

Donald Trump Inaugurated and Martin Luther King Venerated

SATURDAY, JANUARY 25, 2025 08:00am CT

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

Donald Trump Inaugurated and Martin Luther King Venerated. That is the topic we'll discuss today right here on The Christian Worldview Radio Program where the mission is to sharpen the biblical worldview of Christians and to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. I'm David Wheaton, the host. The Christian Worldview is a listener-supported radio program. Our website is TheChristianWorldview.org and the rest of our contact information will be given throughout today's program. As always, thank you for your notes of encouragement, financial support, and lifting us up in prayer.

Monday, January 20th, 2025 was a very big day in our country. It was the day that our nation made a political U-turn from four years of financial, moral, and social decline, foisted upon us by Joe Biden and the Democratic Party to the start of the second term of Donald Trump and promises of American ascent and exceptionalism.

January 20th also coincided this year with the federal holiday named after Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the pastor and revered civil rights activist.

Virgil Walker, Vice President of Ministry Relations at G3 Ministries, co-host of the Just Thinking Podcast, and co-author of a brand new book titled, *A Biblical Theology of Climate Change*, joins us today to discuss the import of Trump's inauguration and the beliefs and life of Martin Luther King.

Later in the program, Soeren Kern, geopolitical analyst and managing editor of *The Christian Worldview Journal* will join us to discuss the Israel-Hamas ceasefire and hostage deal. But first, Virgil Walker joins us to talk about Donald Trump inaugurated and Martin Luther King venerated.

Virgil, so good to have you back on The Christian Worldview Radio Program. It's been a while. Remind us of your background, how you became a follower of Christ, and what you do now.

GUEST: VIRGIL WALKER:

I came to Christ in high school. A dear friend of mine, John Lindsay, shared the gospel with me, explained very clearly that I was a sinner in need of a savior. Took me to Bible studies with him. He was one of my best friends. And long story short, over the course of some time, God just began to work on my heart, convict me of that truth, and understood very clearly that salvation was by grace through faith in Christ according to scripture to God's glory. Repented of my sins. Placed my faith in Him and have followed Him since those days. That was about 1987, '88 timeframe.

I am the Vice President of Ministry relations here at G3 Ministries. We're located right outside of Atlanta here in Douglasville, Georgia. I provide oversight for our national conference, which we have every other year, along with our regional conferences, workshops, overseas trips and the like. So I provide executive oversight for those things. We are a content producing ministry, providing local churches with rich theological content aimed to make sure that we educate, encourage, and equip local church pastors in sound biblical doctrine.

But the biggest aspect of what we do is we provide these massive conferences. We'll have one here coming up in 2025 in September and we anticipate between 8,500 to 10,000 people being at that conference here in Atlanta.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

Virgil Walker, again, with us today in The Christian Worldview. He's also the co-host of the popular Just Thinking Podcast with Darrell Harrison. Okay, Virgil. We're going to talk about two topics today, one about the inauguration of President Trump and also, Martin Luther King. Trump was inaugurated on Martin Luther King Day, so we're going to examine both today. Let's start out with the very beginning of Donald Trump's inaugural address inside the Capitol Rotunda. As you're listening, just picture in your mind that President Biden, Kamala Harris, Barack Obama, Bill, and Hillary Clinton are sitting just feet away from President Trump as he made these remarks.

Audio Soundbite: Donald Trump:

The golden age of America begins right now. From this day forward, our country will flourish and be respected again all over the world. We will be the envy of every nation and we will not allow ourselves to be taken advantage of any longer. Our sovereignty will be reclaimed. Our safety will be restored. The scales of justice will be rebalanced. The vicious, violent, and unfair weaponization of the Justice Department and our government will end. And our top priority will be to create a nation that is proud, prosperous, and free.

As we gather today, our government confronts a crisis of trust. For many years, a radical and corrupt establishment has extracted power and wealth from our citizens while the pillars of our society lay broken and seemingly in complete disrepair. We now have a government that cannot manage even a simple crisis at home. While at the same time, stumbling into a continuing catalog of catastrophic events abroad.

It fails to protect our magnificent, law-abiding American citizens, but provide sanctuary and protection for dangerous criminals. Many from prisons and mental institutions that have illegally entered our country from all over the world. We have a government that has given unlimited funding to the defense of foreign borders, but refuses to defend American borders or, more importantly, its own people.

Our country can no longer deliver basic services in times of emergency as recently shown. We have a public health system that does not deliver in times of disaster. Yet, more money is spent on it than any country anywhere in the world. And we have an education system that teaches our children to be ashamed of themselves. In many cases, to hate our country despite the love that we try so desperately to provide to them.

All of this will change starting today and it will change very quickly. My recent election is a mandate to completely and totally reverse a horrible betrayal and all of these many betrayals that have taken place. And to give the people back their faith, their wealth, their democracy, and indeed, their freedom. From this moment on, America's decline is over.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

Now, Virgil, inaugural addresses typically have themes about unifying the country after a divisive election. Again, Biden, Kamala Harris, Obama, the Clintons were just feet away. These comments were just like a direct repudiation and almost a shaming of what Biden and Harris and the Democratic Party have done to this country and the problems they've caused in our country. Whether wars and inflation, immigration, and crime,

and weaponizing the Justice Department, the list goes on. What did you make of Trump's inaugural address that detailed his plans with these Democrats sitting just feet away?

GUEST: VIRGIL WALKER:

I think the first thing that struck me as he took the podium was that he just seemed incredibly resolute. This is a man from a standpoint of context who's undergone legal warfare, right? Has gone what's now called lawfare as it relates to the Justice Department trying to identify where he might've done something wrong, been in courts, been charged with felonies, has undergone an assassination attempt, has overcome everything from Russia Russia Russia to you name it, has undergone all of that stress.

Finally to reach what no one thought he could, which was to be back in the White House, to be the 45th president and, now, our 47th. Just from a position of all of that context. A man who said, "Now, I'm here. I'm not here for the flowery attaboys, the kind of contextualizing of unity. I recognize where I am and what I'm here for. And the people that put me here desire to see action." And so, I just sensed, from a standpoint of watching him, he was a man of action. It wasn't about flowery words or high rhetoric. It was about, "I'm here. Now, here's what we're going to do to turn things around."

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

He had had enough of the direction that this country had been taken and what they've tried to do to him. He wasn't going to play nice here. Again, Virgil Walker with us today here on The Christian Worldview. We have links to him and his work at our website, TheChristianWorldview.org. Okay. Just two points about the ceremony itself. The first part is there's been a lot going around on social media about the fact that Donald Trump didn't actually have his hand on the Bible as he was being sworn in, in front of Justice John Roberts. The swearing in seemed to be sort of rushed. Trump's wife, Melania, didn't get up there immediately with the Bible for him to put his hand on. Is there anything that we should be making out of this, not having his hand actually on the Bible? Even though it did arrive there, but his hand wasn't on it.

GUEST: VIRGIL WALKER:

Justice Roberts has been known to bobble the ball, if you will, on doing these kinds of things. When he swore in President Obama, it was so butchered that they had to redo it later. So more than anything, it was rushed. It was hurried. I'd make little to nothing of the fact that he didn't place his hand on the Bible per se, but took the oath of office in the frantic way that it happens. It's like a wedding. There's always something that goes wrong. Everything's not absolutely perfect and you don't make much of something little from a standpoint of what the President actually did. I think he's clear about his positions as it relates to religious freedom.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

Second part of the question about the ceremony itself is that it took place inside the Capitol Rotunda because of cold weather, apparently. Not because of security threats as some were reporting. But during the ceremony, there were beautiful hymns like Great is Thy Faithfulness. There were prayers made by Franklin Graham, the Roman Catholic Cardinal, Timothy Dolan, a rabbi, others. In looking at a ceremony like this, as a biblical Christian, we would desire to see a more narrow fidelity to what honors God and not false ways and false religion. But should we really be able to expect that in a country like ours that has freedom of religion and tolerance for those who believe false ways?

GUEST: VIRGIL WALKER:

I would've as a Christian, biblical orthodoxy, Protestant at that, I would prefer to have just men who know the Word, who trust the Word. I'd rather have a Dr. John MacArthur or someone like that up there on the platform. Recognizing that with the pluralistic nature of our society and culture, we're going to get a diverse points of view, a diverse ecclesiastical enclave of different iterations of Christianity, Judaism, and others. I was just glad that there wasn't some completely demonic representation or something of that nature on the platform, recognizing that's the way things are as it stands. But would I prefer that as a biblical Christian? Should biblical Christians expect and desire that? Absolutely. And which is why many of them should run for office. And ensure that when they get to office and the opportunity for their perspective to be reflected and represented, that they do so with strength and vigor.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

Virgil Walker is our guest today. He is the Vice President of Ministry Relations for G3 Ministries. Also, the co-host of the Just Thinking Podcast with Darrell Harrison. You can find links to Virgil at our website, TheChristianWorldview.org. In the last hours before leaving office, Joe Biden issued a preemptive pardon for Anthony Fauci of COVID fame, gain-of-function fame, so forth. General Milley, one of the top generals in the military. And also, a pardon for the January 6th, what's called the Select Committee, that did an investigation into that day in trying to implicate Donald Trump as initiating or instigating a insurrection in this country.

These were preemptive pardons. In other words, Fauci and Milley and then January 6th Select Committee, there's no indictments against any of them. But he just preemptively pardoned them, just in case there could be in the future. Now, as if that wasn't enough, in the final minutes before his term ended, Joe Biden's final act in office, and this was literally as the ceremony at the Rotunda was getting underway, so Donald Trump didn't even know about this before he started to speak, his final act was to preemptively pardon, again, the members of his family dating all the way back to 2014. Again, no indictments against them. But just in case people start looking into my family, I'm going to pardon them from any kind of legal jeopardy. What are your thoughts on these pardons on the very last day, the last minutes of Biden's term?

GUEST: VIRGIL WALKER:

Well, he finishes his office in absolute and utter disgrace. It was the Biden administration and Democrats, in particular, who, when Trump left office, were concerned about preemptive pardons for the Trump family. They were concerned about what Trump would do prior to leaving office in the way of pardons for a variety of different people that they felt like they wanted to go after. Trump did none of those things.

Here they are four years after their term has ended and they do exactly what they accused Trump of doing. So the hypocrisy is absolutely evident, but not at all surprising. You don't pardon someone for a crime not committed. That absolutely makes no sense. But I do believe, in fact... I know as I was listening to the commentary, it looks like regardless of the pardon, I think Trump and his administration, those who are part of it, are going to go and investigate what took place. And at least, make it aware to the public. These people, if they indeed committed crimes, should be disgraced as a result. And whatever they did behind the scenes should absolutely be exposed to the American people.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

This sets a horrible precedent in this country. Because going forward, why wouldn't a president pardon himself and members of his family and everyone who has supported him in this last term to keep them from

having any legal proceedings brought against them? So this was really a game changer, I think. An unprecedented game changer for the future of the country, these pardons.

Again, Virgil Walker with us today on The Christian Worldview. But Biden wasn't the only one who made pardons that day. One of Trump's first acts in office was to pardon over 1,500 of the people who were convicted as part of that January 6th, 2021 Capitol riot. And these people have been in jail, treated very badly. What are your thoughts on what Trump did to these over 1,500 people pardoning them on his first day in office?

GUEST: VIRGIL WALKER:

This is a part of his agenda which is kind of promise made, promise kept. He's been saying that from the outset and has made clear, by every surrogate who goes out and speaks on his behalf, that he had every intention of pardoning a great number of the people who had been wrongly imprisoned for what took place at the Capitol. Always mentioning that those who were involved in any kind of harm to police officers, those cases would be looked at on a case by case basis.

But for the most part, he felt like those people, whatever their crime, had paid that penalty over the course of the last four years and had served in really qualor conditions. I don't know what those were specifically, but he saw fit to pardon them. And definitely, the stories of the reuniting with their families, for many long overdue, there were a number of them as well who actually took their lives while they were imprisoned. And so, those people as well and their families deserve recognition for what took place as a result of their imprisonment.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

Yeah. This whole situation around January 6th, 2021 to the left, an insurrection, and to those on the right, seen as a trespass and riot. And actually, more than that, as an entrapment by the Federal Government, was a real inflection point in this country. And it was completely used to try to marginalize and make, specifically Donald Trump, toxic for having any part in this at all.

And there's so much debate about how this could have been allowed. We see videos of police officers letting protesters come in and we see people in the crowd who were instigating it and not arrested, specifically Ray Epps. And apparently, the January 6th Select Committee, lots of their evidence and recordings has been now deleted. So lots of unknowns and suspicious things around that whole day.

Now, on this first day in office, Donald Trump signed 200 executive actions. Whether in opening up drilling for oil or closing the border from illegal immigration, men not being allowed in women's sports or in women's locker rooms, taking DEI, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, out of the military, defining that there are only two sexes: male and female, getting the US out of the Paris Climate Agreement, and many more. What executive actions that Donald Trump signed the first day seemed very significant to you, Virgil?

GUEST: VIRGIL WALKER:

One of the things that's striking about that is the fact that for the most part, a lot of what he signed were things that 3 years ago, 5 years ago, not even 10 years ago, were common sense. Like the Federal Government will finally acknowledge that there are two genders. Why would that need to be an executive order? That's common sense. And so, it's amazing. It really is emblematic of the fact that we have gone so far afield as we've witnessed the progressives take things so far to the left in this victimized, accommodating

culture that we live in. That there needs to be a president who has common sense to say, "Nope. This is where true north is. This is what's right and true and good and we're going to follow it."

Many of those things align with the biblical worldview. The fact that boys don't need to be in women's sports. Biological males don't need to be competing with women. Those kinds of things are... Basically, the sovereignty of our borders. We don't have a country if we don't have a border. Those kinds of things, again, are pressing issues. But again, should be commonsensical to the everyday person. And three years ago, five years ago, they absolutely were.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

Yes, common sense needs to be based on the truth of Scripture. Otherwise, it's just flawed human reasoning, which is all too common. Virgil Walker, Vice President of Ministry Relations for G3 Ministries is our guest discussing the inauguration of President Trump. After this 2-minute break, to tell you about some ministry resources, we'll discuss more about President Trump and then get to the beliefs of Martin Luther King Jr. I'm David Wheaton. You are listening to The Christian Worldview Radio Program.

Announcing *The Christian Worldview Journal*

We are excited to announce our new monthly print publication called *The Christian Worldview Journal*. In Matthew 24, Jesus called for His disciples to be discerning, watchful, endure persecution, and be prepared and faithful in the lead up to His return. This is what *The Christian Worldview Journal* will aim to do each month in three articles on current events and issues of the faith, including by Christian geopolitical analyst, Soeren Kern, who is the managing editor of the journal.

You'll also find featured resources, ministry news, and more in this 12-page full color publication. Everyone on our mailing list will receive *The Christian Worldview Journal* through the February 2025 issue. Starting in March, all Christian Worldview Partners will receive it.

To sign up for *The Journal*, go to TheChristianWorldview.org or call 1-888-646-2233 or write to Box 401, Excelsior, Minnesota 55331.

Welcome back to The Christian Worldview. I'm David Wheaton. Be sure to visit TheChristianWorldview.org where you can sign up for our weekly email, *The Christian Worldview Journal* monthly print publication, order resources for adults and children, and support the ministry. Today, we are discussing the impact of President Trump's inauguration. Virgil Walker, Vice President of Ministry relations at G3 Ministries is our guest.

Virgil, I think one of the most amazing parts of Inauguration Day was in the evening when Donald Trump was in the Oval Office for about an hour, signing more of these executive actions. And while he was being handed these to sign, he would explain them and so forth for a second. And there was press in front of him and they were just firing questions at him one after the other.

And the amazing thing was his awareness of the details of all these diverse questions they were throwing at him and his plans to deal with them on this wide spectrum of issues. Whether it was finance or China or the

Middle East or you name it. And I look back on Trump and the obstacles he had to overcome to get where he is back in office now today.

Before he ran for president the first time, he was perceived as a playboy, married three times, real estate tycoon, a social liberal, actually, from New York City. And then, a popular television host of a popular program. And then, he comes down that elevator and he's like a bull in a china shop with the other Republican candidates during the primary before the first time he was elected. He gets elected and then complete resistance to him his entire first term. There was the hoax of collusion with Russia that was proven false. Those allegations against him. The constant day after day slandering of him by the mainstream media.

He was impeached twice in office toward the end of his first term. I think he was really deceived by those around him when it came to COVID and the vaccine. And then, he lost the election to Joe Biden. And I think, in my view, illegitimately lost the election. I think there's lots of doubts. I can't produce evidence of every vote for you, but there seemed to be so many discrepancies in that election.

And then, shortly after that, the January 6 riot took place. And he was completely associated with that to make him highly toxic so that he could never run for office again. And during his time away from the presidency, he had his home raided by the FBI down in Florida. He had to endure four criminal cases against him for various things, two assassination attempts. One of them nearly blew his head off in Pennsylvania. And then, lo and behold, he wins re-election. So going back to watching Trump that first night, inauguration evening in the Oval Office, signing those executive actions while answering all these questions from the press. What do you make of Donald Trump as a person and as a leader?

GUEST: VIRGIL WALKER:

It's incredible. As you walk through the historic timeline of the Trump presidency, both first term and now, it's breathtaking. It really is. And this is a man you've got to consider who did not have to do this, especially a second time around. As a billionaire, he could have rode off into the sunset and done his own thing and never been heard from again and enjoyed it. But it's obvious that he has a care and a passion for the country and for the nation. To undergo as much political scrutiny and absolute outright warfare, lawfare, that he did with those who were against him, the media and the like.

It was absolutely amazing to witness, to see him undergo two assassination attempts. And then, to be in the Oval Office signing documents and just taking call... It was a masterclass in competency. Something that we've been missing for the last, at least two and a half, three years, under the previous administration with Joe Biden. There were times when we weren't sure if Biden knew where he was in the room. And then, to have a competent president in the office giving information on the fly without teleprompter as to what was happening and why things were being signed, was really exciting to watch. It was must see TV as he mastered everything that was happening in the room as he signed those documents. So it was really powerful.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

Now, Eric Metaxas is a well-known Christian author and radio host and he was at the inauguration. And he made a short video afterwards talking about the momentous day this was in US history. Here's the audio and I'll follow-up with a question.

Audio Soundbite:Eric Metaxas:

I'm still here in DC trying to process the import of what happened with yesterday's inauguration of President Trump. I don't think we can compare it to anything. The significance of it is so huge. We have to go back literally to 1776. Thomas Paine in Common Sense in 1776 said, "We can begin the world over again." The establishment of a nation where the people govern themselves, it was unprecedented in history and he knew it. It's the dawn of a new age. We were on the verge of losing that. And with the inauguration of President Trump, we, the people, seized power back from whatever elites were trying to take it away from us. And you cannot overstate the significance of where we are now. It is monumental. We need to celebrate it, we need to understand it, and we need to keep fighting, because we've only just begun to do what needs doing. But this is an amazing moment in history. God bless you. God bless America.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

All right. Again, that was Eric Metaxas, author and radio host. Now, those are some big words saying that this was one of the greatest, most important, most critical turning points in the history of our country and going back to the very beginning. In other words, we were in a death spiral in this country, because of the actions of the left with regard to our constitution and everything being overturned. I have never seen such optimism from Republicans, conservatives, many Christians, about the future of our country. It's being called... We're entering a "golden age". I believe Trump used that expression twice in his inaugural address. So these are heady times going on in this country. This has been a very dramatic U-turn. What do you think Christians need to be discerning, watching out for as we move forward into this Trump second term?

GUEST: VIRGIL WALKER:

Man, I appreciate the words and even the setup for what you did. I don't disagree with Metaxas. I do believe where we are is not comparable to anything else. 1776 would be a great benchmark because it really results in We the People, right? And the establishment of a nation. I agree with him that we were on a cliff. We could have gone the direction of socialism in Europe and where they're headed, with the restriction of religious liberties. Or we could go in the direction that I do believe that we're currently headed in, which is one where free speech is available to all. That we operate from a standpoint of a meritocracy, rather than identity politics.

I'm incredibly hopeful. I think it's important for Trump to deliver on promises and to do so effectively and quickly. And for people to feel that things are moving in the right direction with lower inflation rates, with a solid connecting the border, and ensuring that we have border sovereignty. People seeing money back in their pocketbooks, able to do more things. All of those things are important.

For the Christian, uniquely, I think it's imperative that we don't attach ourselves to a man, that we don't attach ourselves to a politician. But that we realize that what we are experiencing is the very grace of Almighty God. That God has given us, for a period, a reprieve through a fallible human being known as Donald Trump. And that as we witness and watch what takes place, that we maintain our heart, our thoughts, our mind, our finger on the pulse of what the Bible has to say about the issue of a biblical worldview.

I recognize this as a honeymoon period where Trump can do no wrong and everything that he does is right. But there are issues that I disagree with him on as it pertains to the issue of abortion, where he's positioned himself. There are other worldview issues, biblical worldview issues, where we as Christians need to stand flat-footed, clear-eyed, and understanding what's at stake. And to speak clearly and effectively about those things.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

I think that's very well said, Virgil, that we cannot follow a man. We must follow Christ only. We must be grounded in His Word. We must keep our emotions and enthusiasm in check over things of this world, politics, and laws, and so forth. And be setting our mind as a priority on things above and be using this time to be even stronger and bolder in proclaiming biblical truth and the gospel.

Again, Virgil Walker with us here on The Christian Worldview today. Now, we said earlier there's going to be two topics we're going to touch on and that's going to be Donald Trump and his inauguration. Well, the inauguration took place on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day, which is now a federal holiday. And you recently did an interview about Martin Luther King, written a column about him that we have linked at our website, TheChristianWorldview.org. Let's start with a question about your view of his impact on ethnic relations and equality in this country. We'll get to his beliefs in a minute, but let's talk about his work for civil rights in this nation.

GUEST: VIRGIL WALKER:

A lot of what was done by Dr. Martin Luther King was well-intentioned, but long-term detrimental. I think we'll look at where we are in current culture as it relates to social justice, as it relates to Critical Race Theory, and recognize that the seeds of those things were sown during the Civil Rights Movement. So all that we abhor about the ideological framework related to race and gender and the like, had its origin in a well-intentioned position that Dr. King began.

And again, there's a lot of nuance to that. There are a lot of facets to that. I'd give him all the credit in the world for what he did in the way of promoting rights with the idea, the biblical idea, of all of us are created in God's image. And as a result, are endowed with certain inalienable rights. Totally understand that, agree with that thought process, but there's a lot more when you begin peeling the layers back to Martin Luther King. In fact, the article that I wrote was about just destroying the myth around Dr. King and some of the other issues that I raised in my piece that really underscore, I think, the direction that our country was headed for quite some time.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

Now, let's move from Martin Luther King's impact on civil rights to the fact that he was not only revered for that, but he is revered as a model Christian in this country. Could you explain what Martin Luther King's beliefs and doctrines were and whether his life practice gave evidence to one of being a true follower of Christ?

GUEST: VIRGIL WALKER:

I argue in my piece and lay out the case that Martin Luther King was not a Christian. He used Christianity. He used his platform as a reverend for the purpose of promoting his political agenda, political policy, his political ideology, which really leaned into socialism. I make that case, particularly the theological case, on the basis of what he wrote and said and did. As it relates to his beliefs, he did not believe, for example, that Jesus was, in fact, deity. He denied the deity of Christ. He denied the virgin birth. He denied the Trinity. He denied the resurrection. He denied the second coming of Christ. He denied original sin.

These are foundational truths that undergird the Christian faith. And so, if you claim to be a pastor, you claim to be a Christian, you deny something as significant as the deity of Christ himself, I don't know how you call yourself a Christian. And those denials are not something that I made up or tried to find somewhere, but

these are in his own writings that can be found and accessed. There's a repertoire of his writings, of his speeches, and his sayings at Stanford University. They keep a running tab on all of the things written by Martin Luther King. You can look those things up, read what he said about the deity of Christ, and in my piece, I pull all of those articles out, all of those things out and link the original sources, so that people can go back and read in full context for themselves what King actually said, did, and meant.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

If you don't believe that Christ was born of a virgin and he was denying the Trinity, that he was part of the Trinity and the deity or divinity of Christ and His resurrection, you are believing in a Jesus you've made up. Not the Jesus of Scripture that must be believed in for one to be saved. Over the decades, there have been all sorts of reports about what his moral life was like. We're not going to get into salacious details, but many of the reports would have him being disqualified from being a pastor or reverend. Considering this all together, Virgil, from his beliefs to his practices of life, how should biblical Christians view Martin Luther King?

GUEST: VIRGIL WALKER:

I think they should shed a clear light on him. Both theologically, understanding what he did not agree with as it relates to being a biblical Christian and then morally. There were so many questions about what he did morally. In fact, the night before he was murdered, he was involved in an adulterous affair. This is written in the books by those who are closest to him. And again, the adultery and all those pieces of the puzzle, I don't usually delve into that to any great degree because I don't have evidence of that. I really try to stick with what I know he's written and said. But there are others who are around him. There'll be FBI files that'll be coming out here in the next two years. I think that'll be incredibly eye-opening. But in addition to that, those who are around him and have written books on him, those closest to him, they were not quiet or shy about what King did while he was away from his wife. And again, all of those things, if indeed true, would disqualify him from any office of pastor.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

Virgil, we appreciate your willingness to do the research and speak the truth about someone who's become a revered figure, that is beyond criticism. But no one should be beyond criticism, especially one who professes to be a follower of Christ and a preacher of His Word. Virgil, we appreciate your commitment to Christ and His Word and the gospel. Thanks for coming on The Christian Worldview Radio Program today. All of God's best and grace to you.

GUEST: VIRGIL WALKER:

Thanks for having me. Look forward to the next opportunity.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

We have links to Virgil, along with the book he has just co-authored with Darrell Harrison, A Biblical Theology of Climate Change, at our website, TheChristianWorldview.org. We'll see if we can get one or both of them back on the program in the coming weeks to discuss the book. Okay. We'll take a short break. And then, Soeren Kern, geopolitical analyst and Managing Editor of The Christian Worldview Journal will join us next to discuss the Israel-Hamas ceasefire and hostage deal, which started just one day before Trump's inauguration. Major ramifications of that, so stay tuned. I'm David Wheaton. You are listening to The Christian Worldview Radio Program.

Welcome back to The Christian Worldview. I'm David Wheaton. Be sure to visit TheChristianWorldview.org where you can sign up for our weekly email, The Christian Worldview Journal monthly print publication, order resources for adults and children, and support the ministry. In this final segment, Soeren Kern, geopolitical analyst and Managing Editor of The Christian Worldview Journal joins us to discuss the Israel-Hamas ceasefire and hostage deal and the ramifications of that.

Soeren, thank you for coming on The Christian Worldview Radio Program today. We're going to talk about this ceasefire and hostage deal which is really big news, but has been overshadowed by the inaugural of Donald Trump coming into office. At least here in America, that has been all of the news the last week or so. So my question for you, Soeren, is, what or who brought this deal about? Was it Biden, Trump, someone in Israel, or otherwise? And how is a trade of 33 Israelis, in this first phase, for 2,000 Palestinian prisoners, that's a 1 to 60 ratio, how is this in any way a good deal for Israel?

GUEST: SOEREN KERN

Those are very good questions and it doesn't really make a whole lot of sense from what we're seeing. This deal, basically, requires Israel to release prisoners: murderers, people who were responsible for the carnage in October 2023 in exchange for hostages that Hamas took in that same massacre. It seems like morally upside down in every single dimension as you look at this.

Of course, the Netanyahu government was under intense pressure from the Biden administration, and also from the incoming Trump administration, to make a deal before Trump's inauguration. This is because some weeks ago, Trump said that there will be "hell to pay", if all the hostages are not released by Inauguration day. And so, I think that that obviously did not happen. There still are American hostages in captivity. All of the hostages were not released and the United States has also not complied with its promise, I guess, you could say, to hold Hamas accountable.

We have a situation here, really, where Israel is in an impossible situation. Because domestically in Israel, there's a large segment of the population that wants these hostages to be brought back. There's the other part of the population that wants no compromise with Hamas and wants to see Hamas utterly defeated. And I think that Prime Minister Netanyahu was in an impossible situation. He had to accept the deal.

The Wall Street Journal reported some very interesting details about the negotiations behind the scenes and shows that the Trump administration officials, particularly a man called Steve Witkoff, who's really President Trump's envoy for the Middle East, pressured Prime Minister Netanyahu, to agree to this deal. The language that was in the Wall Street Journal show that Netanyahu was very reluctant to accept, to sign this deal. He was, essentially, coerced, forced by the Trump administration to do this. The details of the agreement, there's a 6-week period in which there's going to be some hostage exchanges for prisoners.

At the same time, there's going to be a ceasefire negotiations, see if the ceasefire will last. And the aim, really, in Phase 3 is to negotiate an end to the Gaza War by May 27 of this year. And so, the United States has promised that Hamas will have no future governing role in Gaza. I find that very hard to believe. I don't see how the United States could even enforce something like that.

At the same time, Israel is required to completely remove its military presence from what's called the Philadelphi Corridor. It's a piece of land that separates Gaza and Egypt and this is what allowed Hamas to arm

itself over all these years, weapons smuggling coming in through Egypt. If Israel is required to remove its forces from that corridor, it's pretty clear that this will enable Hamas to rearm. You know, it's very difficult to negotiate with Islamists, especially if you're coming from a Western context. And so, the United States administration and European governments have always recognized that it's easier to force Israel into making concessions, than it is to force Islamist governments into concessions.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

Soeren, you mentioned the name Steve Witkoff. Spelled W-I-T-K-O-F-F. This is a good friend of Donald Trump. He is now Trump's special envoy to the Middle East and he did an interview on Fox News Channel recently, within the last several days, describing what has been going on in the Middle East. I want to play the audio of that and have you interpret what he is saying. It is two minutes and 30 seconds long, so listen and I'll follow-up with a question.

Audio Soundbite: Fox News Host

Your relationship with Donald Trump, appears to me, to be forged over the years and you've known each other for a long time when you were with him in Palm Beach, the day that second assassination attempt took place. So you guys know where each other's coming from. Do you see, soon, a handshake deal between Israel and Saudi Arabia that gets that peace deal back on track, that would then pull in other Arab countries in the region?

Steve Witkoff:

There's been talk of a normalization deal and I think that normalization is an amazing opportunity for the region. It's basically the beginning of the end of war. And the beginning of the end of war means that the entire region becomes investable. It becomes financeable. Banks do not have to underwrite whether the Houthis, Hezbollah, or Hamas is going to fire a missile and take down a hyperscale data center. So I think that normalization is huge for the state of Israel. It's huge for the region. And hopefully, it happens. And my own opinion is that a condition precedent to normalization was a ceasefire. We needed to show people that we could stop the violence and we could have conversation and dialogue. And so, this is the beginning of that. And hopefully, everything over there can be settled in that way.

Fox News Host

Just as-

Steve Witkoff:

If it's possible, everyone will become a believer.

Fox News Host

How many countries do you think could be onboard?

Steve Witkoff:

I think you could get everybody onboard in that region. I really do. I think-

Fox News Host

Who's everybody?

Steve Witkoff:

... there's a new sense of leadership over there. Qatar. Look at what... Qatar was enormously helpful. And this Sheikh Mohammed, he did plenty of... His communication skills with Hamas were indispensable here. So I think... The UAE is already a part of it. Egypt was very, very helpful to us in these endeavors. We have the opportunity to get everybody bought in to a better future for the region. More opportunity, more hope. This is an inflection point.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

Okay. Again, Soeren, that was Steve Witkoff, Trump's special envoy to the Middle East in an interview just about a week ago on Fox News Channel. Talking about his work toward the normalization of relations between Israel and Saudi Arabia. This is the Abraham Accords he's referring to here and then having a whole bunch of other Arab states in on this deal. He says, "So it can be investable and financeable." In other words, there's a big money aspect here of profit, of the flow of economies for these countries. Saudi Arabia, of course, wants there to be a Palestinian state within Israel. Talk more about this Abraham Accords. How this ceasefire that's taking place right now is certainly a condition of entering into these Abrahamic Accords. And is there a willingness in Israel to give up land for promises of peace with Saudi Arabia and the rest of her Arab neighbors?

GUEST: SOEREN KERN

We're talking about that Abraham Accords which the first Trump administration announced in September 2020. And that was a normalization agreement between Israel and Bahrain, United Arab Emirates, Morocco, and Sudan at the time. And President Trump has made it clear during the campaign and recently that he sees the ceasefire and hostage deal in Gaza as directly linked to expanding the Abraham Accords.

And so, the Biden administration tried, for a very long time, to expand the Abraham Accords to include Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia is, obviously, one of the largest and most important countries in the Middle East. And if they were to normalize relations with Israel, that would really transform the Middle East in a way that has been unimaginable since the creation of the Israeli state in 1948.

I think Mr. Witkoff, he's really naive in some certain approaches to what's going on in the Middle East. He says that, apparently, that the Islamists who are going to join the Abraham Accords are motivated by money. That's impossible for me to believe. Islamists are not motivated by money. They're motivated by ideology and by Islamism.

The biggest problem that I have with Witkoff, this praising and this fawning constantly over Qatar is very disturbing to me. Qatar is a malign state. The whole ideology behind Qatar is Wahhabism. It's an extreme form of Islam. It's an ideology that tries to restore the Islam of the 7th Century, of the time of Muhammad. And they're trying to export this extreme, ideological Islamism throughout the whole Middle East and all through Europe and, also, to North America.

And so, it just seems to me that there's a naivete. That, all of a sudden, the whole region is basically going to make peace with Israel. There's no way that Turkey or Iran, those are both Islamist states, would agree to join this Abraham Accords. That being said, I think if Saudi Arabia were to come onboard, I would say that there's possibly 10, 12, or more less important states, Mauritania, Oman, some of the smaller Gulf Arab states, who would also join that because they would be getting political cover from Saudi Arabia.

The real big question in my mind is like, "What price is Israel going to have to pay to normalize the relations with Saudi Arabia?" And as you mentioned correctly, that Saudi Arabia has repeatedly made normalization with Israel contingent on the creation of a Palestinian state. And as over and over and over again, the Saudis have said that normalization can only come through giving the Palestinians a state.

And so, this is really where my concern is. President Trump really wants this deal. I guess the Israelis want it, not at any cost. The Saudis want it. And if the Israelis are required to make extreme concessions under pressure from the Trump administration to make this deal happen, it can really bring down the Netanyahu government. It could create a massive amount of tension. It could result in the creation of a Palestinian state, of a two-state solution. And I think that that would be a very, very high price for Israel to pay.

HOST: DAVID WHEATON:

And really, America to pay to be pressuring Israel to give up its land and have another state inside of it. That would be not good for America as well. Just biblically speaking, the land is not to be given away or broken up. Well, we are out of time to today. But we'll hear Part 2 of this conversation with Soeren next weekend and Alex Newman will join us to explain the coming technocracy.

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