mine field, and of all the distortions of the truth that he had to contend with, this must be the most painful, because of his love for the Jewish people and his genuine total efforts to see that never again shall the Jewish people be alone in a world of apathy, hatred and anti-Semitism.

A Holocaust survivor, who lived through the death camps of Auschwitz, recently declared at the San Antonio Jewish community commemoration of Yom HaShoah:  
*“If during the Nazi era the world had leaders like Pastor John Hagee, 6 million Jews, among them one and a million children, wouldn’t have been brutally murdered.”*