



The Abraham Accord: Persians vs. the Abrahamic Family of Jews and Arabs

Dr Christina Lin

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Abstract

The Trump administration's Abraham Accord peace agreement between Israel, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain dispelled the decades-long myth that there would be no peace between the Jewish state and the Arab world without first establishing a Palestinian peace deal. The timing of this historic treaty is largely due to Israel and the Arab Gulf states' shared threat of an Iranian nuclear bomb. Despite conventional wisdom that the first target would be Jerusalem, it is in fact Riyadh, if Tehran is to realize its dream of uniting the Muslim world under its leadership. This serves as a unifying force to gather together Abrahamic descendants of the Jews and Arabs under the Abraham Accord, which provides a security umbrella from the Persian bomb.

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Analysis

On August 13, the Trump administration presented to the world the Abraham Accord peace agreement, signed by Israel and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). In the wake of the normalization between Israel and a third Arab country, Bahrain joined one month later, and now many other Gulf states such as Oman and Saudi Arabia could follow suit to make peace with Israel.¹

This news was welcomed by political pundits believing the peace deals mark a positive shift for the conflict-ridden region, with calls for the nomination of President Trump to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. On the other hand, some countries such as Qatar fear the deals failed to include Palestine in any decision-making that could affect the safety of the struggling nation, and remain committed to the Arab Peace Plan that ties normalizing relations with Jerusalem to ending the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory.²

In fact, back in 2016 then-Secretary of State John Kerry predicted there would be no separate peace between Israel and the Arab world without peace with Palestinians.³



However, the Abraham Accord proved that prediction wrong, and exposes a blind spot in the Obama administration's outreach to Iran and the nuclear deal. They failed to appreciate the threat of Iran to both the Arab Gulf states and Israel.

Iran vs. Arab world and Israel

Despite conventional wisdom that Israel is Iran's number one target as "little Satan" and U.S. as "Great Satan", according to a California Pastor there is an even bigger target should Tehran acquire a nuclear weapon—Saudi Arabia.⁴

¹ Seth Frantzman, "Five countries that could be next to make peace with Israel", *Jerusalem Post*, August 16, 2020, <https://www.jpost.com/arab-israeli-conflict/five-countries-that-could-be-next-to-make-peace-with-israel-638821>

² Tom O'Connor, "As Neighbors Make Deals with Israel, Qatar 'Remains Committed' to Arab Peace Plan", *Newsweek*, September 14, 2020, <https://www.newsweek.com/neighbors-deal-israel-qatar-committed-arab-peace-plan-1531831>

³ John Kerry, Brookings Institution Saban Forum, <https://twitter.com/Breaking911/status/1306427475270959104>

⁴ <https://www.maranatha.tv/ray-bentley-1/season:8/videos/ray-prophecy-update-8-20-20>



Pastor Ray Bentley of Maranatha Chapel presented an interesting thesis for the motivation of Arab states to now seek peace with Israel. Other than the pragmatic reasons of needing Israel's technology, medical research and military wares, an overriding fear is Iran's ambition to unite the Muslim world under its leadership.

Given 85-90% of the Muslim world are Sunnis and only 10% are Shiites, it would be difficult for Iran to unite the Muslim world unless it first removes its competitor Saudi Arabia.⁵ As such the California pastor argues the first target of an Iranian nuclear weapon would be Riyadh, not Jerusalem, which provided the compelling force that brought together the Jews and their Arab cousins under one security umbrella.

Hence the peace deal is named the Abraham Accord to bring the Abrahamic family together, as both the Jews and Arabs are descendants of Abraham via Sarah, Hagar and his second wife Ketura. Also, there are those who believe the Abraham Accord is a fulfilment of the prophetic "covenant with many."⁶

"Covenant with many"

According to some interpretations of the Bible, the covenant with many is a future peace deal or treaty that will precede the rise of the Antichrist and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.⁷ This is outlined in the Book of Daniel 9:27, and some have suggested Israel's recent bid to establish links with many Arab states marks the beginning of the covenant.

The Daniel prophecy states "Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; but in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of the temple will come the abomination that causes desolation, until the decreed destruction is poured out upon him," referring to the Third Temple of Jerusalem which presently does not exist.

As such many remain skeptical, while the Biden campaign is now pushing for a return to the Obama administration's JCPOA and "rebalancing" American foreign policy between Iran and the Arab world.⁸ Should Biden win, it may be interesting to see if his support of the Iran nuclear deal ends up confirming the "covenant with many" as more Arab states are driven to go under the Abraham Accord umbrella.⁹

Remarks: Opinions expressed in this contribution are those of the author. This article first appeared in *The Times of Israel* on September 17, 2020.

⁵ "Sunni and Shia: Islam's Ancient Schism", *BBC*, January 4, 2016, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-16047709>

⁶ "Who was Ketura?", Bar-Ilan University's Parashat Hashavua Study Center, Parashat Hayye Sarah 5764/ November 22, 2003, <https://www.biu.ac.il/JH/Parasha/eng/chaye/sha.html>

⁷ Sebastian Kettley, "Israel peace deal: Is the Abraham Accord the covenant with many predicted by the Bible?" *Daily Express*, September 17, 2020, <https://www.express.co.uk/news/weird/1336489/israel-peace-deal-abraham-accord-covenant-with-many-bible-prophecy>

⁸ Benny Avni, "Abraham Accord challenges Iran as Biden eyes appeasement", *The New York Sun*, September 15, 2020, <https://www.nysun.com/foreign/abraham-accords-challenge-iran-as-biden-eyes/91257/>

⁹ Behnam Ben Taleblu, "If Biden, Then What, On Iran?", *Newsweek*, September 17, 2020, <https://www.newsweek.com/if-biden-then-what-iran-opinion-1532433>; Issac Schorr, "Joe Biden's Inadequate Plan for Iran", *National Review*, September 15, 2020, <https://www.nationalreview.com/2020/09/joe-biden-iran-plan-cause-for-alarm/>



About the Author of this Issue

Dr. Christina Lin is a California-based foreign policy analyst. She has extensive US government experience working on national security policy planning, including at DoD, State, and NSC, and was a research consultant at Jane's Information Group's Chemical, Biological, Radiological & Nuclear Assessments Intelligence Centre.



Christina Lin