Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas are due to hold their first fortnightly meeting next week, following the Annapolis peace conference last month. The two leaders will be laying the groundwork for final status negotiations which will begin in earnest in January , according to the Israeli Prime Minister. It's no surprise that the Annapolis peace conference has found broad support from many international organizations. The principle of "land for peace" has been established by the international community as the only solution to the Middle East conflict. But what is worrying is that so many Christian groups are willing to jump on the "land for peace" bandwagon, believing that if only Israel could give away enough territory, a lasting peace in the Middle East might be found. The Lutheran Church
is one such example, which has in the past called for
divestment
from Israel in an effort to pressure the Jewish state into making peace with the Palestinians. Following the Annapolis peace conference, the denomination is now calling on the Israeli and Palestinian negotiating teams to do everything in their power to bring about President Bush's "vision" of two states, living side by side in peace and security...

Quote: *"Noko assured the Israeli and Palestinian leaders of the "constant and fervent prayers" of the LWF community throughout the next round of negotiations due to start on 12 December. He added, however, that the leaders also needed to do everything they could to agree a peace treaty "resolving all outstanding issues and resulting in two states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security – and the establishment of peace with justice in the Holy Land".*

I recently received an email from a Christian company which contained an advertisement for a charity called World Vision, which seeks to alleviate child-poverty around the globe. Having co
mmented
on this charity before in relation to its stance on Middle East peace, I decided to email the company that had sent me the advertisement and inform them of the charity's unscriptural views. Unfortunately I received no response. But I did send a copy of the email to World Vision by mistake, and I did receive a response from them. In their reply World Vision say they have worked with the children of the Holy Land for 30 years. But their website states the charity will
not work in Israel
. They say the reason for this is because the average annual income there is much higher than other nations. The average income may be higher, but according to recent statistics, one in three Israeli children is poor, 23% Israelis in poverty have contemplated suicide, and the number of Israelis asking for food has doubled in the past five years. Not to mention the thousands of Jewish families making Aliyah from former Soviet countries every year. The World Vision email says they are a non-political organization which seeks the welfare of children caught up in the Middle East conflict, but that sometimes their support for peace may have

"political ramifications".

Quote: *"In Israel, World Vision does not have ongoing development programmes. This is not a political decision. Development programmes are established in areas with significant levels of need and the highest levels of poverty. The annual per capita income in Israel is over US$22,000, as opposed to Gaza and the West Bank, which is under US$900 per year. What is World Vision's view on the crisis? As a non-political humanitarian organisation we hold no political position in this or any conflict. Our focus is on helping children and families in need, regardless of their religious or political affiliations. For the sake of all children in the Middle East, World Vision is appealing to all parties to protect them, cease all hostilities and negotiate a peaceful end to this crisis.*

I am for peace in the Middle East, and I believe we should pray for the peace of Jerusalem. But as Christians, we must not work against the revealed will of God, politics or no polictics. It seems that the will of the international community holds more sway with many of these Christian groups than the Scriptures do. They have adopted a world vision that is inconsistent with the Word of God, for they think that through dividing Jerusalem and parting the land, Israelis and Palestinians can somehow achieve a lasting peace without God. But peace did not come in 1948 or 1956, when Israel possessed none of the land now under contention. For 19 years, Arab nations controlled Gaza, Judea, Samaria and east Jerusalem, yet at no time did they ever call for the creation of a Palestinian state. And since the days of the Babylonian captivity, there has never been an independent state in the land of Israel, nor has Jerusalem ever been the capital of any other people. These Christian organizations have bought the lie that this conflict is between Jew and Palestinian over land, when in reality it is a spiritual battle between the forces of light and darkness over the establishment of God's Kingdom on earth. As the Scriptures state, the status of Jerusalem will eventually become such a contentious issue, that all the people of earth will be gathered together against it.

Zechariah 14:2-3
Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah [and] against Jerusalem. And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it.

Sadly many Christian organizations are themselves becoming embroiled in this conflict. Though they may do so in the name of peace, in reality they are seeking the division of the city where God has chosen to place His name (1st Kings 11:36). And in His jealousy and in the fire of His wrath, God will defend His Holy City.

Zechariah 12:9
And it shall come to pass in that day, [that] I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

Source YNet News , Christianity Today , World Vision