

THE KURDISH QUESTION IN IRAQ:
AN ANALYSIS OF THEIR SEARCH FOR INDEPENDENCE
IN LIGHT OF BIBLICAL SHALOM

by

Joelle P. Morabito

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Thesis written by
Joelle P. Morabito

Approved by

Thesis Advisor

Accepted by

Dean, Templeton Honors College

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Student's Name Joelle P. Morabito

Telephone (845) 546-8123 Email .
joelle23@optonline.net

Date of Submission May 9, 2008 Degree Program B.A., Political
Science

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Introduction

Ours is a world divided by competing interests, gross inequalities, and oppression. The Biblical narrative speaks hope to a hurting world, proclaiming that reconciliation and peace are in fact possible by the grace of God. The paradigm of Biblical shalom details God’s hope for the flourishing of human beings and presents us with a means to reconciliation. Biblical shalom is indeed relevant to analyzing even challenging international issues. Present-day Iraq is one such instance, divided as it is among competing ethnic and religious identities. From the ruins Biblical shalom speaks, offering hope and the possibility of reconciliation and peaceful living to even Iraq’s fiercely divided Sunnis, Shiites, and Kurds.

Comment [B1]: Since your fundamental compass in this paper is biblical shalom, you might start with a signal paragraph about human flourishing and how it is relevant to analyzing even challenging international issues. I realize that you get to shalom in the second paragraph, but it shalom-as-lens is the most interesting part of your argument. So, why not lead with it? Instead, your first paragraph is an overview of colonial history in Iraq. Not a compelling start. Furthermore, it feels a bit like you just drop a bit of history in the beginning and then turn to the important stuff in the second paragraph. This first paragraph might more effectively introduce your history section. Just a suggestion.

Sectarian violence has plagued Iraq since its creation as an imposed amalgamation of ethnic groups following the fall of the Ottoman Empire after World War I. Much like for the African colonies, the British defined the territorial limits of the Iraqi state without regard to the politics of or relationships among the different ethnic and religious groups, and fighting and bloodshed has long plagued relations between the Shiites, Sunnis, and Kurds. The question which should be at the forefront of the US-led occupation of Iraq and efforts at nation-building is how we can help Iraqis create a society that is politically, economically and culturally sustainable.

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In this paper I will explore the struggle of the Kurds as a stateless nation living astride the borders of multiple countries and their struggle for recognition, rights, and provision. I will focus on the Iraqi Kurds as my case study, exploring their historical situation as a minority in Iraq and focusing specifically on their integration into the country of Iraq. Nations in similar situations have either taken the road of self-

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Comment [B2]: Rather, "...struggle of the Kurds as a stateless nation living...."

Comment [B3]: Alternative language: "Nations in similar situations have either taken the road of self-determination or integration. The former leads to the establishment of an independent nation-state. The latter assumes that people groups can work together...."

determination or integration. The former leads to the establishment of an independent nation-state, while the latter assumes people groups can work together to coexist in a peaceful manner in which all communities are provided for. I will suggest a biblically-informed perspective for assessing and addressing the problem of Kurdish nationalism in Iraqi political development. More specifically, the Biblical ideas of justice and shalom offer helpful ways of thinking through concerns related to the political challenges of the day, even such difficult challenges as Iraq. Finally, using these ideas as a lens to view the Kurdish situation, I conclude with several policy recommendations.

The Kurds are an ancient people whose presence in the Middle East region of Kurdistan can be traced back thousands of years. Despite their historic nationalist push for independence and multiple occasions throughout modern history, the Kurds have not been given that for which they've long hoped. The sectarian conflict in Iraq between Sunnis, Shiites, and Kurds is a perilously complex issue that throws into question the very future of a unitary Iraq and the potential governing of its regions. Other issues which must be considered are control of Kirkuk and distribution of oil revenues, the PKK terrorist group, and the future of US involvement in Iraq. I propose the Biblical concept of shalom as the lens by which we look at the situation, suggesting means for reconciliation among Iraqi leaders and citizens as well as regional actors. In light of Biblical shalom and the specifics of the Kurdish situation, I do not believe that the Kurds should receive an independent state, but that they should receive a semi-autonomous region within a federalized Iraq.

Comment [B4]: Rather, "...think through how to order our life together, and...."

Comment [B5]: Redundant. You basically say this at the beginning of your sentence.

Comment [B6]: Suggested alternative: "I will suggest a biblically-informed perspective for assessing and addressing the problem of Kurdish nationalism in Iraqi political development. More specifically, the biblical ideas of justice and shalom offer helpful ways of thinking through concerns related to the political challenges of the day, even such difficult challenges as this one. Using these ideas to "see" the issues related to the Kurdish people, I conclude with several policy recommendations."

Comment [B7]: I recommend section titles to help your reader stay with you throughout your lengthy argument.

Comment [B8]: Avoid ending a sentence with a preposition. So, "...given that for which they've long hoped."

Comment [B9]: Suggested alternative language: "... is a perilously complex issue that throws into question the very future of a unitary...."

Comment [B10]: Putting it this way—i.e., "In addition—suggests you've come to your conclusion about this independently of what a shalom-driven perspective might suggest.

The Kurds – An Ancient People

There is a Kurdish adage which says “Level the mountains, and in a day the Kurds would be no more” (Ciment 1996, 1). In fact, the Kurds are a mountain people, whose presence as one of the oldest living cultures in the world today is found recorded in the earliest recorded history of the Middle East. Kurdistan, as the homeland of the Kurds is called, occupies mountainous areas where Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Syria converge (O’Leary 2005, 17). The Kurds are the largest ethnic group in the world that occupies a geographically compact area and yet has no nation-state of its own. Iraq’s approximately 3.3 million Kurds comprise 15-20 percent of the population and reside mostly in the mountains of the north and east. The Kurds constitute a minority in each of the states they occupy, and it is clear that a substantial portion of Kurds throughout multiple states share a common identity (McDowall 2005, 1). The majority of Iraqi Kurds are Sunni Muslims who maintain their own distinct language and cultural traditions and identify with the broader Kurdish population. The isolation and impenetrability of their mountain way of life have long protected them, allowing them to preserve their autonomy, independence, and distinctive way of life. According to James Ciment, however, the mountains have also been the Kurd’s worst enemy, isolating them to the point of ignorance in regards to political, economic, and social developments in the larger Middle East. In addition, the mountains have kept the Kurds divided into hostile and mutually suspicious factions.

Comment [B11]: ?

The Development of Kurdish Nationalism

The world recognizes the Kurds as a nation – having its own national, cultural, and linguistic characteristics (MacDonald 2007, 15). Broadly speaking, there are two main schools of thought which explain the origins of the nation and nationalism. As

Michael Gunter tells us, “The primordialists or essentialists argue that the concepts have ancient roots and thus date back to some distant point in history...The constructivists, on the other hand, maintain that nationalism is a recent construction that in effect has invented nations” (Gunter 2007, 1). Most Kurdish nationalists trace the origins of their nation “back into time immemorial” (Gunter 2007, 2), seeing themselves as the descendents of the ancient Medes who overthrew the Assyrian Empire in 612 BC. They also recall the following myths regarding their ancient origins:

...King Solomon, *jinn*, the blacksmith Kawa who defeated the ruthless leader Zohhak who had been feeding the brains of young men to two giant serpents’ heads growing from his shoulders, and their national holiday *Newroz* celebrating the beginning of spring or the new year” (Gunter 2007, 2).

A difficulty in reconstructing Kurdish history is that the history of the Kurds has most often been written by the hegemon, which the Kurds have not been for 800 years.

Scholar Mehrdad Izady points to the period from the 5th century BC through the 6th century AD as marking “the homogenization and consolidation of the modern Kurdish national identity. The ethnic designator *Kurd* is established finally, and applied to all segments of the nation” (Gunter 2007, 3). Scholar Vladimir Minorsky, however, contests this early date, saying instead that “about the period of the Arab conquest [mid 7th century] a single ethnic term *Kurd*...was beginning to be applied to an amalgamation of Iranian or iranicised tribes” (Gunter 2007, 3). Regardless of to which century we trace the solidification of the use of *Kurd* as a solid ethnic identity, it is clear to most scholars that “the Kurdish consciousness of separate identity goes back far in history” (Gunter 2007, 3).

However, those who espouse the constructivist nationalism argument would contest that

...the very concept of the nation and nationalism being the focus of one's supreme loyalty is relatively new even in the West, where many would argue that it only began to develop in the latter part of the 18th century and specifically during the French Revolution which began in 1789 (Gunter 2007, 7).

Comment [B12]: ?

In the Middle East, the concepts of nation and nationalism are even newer; here nationalism emerged only after World War I following the fall of the Ottoman Empire. Scholars who support the constructivist perspective cite the identification with tribes as the main source of identity in the 17th century and before. Kurdish nationalism is thus a result of the Ottoman Empire's disintegration and thus a relatively new phenomenon. In light of the development of the concepts of nation and nationalism in modern times, the modern development of Kurdish nationalism does not detract from the legitimacy of the Kurd's quest for autonomy.

The Kurds in Iraq

Kurdish nationalism in Iraq specifically developed mostly in the twentieth century in response to the building of an Arab state that would permit only a minimal amount of Kurdish autonomy as part of a rule of oppression and subjugation. In order to understand the Kurdish quest for independence, we must explore significant points in their history as people in Iraq since the growth of nationalist sentiments.

Comment [B13]: Perhaps "as part of a rule of oppression and subjugation."

Comment [B14]: Avoid redundancies. You use "understand" twice in the same line. Consider "note" or "explore" to replace second one.

Following the decline of the Ottoman Empire and its rule over Kurdistan in the early part of the century, the British seized control of Iraq, a move that was met by resistance and rebellion from the Kurds. The 1920 signing of the Treaty of Sevres signed

Comment [B15]: New parag.

Comment [B16]: Avoid using "which" without a comma preceding it. Use "that"; otherwise your prose is riddled with "whiches", and you don't want them and a bunch of warlocks running around in your work, do you?;-)

by the governments of Britain and France when the Kurdish appetite for independence. The treaty established Kurdistan as a mandate, promised Kurdish independence when the European powers deemed the peoples there ready for it, and suggested the possibility of a Kurdish state. The treaty was, of course, outdated and implausible before its signing, and the British exploited Iraq's religious and ethnic differences in their efforts to rule, governing Iraq's Southern Kurdistan through a system of indirect rule. In their system of governance the Kurds were subjected to Arab rule, a fact highlighting the shared sentiments of Arabs and Brits that in fact "as a race, [the Kurds] are not a political entity, and are incapable of self-rule" (Ciment 1996, 54). Initially unaware of this, the Kurds at first welcomed British rule. The British appointed a Kurdish leader in charge of overseeing the reestablishment of the Kurdish tribal system, touting promises of an independent Kurdistan, sentiments which were extremely popular in the Kurdish countryside. Meanwhile, outrage over the transfer of oil revenues garnered in Kurdistan to British and Arab administrators spurred a rebellion in northern Iraqi Kurdistan. In response, British rulers felt the need to take seriously Kurdish grievances, signing the Local Languages Act of 1931, which guaranteed the teaching of Kurdish in Mosul schools, as well as a last-minute amendment to the Independence Treaty of 1932 requiring the election of local Kurdish officials.

Comment [B17]: I suggest making this punchier and in the active (rather than passive) voice. So, "Britain and France's signing of the 1920 Treaty of Sevres when the Kurdish appetite for independence. The Treaty established Kurdistan as a mandate, promised...."

Comment [B18]: superfluous

Comment [B19]: Missing definite article

Comment [B20]: Confusing syntax

Comment [B21]: Do you mean, rather, "transfer"?

Comment [B22]: You've already used "which" in this sentence, so I recommend the following language: "...Treaty of 1932 requiring the...."

In comparison to the Kurds of Turkey, whose culture and way of life have been severely restricted for the duration of the twentieth century, the Kurds of Iraq have enjoyed relative freedom of cultural expression since the passage of the aforementioned laws during the 1930s. Yet, the Iraqi Kurds have still been subject to oppression, as well

as numerous **political**, economic, social, and cultural restrictions that have encouraged them to seek independence.

Comment [B23]: You might consider adding "oppression" there since the knowledgeable reader will immediately wonder why you mention only "political...restrictions". Gassing the Kurds in the 1980s is hardly a restriction. So, "...subject to severe political oppression and economic, social, and cultural restrictions that have encouraged...."

During the years of the Kingdom of Iraq from 1932 until 1958, the Kurds and their cultural, political, and economic grievances were largely ignored by the Arab government. The promises made to promote the Kurdish language and appoint Kurdish officials were blatantly ignored, and when the Kurds took this complaint to the League of Nations the Arab king complained that by their demands were seeking "a wedge to pry autonomy and even full independence from the Baghdad government" (Ciment 1996, 56). Meanwhile, intra-Kurdish fighting intensified in the form of banditry and blood feuds, a by-product of the British efforts to foster a new tribalism and a lack of strong central governmental authority due to unrest in Baghdad. Things worsened during World War II, when a food shortage plagued the mountainous Kurds. In response Kurdish leader Mustafa led a rebellion against the government and the British in 1943, which was countered by the government sending in the pro-government Kurdish militia. Mustafa and his followers were driven into exile in the Soviet Union, where they remained for the next twelve years. This "retreat of the Five Hundred," as it is known, is seen as a milestone in the Kurdish nationalist movement (Ciment 1996, 56). Between World War II and the Revolution of 1958, the Kurds faced economic exploitation, seeing little of the oil revenue generated from their territory, and were largely landless. Restless as a minority and opposed to the Baghdad government, they showed a significant degree of loyalty to the Allies. Their loyalty and Allied propaganda about self-determination raised hopes of Kurdish independence in the immediate postwar time. Yet again, Britain and the

United States did not heed Kurdish cries for independence, fearing that doing so might drive the conservative Iraqi regime into the grasp of the Soviet Union.

A fresh wind seemed to blow for the Kurds when Arab General Qasim gained control of Iraq by means of a military coup in 1958. His policies sought to remake Iraqi society and restructure foreign policy. Of most significance to the Kurds, his accession to power appeared to bring in a new era of Arab-Kurdish relations, as he established the KDP under the following mantra:

...Hails as solid bases for the welfare, freedom, and equality of the Kurdish and Arab peoples, the important Arab liberation movement, its success in liberating Iraq, the establishment of the Republican regime and the withdrawal from the Baghdad Pact, which was clearly detrimental to the Kurdish nation (Ciment 1996, 58).

Comment [B24]: Is this correct?

Despite his rhetoric, it quickly became clear that Qasim had no real interest in finding a solution to the Kurdish question. He appointed no Kurds to his cabinet and did nothing to promote their betterment or search for independence despite their continued loyalty to Qasim. On the contrary, the Kurd's actions focused Qasim's attention on the strength of the Kurds and their demands for autonomy, a goal he believed was only a prelude to their intention – secession. In response, Qasim utilized “time time-honored tactics of pitting tribe against tribe” (Ciment 1996, 58), arming the Kurdish Zibari tribe, a long-time rival of the Kurdish Barzanis tribe, whose head was leader of northern Iraq. “Thus began the longest war in modern Kurdish history, triggered, ironically, by the actions of perhaps the best friend the Kurds had ever and would ever have in Baghdad” (Ciment 1996, 58). From 1961 until 1975 the Iraqi Kurdistan was at war with four different foes – Qasim, the first Baath regime in 1963, the nationalist-military government of the Arif brothers, and

Comment [B25]: This sentence is bearing too much. Divide into two sentences or lop off the last clause.

the second Baath regime, headed by Aaddam Hussein, after 1968. During this time Qasim was murdered and Iraq taken over by a Baathist regime in 1963.

When the Baath party took power, it immediately unleashed a “reign of terror” against its enemies, including the Kurds, “systematically removing Kurds from their homes around the crucial oil city of Kirkuk and replacing them with Arab families” (Ciment 1996, 59). The Baath regime also initiated a new offensive in the North, which outlasted its regime and resulted in the army’s defeat at the hands of the Kurds. Meanwhile, intra-Kurdish division intensified, dividing between two increasingly aggressive bases of power, the Barzani confederation in the north and a confederation in the east under the leadership of Jala Talabani and affiliated with the KDP. The new Baath government pitted the two forces against each other. Despite this, the pressure from the Kurds for autonomy could not be ignored any longer, and in early 1966 the Iraqi Prime Minister and Kurdish leaders met and announced “the most ambitious plan ever to assure Kurdish autonomy...Among other things, the treaty recognized ‘the existence of the Kurdish nation,’ mandated Kurdish administrators for the region and local government, guaranteed bilingualism in Kurdish regions, and encouraged Kurdish culture, letters, and the arts through statutes and subsidies” (Ciment 1996, 59-60). Despite the Prime Minister’s intentions, however, he lacked the power to call the shots and was soon after ousted from power. Fighting between the government and the Kurds continued through the second Baath coupe of 1968.

Comment [B26]: Baath party

Comment [B27]: two

Comment [B28]: Are these the dwarves of the north or something?

Encouraged by their victories over government forces in the 1960s and receiving arms from the shah, Kurdish leaders felt assured time was on their side. On March 11, 1970, a peace agreement was announced to the Iraqi public on national TV calling for a

halt to the war. The costs so far had been devastating – according to a UN report, 40,000 houses in 700 villages had been destroyed; 300,000 people displaced; and there were some 60,000 dead and wounded on both sides (Ciment 1996, 60). Seeing this as the best they could hope for, the Kurds accepted the agreement. The Kurds and the government argued over the oil-refining city of Kirkuk in the Kurd-dominated region and within what time frame Kurdish administration and education should takeover. Nonetheless, the Kurds enjoyed a large degree of autonomy during the years of 1970 to 1974, controlling and administering territory (Stansfield 2007, 103). A law passed by the Iraqi government in 1974 fell short of the provisions outlined in the 1970 peace treaty. The Kurds saw it as “autonomy of a diminished nature,” and called it “Paper Autonomy” (Stansfield 2007, 106). Rejecting the law, the Kurds relied upon Iran to maintain a viable force against the militarily superior Iraqi government. However, Iran withdrew this support following their signing of the Aligers Agreement with Saddam in 1975. The signing of this agreement resulted in the collapse of the Kurdish rebellion (Stansfield 2007, 100).

Comment [B29]: Redundancy. I suggest, “accepted the agreement...”

Comment [B30]: This should be a separate sentence.

Comment [B31]: Separate sentence

Comment [B32]: date

Comment [B33]: separate sentence

From 1975 to 1980, the Kurds suffered a chaotic period in which they were greatly divided due to factionalism. Nonetheless, the Iran-Iraq War began in 1980 enhanced the struggle of the Kurds to monumental proportions. As punishment for the Kurds’ former alliance with Iran, the Saddam government perpetrated an *Anfal* campaign against the Kurds during the late 1980s, devastating civilian populations with chemical weapons and decimating rural areas. Reeling and devastated by the end of the 1980s, it would take a significant event to restore the Kurds to the position of autonomy they had enjoyed only two years earlier. Saddam’s invasion of Kuwait prompted an international crisis and the redistribution of domestic power in the Iraqi state.

Comment [B34]: Since these two sentences are in tension—how can a divided Kurdish people also struggle together for independence?—start the second sentence with “However” or “Nonetheless, the 1980 onset of the Iran-Iraq war enhanced the Kurdish struggle to monumental proportions.”

Comment [B35]: Just say “the Saddam government perpetrated...”

Saddam Hussein's genocidal attempts against the Kurds in fact served to foster Kurdish nationalism, and following Iraq's defeat in the Gulf War of 1991 a de facto Kurdish state was established in Iraq. The United States enforced a "no-fly zone" over northern and southern Iraq with the purpose of protecting the Kurds from any potential attacks by Saddam. This allowed for the development of the oil industry, construction of major dams, cement and tobacco factories, and agricultural mechanization. These developments served to create greater wealth in Iraqi Kurdistan and foster the development of Kurdish nationalism. (Gunter 2007, 11).

Comment [B36]: Shouldn't you mention the U.S. enforced "no fly zone" here to help the reader understand how this autonomy was established and protected?

Other Issues to be Considered

The PKK is a Kurdish terrorist organization that seeks the creation of an independent Kurdistan. They carry out most of their attacks in Turkey and have killed thousands of people. Mt. Qandil, on the edge of northern Iraq and Iran, is the home of the PKK training camps. This is 100km from Turkey; however, it is the launching point for attacks on Turkish citizens. The United States has checkpoints on roads leading to the mountain, but does not disturb Kurds traveling to and from the area. These actions of the United States are influenced by their simultaneous efforts to address the interest of Turkey, a long-standing ally, and to preserve Kurdish autonomy. Turkish opposition to Kurdish independence is a key issue, and the potential repercussions on the part of the Turkish government should independence be granted must be considered in seeking to resolve the conflict. There are about 5,000 members of the PKK, from Syria, Turkey, and Iran. The PKK has gone through several name changes, but still remains a terrorist group. Turkey's action against this group will only lead to instability in the region. Brandon

Comment [B37]: This is an abrupt move. Can you make the transition from autonomy to a description of the PKK that keeps from jerking the reader from one line of thinking to another? Is this a good place to insert a section title, as you turn from Kurd history to analysis of related issues?

Comment [B38]: You might say a little more about why the US is there. You don't have to go into detail, but the US is a major player in this drama, protecting autonomy while trying to address the concerns of Turkey, a long-standing ally. This enforced autonomy has also encouraged more Kurdish enthusiasm for independence. Finally, since the trajectory of your argument is toward autonomy, even independence, this may be the place to begin raising regional reasons against independence (e.g., it may have destabilizing effects in Turkey).

Comment [B39]: Avoid passive voice. One way to do this is to review your sentence when you use the preposition "by". It often signals passive voice. Instead, "Turkey's action against this group..."

James was the only source to live among the PKK and to voice the idea that the PKK lends some stability to the region; however, I find these claims unfounded, as I think it is highly unlikely that the PKK will surrender their violent ways.

Comment [B40]: Where'd you find them?;-)

The conflict in Iraq is rooted in divisions between Sunnis, Shiites, and Kurds. Each ethnic group is dedicated to communal self-preservation at the expense of unification of the country and of its regional and ethnic differences. In elections held since the US-led war began in 2003, the overwhelming majority of Iraqis have voted along ethnic lines. This issue of deep-seated ethnic divisions is of prime importance in seeking to determine whether or not the Kurds should be given independence. I will return to this issue when prescribing policy suggestions, but it seems to me that hopes for a unitary Iraqi state are unrealistic and policies in favor of this approach will be largely ineffective. Rather, an Iraqi state must be created which allows for the flourishing of each ethnic group and a degree of self-rule.

Another issue of significance which must be considered when thinking about the Iraqi Kurds is that of who should have control over Kirkuk. The Turkmen are the victims of violence in Kirkuk; Kurds are forcing them out of their homes. Kidnappings and murders have led refugees to flee to Turkey, Jordan, and Syria, and leaving is difficult due to residency permits and visas. Some feel that the targeting of Turkmen is due to class – if you are a businessperson, wealthy, or in the military you are a target. Kurds are forcefully taking over economic opportunities, leaving others with minimal opportunities. With regards to regional interests on this matter, Turkey wants to see the Turkmen stay in Iraq in order to give them leverage in the country; yet if they don't provide visas and permits for Turkmen refugees to flee to their country, they will have a major refugee

Comment [B41]: I don't know what this sentence means.

problem. This reality within Kirkuk makes a solution urgent, but complicated (“Turkmen Experiencing” 2007).

Comment [B42]: Perhaps these two paragraphs should go in the next section. At any rate, after reading through your paper, I couldn’t find your policy prescription related to Kirkuk. Did you develop one?

The Kurdish Quest for Independence On the World Stage

Comment [B43]: Perhaps, “on”

The past three centuries have witnessed the emergence of the state as the dominant political actor on the world stage. Amidst this backdrop has occurred the explosion of nationalism, the pursuit of self-determination, and the desire that nations be allowed to govern themselves and enjoy autonomy. What are the positives and negatives resulting from these developments? Should we favor the self-determination of nations who seek it? More specifically, what are the benefits and drawbacks of Kurdish nationalism and the concomitant pursuit of independence? According to the body of basic principles and laws concerning human and civil rights, the Kurds undeniably have the right to self-determination (McDowall 2005, 10). The International Court of Justice declared in 1995 that self-determination is “one of the essential principles of contemporary international law,” yet when the legal norm of self-determination is examined it seems that its nature and applicability is limited to reflect the will of states at the expense of the aspirations of nations, a result of our Westphalian State system (Allain 2004, 13). Despite their long and ardent nationalist struggle for self-determination and autonomy, competing nationalisms, regional power struggles, and international politics have continually thwarted Kurdish efforts (Ciment 1996, 1). Were self-determination justly conceptualized, Jean Allain contends, “it would surely find room to accommodate a people, which today find themselves in the neighborhood of thirty million strong, to determine for themselves their political association” (Allain 2004, 15).

Comment [B44]: You hyphenate this elsewhere. Be consistent.

Comment [B45]: Don’t capitalize

Biblical Shalom as a Paradigm and Guidepost

Should the Kurds in Iraq be granted an independent Kurdistan? In this paper I endeavor to look at the Kurdish situation and their search for independence in light of a biblically-formed worldview. In order to develop a lens through which we can do so, we must cultivate an understanding of the Biblical principle of shalom. Used 250 times in the Old Testament, the Hebrew word “shalom” details a multi-faceted principle of peace with God, ourselves, others, and nature. One aspect of shalom which God desires for all of humanity is that of harmonious relations between people. In reading the Biblical narrative we see that shalom is both a gracious gift of God and a task which we as humans must work toward achieving. There is a tension inherent in shalom in that God is its primary source, and yet we as fallen human beings are given the responsibility to serve as the agents of God to create the conditions which make shalom possible. Jeremiah 29:7 instructs Jews in the Diaspora to “Seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.” In addition, Paul tells Corinthian Christians in 2 Corinthians 5:19 that they have been charged to be agents of reconciliation and seek to work for Biblical shalom as God desires for our individual and communal lives together.

Comment [B46]: In international relations, autonomy and independence are NOT synonymous. Nations can be granted autonomy within a state. Quebec is an example of this.

Comment [B47]: More modestly, “a biblically-formed worldview.”

Comment [B48]: In a footnote you might identify several of the “facets” for the reader’s sake.

Comment [B49]: Paul tells Christians in Corinth that they are agents of reconciliation....”

Comment [B50]: You might mention Jeremiah 29.7 here as an OT parallel. Your argument would be stronger if you develop the significance more.

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The New Testament presents us with the person of Jesus Christ, the son of God, yet through the miracle of the Incarnation, one of us. The Gospel story presents Christ as the Savior of humankind, an agent of transformation in human society. While on earth, Jesus did not teach that the Kingdom of God was to remain unseen until the coming of the New Jerusalem – that the holy, just, and peaceful reign of God must continue to be waited upon – rather, following his baptism and time in the desert, Jesus returned to

Comment [B51]: Humankind is gender -neutral

Comment [B52]: What sort of after-dinner dessert was he spending time in?

Galilee declaring, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the Gospel”.ⁱⁱ Jesus declared that his arrival and ministry were the fulfillment of Israel’s messianic expectations, which included the expectation of shalom – that in his person and work the long-expected reign of God was decisively breaking in.ⁱⁱⁱ Jesus did not tell his followers to patiently await the sight of justice and shalom; rather, he marked the breaking in of God’s kingdom, justice, and shalom to transform this world! Christ’s resurrection on Easter Sunday, the first day of the week, is significant: it marked a new order of being and possibility – the start of God’s new creation!^{iv}

Jesus sought to change the very social structures which hindered the flourishing of shalom, and as his followers we are called to do the same, walking with the knowledge that while this world will never reach perfection, the kingdom of God is here and has defeated the earthly powers and principalities. In light of this, God’s shalom can be worked for and experienced! Let us stand with hope for humankind and this planet because far from abandoning this world, the faithful God has made a covenant with this planet and has not forgotten creation, breaking into the kingdoms of this world, declaring that the gates of Hades will not overcome and that Christian hope is for within history, not just beyond it!^v Such true faith in God’s words will provide the motivation to resist evil and work for justice and shalom. Shalom is certainly a gift of God, but it is also a task,^{vi} and biblical accounts of such flourishing follow human efforts of obedience and faith. With Jesus there is hope in spite of our failures and the decrepit state of mankind!^{vii}

So we understand that as followers of Christ we can share in making peace. The Beatitudes detail the characteristics followers of Christ should possess in seeking to further the Kingdom of God on earth. The New Testament tells us that peacemaking was

Comment [B53]: Separate sentence

Comment [B54]: Use gender-neutral language.

Comment [B55]: possess

the essence of life in Christ for the early church. I must emphasize that this does not speak just of a future kingdom of God, but offers prescriptions for seeking the kingdom of God here on earth. The Good News is that Christ is the mediator of peace and the fulfillment of the long-promised peace, and through him we can find reconciliation between God and people and among human beings.

Comment [B56]: prescriptions

Comment [B57]: Be careful here. This is a "social gospel" idea considered unorthodox. More importantly, it contradicts your own point that shalom is God's gift that requires tasking in concert with it. As you state it, the reader may believe that you think humans can build the kingdom "on earth as it is in heaven."

Comment [B58]: The spirit of these two paragraphs seems to point to CHRISTIAN responsibility. Yet, you are making the case for HUMAN responsibility toward the Kurds. Right? Your analysis and prescriptions is for all humans, not just for Christians.

How can we seek to fulfill the call to Biblical justice in our state-centric modern world? Shalom is a positive idea – it points to the presence of these things, rather than having a negative focus like our concept of peace which points to the absence of something like war (Yoder 1984). "Peacemaking as shalom making is striving so that those who do not now enjoy material shalom and physical well-being can do so" (Yoder 1984). So we see that God desires shalom for all human beings. In seeking to realize this practically in our living together, Brueggemann insists that "Shalom is caused by and requires interventions that will redistribute power." He encourages us, concluding by saying "With people nothing is possible. With God all things are possible" (Brueggemann...Peace is a Shalom 2004).

Comment [B59]: You don't italicize this word elsewhere. Be consistent

So where do we begin in seeking to discern how Biblical shalom may be worked for in the Kurdish situation? Too often we view the Gospel individualistically, believing its themes of sin, guilt, and salvation apply only to individuals and their relations with other individuals. However, Walter Brueggemann suggests that when we look at the whole of the Biblical message "we discover an important alternative model for thinking faithfully...we will look at the concepts of chaos and order, that is, the problem of chaos and the powerful imposition of order as the divine resolution of the problem" (Brueggemann...Peace is a Gift 2004, 3). When we move away from doing theology

around the narrow, individualistic questions of sin, guilt, and salvation and do theology “around the issues of freedom and power, authority and responsibility...we shall be speaking about peace” (Brueggemann...Peace is a Gift 2004, 4). This, Brueggemann insists, places us on our way to Biblical shalom.

So how do the fundamental aspects and implications of shalom relate to the international community in regards to the treatment of the Kurds? One vital aspect of shalom is that of right relationships. Right political relationships are those that allow for human flourishing – the provision of a political context that empowers people to meet their physical needs, relational responsibilities, and exercise their individual gifts. What would right political relationships look like for key actors in the Kurdish situation, for example between the Kurds and Turkey, and the Kurds and the Iraqi government? I will return to this question in the conclusion of my paper when I suggest policy prescriptions for the resolution of the Kurdish question.

United States Policy Toward Iraq

The policy of the United States towards Iraq has consistently been the preservation and further solidification of Iraq’s unity and territorial integrity. While many Kurdish leaders have repeatedly made claims that the United States government pays little individual attention to the Kurds, this is consistent with their position towards Iraqi unity and also largely misfounded. The U.S. has significant policies of humanitarian support and protection for the people of Iraqi Kurdistan, “policies that have saved thousands of lives and helped the diverse people of this region protect their cultural identity and improve their economic situation” (MacDonald 2007, 117). The United

Comment [B60]: You could do more to “operationalize” shalom here. You’ve been talking about peace, reconciliation, and right relationships. These are fundamental aspects and implications of shalom. However, isolate one or two “variables” or “factors” related directly to the question of how the international community should treat the Kurds that are derivative of shalom. Suggestion: right relationships might be the ticket. So, explore what would right political relationships look like between the Kurds and Iraq (and Turkey)? The latter part of your paper argues a particular set of political relationships but they are virtually unconnected you’re your discussion of shalom. Let me offer an idea you probably heard at ASP but you do not mention here—human flourishing. Perhaps you can argue that those political relationships are “right” insofar as they are likely to produce human flourishing. This immediately begs a definition of human flourishing. One definition is: Humans flourish when they live in a political context that empowers them to meet their physical needs, relational responsibilities, and exercise their individual gifts. Of course, insecurity or political instability (or, to use Brueggemann’s words, chaos) makes the realization of these things less likely. So, you could focus on what makes for security or political stability (or Brueggemann’s word, order) that would make human flourishing likely. If you choose to take my suggestion, demonstrate how each of your policy prescriptions relate to each of the issues you address—regional autonomy, Turkey-Kurd relations, and Kirkuk—with human flourishing as the goal of your prescription.

Comment [B61]: This sentence is doing too much. Divide it up.

States opposes the creation of an independent Kurdistan and seeks to discourage Kurdish nationalist and separatist notions, claiming that a move towards an independent Kurdistan would “lead to tragic results for the Kurdish people of Iraq” (MacDonald 2007, 117) and would inflame regional opposition. Turkey, a NATO ally of the U.S., strongly opposes an independent Kurdistan, largely due to the huge numbers of Kurds Turkey has and the large portion of its land which is a part of Kurdistan. In addition, the continued ability of the United States to provide humanitarian assistance and a degree of protection to the Iraqi Kurds depends on the cooperation of Turkey.

It seems to me that the prospect of the reconstruction of Iraq as a unitary state is impossible at this point. The Biden-Gelb Plan for Iraq, laid out by Democratic Senator Joe Biden of Delaware, ~~chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and~~ Council on Foreign Relations President Emeritus Leslie Gelb initially as an op-ed in *The New York Times*, details a plan for Iraq which calls for a federalist system with three largely autonomous regions – Shiite, Sunni, and Kurd, with a strong but limited central government in accordance with the Iraqi constitution. The central government would retain control of only common interests – border defense, foreign policy, and oil production and revenues – and regional governments would hold the responsibility of administering their own regions. A bipartisan bill outlining the plan was sponsored by Senators Biden and Brownback and passed by the U.S. Senate in late September of 2007. Unfortunately, the bill is a non-binding measure and is likely to have little practical effect.

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Suggestions for Shalom in Iraq

A federal system made up of a loose confederation of three largely autonomous regions – Kurdish in the north, Shiite in the South, and Sunni in the middle – is the solution most consistent with Biblical shalom. It is a step towards more harmonious relations among all the people of Iraq and their neighbors, which is a sure step towards Biblical shalom. At this point, it is difficult for me to see it possible that the divided sects come together under a strong unified system – the divisions are too strong and deep. It seems that the needs of the individual communities of Iraqis will best be met by a regional government given the responsibility of governing their region. The prospects of an independent Kurdish state seem impractical considering the unanimous fierce opposition to such a proposal from neighboring states, many of whom would lose territory in the creation of a Kurdish state (McDowall 2005, 10-11). The creation of an independent Kurdish state would greatly enflame regional tensions and, in my view, move us farther from the norm of Biblical shalom which I have set to examine.

Comment [B63]: Missing word

Comment [B64]: You haven't really played this up in your earlier discussion, so the reader isn't ready for your claim. You should devote at least a paragraph to the tensions between the other two sects and the Kurds. This is REALLY important if you want to deny that a unitary government is most consistent with shalom.

In light of what I have suggested in the preceding paragraph, the question becomes how the Kurds can develop a relationship of functional equality within the state of Iraq, allowing for human flourishing as shalom demands. The Kurds have enjoyed relative autonomy for the past decade, developing democratically to a degree (MacDonald 2007, 256). After five years of a frustrating war in Iraq, it is painfully clear that an Iraqi solution will not be a military one. The solution must be political, so the question is how a civil society can be developed in Iraq that encourages cross-cutting ethnic and political cleavages, providing opportunities for cooperation across sectarian lines. I believe that binding the ethnic groups through resources can work towards a resolution for the issues that have led to sectarian violence and that providing for

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Comment [B66]: Be more modest in your language. Otherwise, you come off as naïve.

protection of minorities through the Constitution and leaving Baghdad as a federal city will be enough to mitigate the potential ‘ethnic cleansing’ feared by some. The primary focus of the United States in Iraq should be the development of a working infrastructure, one that can effectively deliver energy, education, health care, jobs, and security. But most importantly, the most difficult thing the US owes Iraq is an opportunity for political reconciliation and an environment that encourages the development of a viable civil society.

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As Carlos Pascual argues, I believe that what is needed in order for political reconciliation to come about in Iraq is a space for political reconciliation among key Iraqi and regional actors. The creation of this arena will require a UN special team and must have substantial political backing, set expectations but a flexible mandate, and the input of skilled diplomatic efforts. The lead negotiator should report to the Secretary General and must be empowered to engage regional and international actors directly. In addition, dialogue among the regional Middle Eastern countries regarding economic interests and cooperation for a sustainable solution in Iraq should be encouraged within the context of the international community (Pascual and Cullin 2007). While dialogue with key players is highly controversial and a difficult venture, particularly between the United States and Iran, the utmost effort must be given to diplomatic discourse for the sake of the peace and betterment of the region. Dialogue between countries works toward the fulfillment of shalom, and the pursuing of economic agreements and flourishing allows for the improvement of living conditions and thus fullness of life, a definite concern of Biblical shalom.

Comment [B67]: Missing verb

Comment [B68]: This looks like Carlos Pascual’s proposal. Be sure to give him attribution. It would give your paper more credibility if you introduce him to the reader as well.

Comment [B69]: You should at least recognize 1)the controversial nature of this statement (e.g., the US believes dialogue with Iran is wrong, and 2)it is an extremely dicey and difficult enterprise. Don’t give the reader the impression that you believe that talking amongst themselves, regional powers will walk away in peace and harmony.

Comment [B70]: How about "any"?

In order for any progress made towards reconciliation to have lasting effects throughout the whole of Iraqi society, civil society needs nourishing. Doing so may be done more effectively if addressed indirectly; one way to effectively do this is that the US continue to fund the indigenous design and implementation of many civil society projects that require cooperative efforts across sectarian lines. The provincial reconstruction teams currently working in Iraq under the leadership of the US military should continue their work of joining with Iraqis to rebuild the country's infrastructure. For example, the National Democratic Institute works with members of the Iraqi government in helping them develop their ability to interpret a constitution, conduct policy analysis, develop a legislative library, and develop and adhere to rules of procedure, among other things. It is vital that these projects be led and carried out largely by Iraqis. Iraqis bridging divides and working together across ethnic lines is likely to create jobs and a working infrastructure, and more importantly, foster the trust that undergirds a viable civil society and allows for an environment in which harmonious relations among Sunnis, Shiites, and Kurds may be pursued as Biblical shalom desires.^{viii}

Comment [B71]: You should probably acknowledge in a footnote that these ideas are found in the Washington Watch column of a forthcoming edition of Prism (May/June 2008)

I will now propose those other policy enactments which I think best work for the attainment of justice and shalom and which I believe should accompany the creation of a federal system in Iraq. Firstly, the United States should pressure the Iraqi Kurds to stop the violence perpetrated by the PKK. Despite the agreement of Iraqi Kurds with the political aims of the PKK – that is, the pursuit of an independent Kurdish state – the Kurds must recognize that the terrorist actions of the PKK enflame Iraqi relations with Turkey and serve as a source of conflict and instability in the region. Turkey's military involvement of late in northern Iraq has served to heighten tensions and the desire of the

Comment [B72]: Rather, "to stop"

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PKK to perpetrate violence within Turkey. As such, all efforts must be made to cut off funding to the PKK and wipe out camps like Mt. Qandil in northern Iraq. Despite the hopeful voice of a minority who see the PKK's potential as a stabilizing force in the region due to its secular emphases (Brandon, James 2007), I think it unlikely that they will leave behind their violent tactics, and as such the terrorist group must be disabled. Senator Sam Brownback, along with other policymakers, acknowledge that Turkey has a right to be upset over the PKK, but feels that if Iraqi Kurds are given a semi-autonomous region, they will no longer support the PKK. The United States should use positive incentives first, followed by negative incentives, to pressure the Kurdish regional government to enforce the rule of law and end terrorism within its jurisdiction. In addition, high-profile PKK leaders should be extradited to Turkey for prosecution in order that retributive justice as the Bible calls for may be served and pave the way for shalom and peaceful relations to flourish. The US must find a way to stand against terrorist groups like the PKK without opening another front. This shows the delicate nature of the situation—the US cannot jeopardize the stability of Northern Iraq, but it must also maintain credibility with its Turkish ally.

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Comment [B74]: Incorrect use of semi-colon

In regards to a timetable for the withdrawal of American troops from Iraq, the United States should maintain a military presence in Iraq until stability has been achieved. In order to achieve reconciliation and work towards shalom in Iraq, the United States must remain, in order to adequately address the risk that an Arab majority could reimpose its will on minority Kurds (Ahmed 2005, xiii). The US should act as a positive force to bring peace and reconciliation through troop presence, the training of Iraqi security forces, and the continued work of provincial reconstruction teams (PRTs). As

Comment [B75]: ?

Comment [B76]: Rather, "in order to adequately address the risk that...."

Comment [B77]: Perhaps also training Iraqi security forces?

long as the United States remains committed to working towards reconciliation and sustainability in Iraq, the continued presence of the US military and its efforts to rebuild the degraded infrastructure will bring greater stability to the region. While I see some legitimacy to the widespread argument that US presence is destabilizing the Middle East by enflaming tensions with al Qaeda and other radical organizations, I feel that an immediate withdrawal would destabilize the region further.

Comment [B78]: You should address the argument—widespread among those who want withdrawal very soon—that US presence is destabilizing the situation because it spurs on al Qaeda and even creates tensions with the likes of Moqtada al-Sadr and others.

While troop withdrawal is necessary, I do not support calling for a specific date. Iraqi self-sustainability is crucial to success in Iraq; pushing for a withdrawal timeline with dates set as each progressive step is achieved will force Iraqis to take ownership of their country and move towards reconciliation. In regards to the stability of the region, I believe that a gradual troop withdrawal will allow for the strengthening of Iraqi security and armed forces and limit the instability that may result.

Comment [B79]: This seems contradictory to me: a strict timeline seems to require “a set date.”

In regards to Kirkuk, the international community must pressure the Kurdish regional government to halt the “Kurdification” of the city – the changing of population demographics and the driving out of the Turkmen. The Turkmen must be protected and given the opportunity for equality and flourishing just as the Kurds are. Perhaps one way to bring this to fruition is through cooperation among Kurds and Turkmen in the work of developing Iraq’s infrastructure and various other reconciliatory projects in the development of Iraq’s civil society. In light of Turkish threats to invade Northern Iraq should Kirkuk be annexed by the Kurds, Kurdish efforts to do so must be surrendered for the sake of regional stability. Turkish concerns in regards to this matter seem legitimate, as Turkey is concerned that should Kirkuk be annexed by the Kurds, the oppression of the Turkmen will continue. Flourishing for all peoples in Iraq must be sought.

The Future of Kurdish Nationalism and Regional Relationships

In regards to the future of Kurdish nationalism in the Middle East, scholar David McDowall speaks to the prospect of Middle Eastern societies' "search for strength with more liberal values," of which he says

One can confidently expect this also to be reflected in Kurdish society. If Kurds find their neighborhood to be more tolerant and more accepting of the plurality of cultures that make the Middle East, than ethnic nationalism among the Kurds will also progressively soften as Kurdish communities feel they can be themselves and manage themselves without having to be overly assertive" (McDowall 2005, 3).

Some scholars suggest that in our modern, greatly interconnected world, we must seek to alter the search of ethnic and people groups from that of "statehood" to that of "peoplehood" (MacDonald 2007, 31).

Deleted: Only through the coming together of Shiites, Sunnis, and Kurds will we see true, lasting progress in Iraq, and the Biblical narrative provides us with some guidelines on achieving reconciliation.

The United States is likely to do what it can to maintain strong ties with Turkey, and scholars such as Toensing argue that the Kurds will only have good standing with the US as long as their agenda does not conflict with US-Turkey relations (Toensing 2007). While the Kurdish region of Iraq benefits from the United States' occupation in Iraq, the US will not likely sacrifice its position with Turkey in order to protect the Kurdish region. There is a great need for cooperation between Turkey and Northern Iraq; the long term regional and economic interest of both people groups calls for a new approach to how they interact, despite centuries of enmity.

Turkish State Minister Kursad Tuzmen called for Iraq's neighbors to encourage Iraqi stability. Tuzmen believes that economic relations between Turkey and Iraq are progressing and that Turkey is eager to encourage this growth due to their mutual economic interest ("Turkey Calls for Support" 2007). Mr. Tom Stahl, the director of the

Iraq desk at USAID, was particularly insightful about the current and future U.S. policy in Iraq, and furthermore had a good understanding of the relationship and challenges between the United States and Turkey. Mr. Stahl explained how Turkish interests in Iraq are different than other regional players for several key reasons. Turkey's interests in Iraq lie primarily in Northern Iraq with issues such as the PKK and the Kurds. The PKK has killed thousands of Turkish citizens, and Turkey continues to threaten military attack in Northern Iraq if the United States and Iraq does not act soon to halt the work of the PKK. Most Western diplomats feel that moving into Iraq would be an unwise decision for Turkey, though the possibility remains in order to deter PKK attacks. If Turkey did move into Iraq, it would threaten the current stability in this region and might anger the US; however, if a large attack were to occur in Turkey, Ankara would not hesitate (Saribramiouglu 2007). In addition, Turkey is concerned about Kirkuk not only because of the economic power the oil gives to whomever controls it, but because they fear that under the current Iraqi Constitution further steps will be taken to change population dynamics there.

To demonstrate their understanding of Turkey's concern, the United States has assigned General Ralston as a special envoy to the region to address this issue. The United States is attempting to take measures that will strengthen its relationship with Turkey at this pivotal point for Iraq (Rainsford 2007). The United States does not want to alienate its NATO ally and must find a way to convince Iraqi Kurds to constrain PKK violence. Biblical shalom calls for right relationships and reciprocity; in the case of Turkish-Kurdish relations it seems only just that the actions of the PKK must be addressed and stopped.

While it is in the best interest of Turkey that Iraq is stabilized, Turkey is less interested in asserting their influence in Iraq and would rather have the instability and problems stay out of their own country. An instance that Turkey would engage in Iraq is if the Kurdish population moved toward creating an independent state. Turkey would ideally like to see Iraq run with a strong central government, with national institutions, particularly so it would keep the Kurdish population as a part of the general Iraqi population.

The Marmara Declaration, produced during a 2007 conference with high-level foreign policy and national security figures from Iraq, Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Turkey, agreed on four objectives for Iraq: stability, unity, democracy and effective governance, and national reconciliation/regional security. They agreed that funding for sectarian forces from other countries should stop, but also that Iraq must end the presence of organizations that threaten others (like the PKK). Other recommendations included the adoption of amendments or a referendum to diffuse the issue of Kirkuk, and noted that the presence of the United States to maintain stability should only be at the request of the Iraqi government. The influence of Turkey is seen in the mention of Kirkuk and the PKK, but it seems that the entire region has seriously made an effort to look for ways to compromise interests for the sake of peace, which benefits everyone and works toward Biblical shalom. (Marmara Declaration 2007). Stability and cooperation in the region will allow for human flourishing among the Kurds, an opportunity of which they have often been deprived of in the past.

Comment [B80]: Are these official diplomats or NGO leaders? Try to give more credibility to this Declaration since it is consistent with your argument. If the reader thinks the Declaration isn't important, they he/she will not count this as an illustrative event validating your thesis.

Conclusion

The Kurds are an ancient people whose quest for independence can be traced back centuries. Despite their historical struggle for independence amidst an environment of oppressive rule and conflict between the Sunnis and Shiites and Iraq, the Kurds have not been granted independence. Biblical shalom provides us with a lens through which we can look at the world and pursue reconciliation and peaceful relations. Shalom calls for right relationships between people. Right political relationships are those which allow for human flourishing. I believe the alternative which best works toward the attainment of shalom in the Iraqi Kurdish situation is the creation of a federal system in Iraq with semi-autonomous regions. In addition, an arena for diplomacy among key Iraqi and regional actors must be developed. Iraqi civil society must be nourished through projects which bring together Iraqis of different political and ethnic loyalties to develop the infrastructure of the country. The terrorist activity of the PKK must be halted and its members guilty of criminal activity expedited to the appropriate countries for trial. The international community must pressure the Kurds to halt the “Kurdification” of Kirkuk and rather seek reconciliation across ethnic lines through cooperatively working to develop Iraq’s infrastructure. While reconciliation and right relationships among all peoples in Iraq will not be achieved easily, Biblical shalom serves as a compass pointing toward reconciliation and human flourishing.

ⁱ Biblical shalom also entails peace, fullness of life, physical well-being, triumph, safety, and victory.

ⁱⁱ Mark 1:15, New King James Version.

Luke's Gospel records that Jesus declared his fulfillment of the prophesy of Isaiah which called for the year of the Lord (Luke 4:18-19, Isaiah 61).

ⁱⁱⁱ Nicholas Wolterstorff, 15.

^{iv} Wright, 67.

^v Mangalwadi explains that when we look too closely at principalities and powers we can easily become frightened; Christ's authority over all principalities and powers gives us hope to continue, not our own strength. Mangalwadi, 100.

^{vi} Brueggemann, Walter, *"Peace is a Gift and a Task"*, (St. Louis, MO: Walter Brueggemann, 2001).

^{vii} Mangalwadi cites three biblical accounts of hopelessness in which human efforts of obedience and faith were blessed with success: Peter's failure to catch any fish and Christ's filling of his nets; Jesus' feeding of the 5,000 through the multiplication of one boy's loaves of bread and fish; and Jesus' changing of water into wine when the wedding banquet ran out of wine. Mangalwadi, 99-100.

^{viii} These ideas are borrowed from the Washington Watch article entitled "Seeking Shalom in Iraq" by Joelle Morabito and Dr. Bret Kincaid, to be published in the forthcoming May/June 2008 edition of the PRISM magazine, a publication of the Sider Center for Ministry and Public Policy.

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