

CHRISTIAN BASHERS RIP HEGSETH AND HUCKABEE

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They've started already. One week after the election and the Christian bashers are foaming at the mouth over president-elect Donald Trump's selection of Pete Hegseth to be Secretary of Defense and Mike Huckabee to be U.S. Ambassador to Israel.

Hegseth is a strong Christian who literally wears his religion on his body (he has more than a dozen tattoos emblazoned on his right arm and chest). To be sure, that is bizarre, but that is not what his critics are upset about. They don't like what the tattoos represent—Christianity.

If he had metal spikes hanging from his nose, or had tattoos honoring Lucifer on his neck, that would be fine. But once Jesus is brought into the mix, that's a call to arms. Indeed, the Christian bashers are explicitly calling him out for wanting a call to arms—they are saying he wants to bring back the Crusades.

The Jerusalem Cross on Hegseth's chest is driving them mad. The left-wing folks at the Daily Beast informed their fans that it is "a 13th century Crusades symbol, over his right bicep." They are twice wrong. They are off by 200 hundred years (it dates back to the 11th century, 1099 to be exact) and it is located on his chest, not his right arm.

After the overthrow of the Crusader state in 1291, the Jerusalem Cross remained a symbol of Jerusalem for Christians, and is still popular today among Catholic organizations, none of which are extremist.

Another reminder of the Crusades is the Latin phrase, "Deus Vult," which means "God wills it": it is on Hegseth's right

bicep. It is true that it was a rallying cry during the First Crusade. So what?

A human rights left-wing activist group from the U.K., Action on Armed Violence, is also exercised about all the Crusader symbols. It says “Deus Vult” was invoked to “justify acts of religious violence.” The Bulwark, a publication by the angry never-Trumper Bill Kristol, says these Crusader images are “disturbing.”

What is really disturbing is their ignorance. The Crusades were a defensive reaction to Muslim aggression. Princeton’s Bernard Lewis, one of the world’s most noted historians, says, “The Crusade was a delayed response to the jihad, the holy war for Islam, and its purpose was to recover by war what had been lost by war—to free the holy places of Christendom and open them once again, without impediment, to Christian pilgrimage.”

Also, the Crusaders were volunteers, not papal conscripts. Just as important, according to St. Louis University professor Thomas F. Madden, who has written extensively on this subject, “All the Crusades met the criteria for just wars.”

Action on Armed Violence and the Bulwark slam Hegseth for his ties to Christian nationalism. As [I recently pointed out](#), this is one of the greatest anti-Christian smear jobs of our day. Digging deep, any researcher worth his salt knows how vacuous these charges are.

Examples of “Christian nationalism” include saying in public, “Blessed is the nation whose God is Lord.” That happens to be Psalm 33:12. Those who say that Trump “loves the United States of America. He loves God,” are cited as examples of this bogeyman. Singing “God Bless America” is another indicator of Christian fanaticism.

Mike Huckabee is an Evangelical Christian who is a rock-solid supporter of Israel. But according to John Hudson at the *Washington Post* that is a problem. He is worried that people

like Huckabee, who believe that in the covenant that God made to Abraham about Israel, “have turned that belief into a right-wing brand of Zionism.”

Similarly, the militants at J Street have lashed out at Huckabee for his “extremist views.” Louis Moreno, a former U.S. Ambassador who knows Huckabee, calls him an “utter nut case.” Why? Because the former Arkansas governor believes in the biblical account of the end of times. If he believed the fiction that the sexes are interchangeable, that would be considered reasonable.

Vanity Fair wins the prize for the most irresponsible accusation against Huckabee. After it posts a short critical account of Trump’s nominee, it offers what it calls a Fun Fact. “Huckabee is a Christian Zionist; Christian Zionists believe ‘Muslims, Jews, and non-Christians are ultimately damned.’”

Where did that incendiary comment come from? Apparently from the website of Political Research Associates, a left-wing outlet. It has a post, “101 Christian Zionists,” with lots of statements and links to its sources. On p. 2 it lists five beliefs that it attributes to Christian Zionists, including the one mentioned by *Vanity Fair*. But unlike most of the other beliefs it cites, this one is not linked to any source, nor is it in quotes. In other words, it was made up by Political Research Associates and *Vanity Fair* cited it as if it were authoritative.

Radicals hate Pete Hegseth because he is a committed Christian and a patriotic American. They hate Mike Huckabee because he is a committed Christian who defends Israel. It’s really not all that complicated.