

Israel and Palestine Conflict: A Christian Perspective

Contact Information

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Course Outline

Sessions	Topic	Description
1	Historical Background	Highlight political decisions, wars and violence resulting in current conflict and illustrate troubling cycle of nationalism, polarization, marginalization and violence.
2	Religion and the Land	Present perspectives of modern Jewish and Christian Zionism. Discuss other Christian perspectives and Islam's view of land.
3	Life in Palestine I	Discuss trends and personal examples related to resource access, harassment and destruction of private property and relocation in Jerusalem and the West Bank.
4	Life in Palestine II -	Present trends related to restricted movement, constant threat of bombing as well as access to water and electricity. Discuss the relationship between the Palestinian political parties and Israel.
5	Christian Presence	Discuss the dwindling Palestinian Christian population. Illustrate how the Christian community (including ELCJHL and ELCA) provide various community services while seeking justice and promoting peace.
6	Activism	Present certain Israeli and Palestinian initiatives as well as international and US domestic activities committed to awareness building, justice and peace.

Session One: Historical Background

- I. **Description** - Highlight political decisions, wars and violence resulting in current conflict and illustrate troubling cycle of nationalism, polarization, marginalization and violence

II. Session Outline

- A. What do the terms Palestinian, Arab, and Israeli mean?
 - 1. Ethnicity, citizenship meanings and the contextual differences pre and post 1948.
 - 2. Relationship to religious preferences.
- B. Has the conflict between Jews and Muslims been going on for centuries?
 - 1. Timeline of Political Authority - various ruling authorities between ancient Israel (1000 B.C.) and the state of Israel (1948).
- C. Have the Jewish people always considered returning to the Holy Land?
 - 1. Advent of modern day Zionism
- D. What key political events created and contribute to the conflict?
 - 1. British Mandate and McMahon/Hussein Agreement
 - 2. World War I and II Impact
 - 3. UN Resolution 181
- E. How does violence contribute to the conflict?
 - 1. 1948 War and Displacement
 - 2. 1967 War and Occupation
 - 3. Intifadas and Assassinations
- F. How do competing narratives impede reconciliation?
 - 1. Israel - safety and security
 - 2. Palestine - dignity and freedom

III. Source Materials

- A. The Israel-Palestine conflict: a brief, simple introduction. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iRYZjOuUnIU>)
- B. Conflicting Narratives -1967 War, (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MBYkBqY1-LM>)
- C. Resolving Competing Narratives (Dr. Hiba I. Hussein) - (www.haaretz.com/peace/1.684772)

IV. Other Resources

- A. Documents
 - 1. Palestine, Israel and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, A Primer (Joel Beinin and Lisa Hajjar) - (http://www.palestineportal.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/MERIP_Primer_PalestineIsrael_Feb2014.pdf)
 - 2. A Timeline of the Israeli Palestinian Conflict (Churches for Middle East Peace) - (<https://www.palestineportal.org/learn-teach/israelpalestine-the-basics/timeline/>)
- B. Books
 - 1. Blood Brothers (Elias Chacour) - 1948 Displacement

2. Lemon Tree (Sandy Tolan) - 1948 Displacement to current events
3. Children of the Stone (Sandy Tolan) - 1967 War to current events
4. Erased from Space and Consciousness (Noga Kadman) - Israel and the Depopulated Palestinian Villages of 194

Session Two: Religion and the Land

- I. **Description** - Present perspectives of modern Jewish and Christian Zionism. Discuss other Christian perspectives and Islam's view of land.

II. Session Outline

- A. Why is the Holy Land important to Jews, Christians and Muslims?
- B. How does God's covenant gift of land to Abraham apply today?
- C. What does it mean to be a Christian Zionist?

III. Source Materials

1. Conflict in Israel and Palestine: Crash Course World History 223
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1wo2TLIMhiw>)
2. IsraelPalestine For Critical Thinkers: #1 Ancient Roots
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S2jnvsvF38k>)
3. Blood Brothers: The Dramatic Story of a Palestinian Christian Working for Peace in Israel (Elias Chacour, 1984).
4. The Land: Place as Gift, Promise, and Challenge in Biblical Faith (Walter Bruggeman)

IV. Other Resources

- A. Documents
 1. Religious Jewish Zionism History
(<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/religious-zionist/>)
 2. The Holy Land Today (N.T. Wright) Messianic Fulfillment Theology
(<http://ntwrightpage.com/2016/04/05/the-holy-land-today/>)
- B. Books
 1. Jesus and the Land (Gary M. Burge) - Messianic Fulfillment Theology
 2. Faith in the Face of Empire. The Bible Through Palestinian Eyes (Mitri Raheb)
 3. Chosen? Reading the Bible Amid the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (Walter Bruggeman) Messianic Fulfillment Theology
 4. The Land and the Book: An Introduction to the World of the Bible (Charles Page II and Carol Volz)

Session Three: Life in Palestine I

- I. **Description** - Discuss trends and personal examples related to resource access, harassment and destruction of private property and relocation in Jerusalem and the West Bank

II. Session Outline

- A. What is the geography of Israel and Palestine?
 - 1. Size and Population Density
- B. What is the government make up in Israel and Palestine?
 - 1. West Bank - two legal systems
- C. How does Israeli authority impact Palestinian life?
 - 1. East Jerusalem
 - 2. Bethlehem
 - 3. Hebron
 - 4. Rural regions (Area C)

III. Source Materials

- A. West Bank Map, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (<https://www.ochaopt.org>)
- B. Mapfight, Land Size comparisons (<https://mapfight.appspot.com/us.nc-vs-gaza/north-carolina-us-gaza-strip-size-comparison>)
- C. Palestinian Fatah and Hamas Reconciliation (<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/11/israel-fatah-hamas-gaza-strip-palestinian-reconciliation.html#ixzz54wpusXJS>) and (<https://www.timesofisrael.com/pa-to-resume-full-payments-for-gaza-electricity-amid-reconciliation-bid/>)
- D. One Rule:Two Legal Systems (<https://www.acri.org.il/en/2014/11/24/twosysreport/>)
- E. Area C Population (https://www.btselem.org/topic/area_c)
- F. Area C Humanitarian Response Fact Sheet UN (https://www.ochaopt.org/sites/default/files/ocha_opt_area_c_humanitarian_response_plan_fact_sheet_2010_09_03_english.pdf)
- G. Jerusalem Interactive Map, Terrestrial Jerusalem (<http://t-j.org.il/JerusalemAtlas.aspx>)
- H. East Jerusalem: Palestinians at risk of eviction UN Office for Coordination of Human Affairs (<https://www.unocha.org>)

- I. Living under Policies of Colonization- Jerusalem, Visualizing Palestine (<https://visualizingpalestine.org>)
- J. Hebron Interactive Map, Hebron Apartheid (<https://www.hebronapartheid.org/index.php?page=timeline>)
- K. Hebron and Breaking the Silence (<http://www.breakingthesilence.org.il/testimonies/videos/26371>)
- L. Bethlehem, Checkpoint 300 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zi-XXYmIm_c)
- M. South Hebron Hills Map (<https://www.google.com/maps/@31.4102298,35.155037,2616m/data=!3m1!1e3>)

IV. Other Resources

- A. Books
 - 1. The Kingdom of Olives and Ash: Writers Confront the Occupation (Michael Chabon and Ayelt Waldman)
 - 2. Lemon Tree (Sandy Tolan) - 1948 Displacement to current events
 - 3. Children of the Stone (Sandy Tolan) - 1967 War to current events

Session Four: Life in Palestine II

- I. **Description** - Present trends related to restricted movement, constant threat of bombing as well as access to water and electricity. Discuss the relationship between the Palestinian political parties and Israel.

II. Session Outline

- A. What is Gaza's history since 1948?
 - 1. Timeline
 - 2. Gaza Demographics
- B. Why does Israel maintain a comprehensive Gaza blockade?
 - 1. Security Concerns
 - 2. Impact of Violence
- C. What is the current government situation in Gaza?
 - 1. Hamas and Fatah relations
- D. Why is Gaza considered by the UN as a humanitarian crisis?
 - 1. Water, Electricity, Access to Health Care
- E. What other Israel policies adversely impact Palestinian life?
 - 1. Imprisonment

2. Israeli Settlements

III. Source Materials

- A. Historical Timeline, The Commonwealth Times (<http://www.commonwealthtimes.org/2014/08/25/abbreviated-timeline-of-the-israelipalestinian-conflict/>)
- B. Gaza 2017, Association of International Development Agencies (<http://www.aidajerusalem.org>)
- C. Hamas Rocket Threat, Israeli Defense Forces (<https://www.idfblog.com/facts-figures/rocket-attacks-toward-israel/hamas-rocket-threat-fajr-5/>)
- D. Palestinian Rockets Fired From Gaza During Operation Protective Edge, Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs (<http://jcpa.org/timeline-key-moments-gaza-war/>)
- E. Palestinian & Israeli Deaths - Timeline of Violence since Sept. 2000, Visualizing Palestine (<https://visualizingpalestine.org>)
- F. Palestinian Government Regulation (<https://dailynewsegypt.com/2017/12/02/cairo-hosts-palestinian-reconciliation-negotiations-hamas-fatah/>)
- G. Gaza - 10 Years Later, United Nations Report (<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=57157#.WjFuq7aZPEY>)
- H. Gaza Electricity Trends - 2017 (<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/06/12/israel-cuts-gaza-electricity-palestinian-president-says-will/>)
- I. Gaza Water Confined & Contaminated, Visualizing Palestine (<https://visualizingpalestine.org>)
- J. United Nations Relief Work Agency Gaza Report (<https://visualizingpalestine.org>)
- K. Palestinians in Israeli Prisons - August 2013, Ireland-Palestine Solidarity Campaign (ipsc.ie)
- L. Arrests of Jerusalemite Children, Addameer (Association https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0uDPeeD_RPk&feature=youtu.be)
- M. Occupied Palestine Under Attack (<https://www.nad.ps/en/publication-resources/infographics/updated-infographic-one-year-timeline-continued-aggressions-state>)

Session Five: Christian Presence

- I. **Description** - Discuss the dwindling Palestinian Christian population. Illustrate how the Christian community (including ELCJHL and ELCA) provide various community services while seeking justice and promoting peace.

II. Session Outline

- A. What is it like for Christians living in Israel and Palestine?
 1. Israel's Diverse Religious Landscape
 2. Israeli Jewish Religious Belief
 3. Christians in Israel
 - a) Jerusalem - Rev. Munib Younan
 - b) Nazareth - Dina Katanacho
 - c) Ramallah - Jean Zaru

- d) Bethlehem - Rev. Mitri Raheb
- B. Why is the Christian population dwindling?
 1. Bethlehem Focus
 2. Study Findings
- C. What are Palestinian church leaders doing in terms of community support?
 1. Evangelical Lutheran Church of Jordan and the Holy Land
 2. World Council of Churches

III. Source Materials

- A. Israel Diverse Religious Landscape, Pew Research Center
(http://www.pewforum.org/2016/03/08/israels-religiously-divided-society/pf_2016-03-08_israel-01-01/) apf_2016-03-08_israel-01-01/
- B. Israeli Jewish Religious Belief - Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs
(<http://www.jcpa.org/dje/articles2/howrelisr.htm>)
- C. Rev. Munib Younan (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pzzyjtuyC0&t=9s>)
- D. Dina Katanacho (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yklr53g5NvU>)
- E. Jean Zaru (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6dS7WEwkTNk>)
- F. Rev. Mitri Raheb (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SMGDsadHYSg>)
- G. Dwindling Christian Presence, BADIL Center for Palestinian Residency & Refugee Rights (http://www.badil.org/phocadownloadpap/Badil_docs/Working_Papers/WP-Kairos-BADIL.pdf)
- H. Quick Facts about Palestinian Christians, Institute for Middle East Understanding
(<https://imeu.org/article/quick-facts-palestinian-christians-bethlehem-east-jerusalem>)
- I. Christian Population Trends, Diyar Consortium Study (<https://www.diyar-consortium.org>)
- J. Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land overview (elcjh.org)
- K. Seek #Justice and Peace in the Holy Land, World Council of Churches
(<https://www.oikoumene.org/en/what-we-do/12-faces-of-hope>)

IV. Other Resources

- A. Documents
 1. The Kairos Palestine Document: A moment of truth (<http://kairospalestine.ps/?q=node/2>)
 2. Palestinian Christians - Ongoing Forcible Displacement and Dispossession. Until When? (http://www.badil.org/phocadownloadpap/Badil_docs/Working_Papers/WP-Kairos-BADIL.pdf)
 3. Faith Under Occupation: The Plight of Indigenous Christians in the Holy Land (<http://eappi.org/en/resources/publications/faith-under-occupation-2012>)
 4. Pursuing Peace and Strengthening Presence: The Atlanta Summit of Churches in the USA and the Holy Land (<https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/general-secretary/joint-declarations/pursuing-peace-and-strengthening-presence-the-atlanta-summit-of-churches-in-the-usa-and-the-holy-land>)
- B. Books
 1. Bethlehem Besieged: Stories of Hope in Times of Trouble (Mitri Raheb)
 2. Our Shared Witness: A Voice for Justice and Reconciliation (Munib Younan)

Session Six: Activism

- I. **Description** - Present certain Israeli and Palestinian initiatives as well as international and US domestic activities committed to awareness building, justice and peace.

II. Session Outline

- A. What are examples of Israeli and Jewish initiatives supporting justice and peace?
 - 1. Other Voice, Tayush, Breaking the Silence
 - 2. Btselem, Jstreet, Jewish Voice for Peace
- B. How do Palestinians promote non-violent activism?
 - 1. Collaboration
 - a) Israeli activists
 - b) International initiatives
 - 2. Education and community services
 - a) ACT Palestine Forum
- C. What other initiatives are occurring internationally and in the US?
 - 1. World Council of Churches
 - 2. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
 - 3. Operation Dove, Christian PeaceMakers
 - 4. Bright Stars of Bethlehem (USA)
 - 5. Peace Not Walls - ELCA Campaign (USA)
 - 6. Black Palestinian Solidarity (USA)
- D. What challenges do activists face?
 - 1. Lack of Awareness
 - 2. Bureaucracy
 - 3. Normalization and apathy
 - 4. Funding
 - 5. Harassment and Threats
 - 6. Hopelessness
- E. What do Palestinians seek from us?
 - 1. Come and See. Go and Tell
 - 2. The 4 Ps

III. Source Materials

- A. Disturbing the Peace documentary trailer, Combatants for Peace (<http://disturbingthepeacefilm.com>)
- B. Ecumenical Accompaniment Program in Palestine and Israel, World Council of Churches (<http://eappi.org/en/resources/videos/eyewitness>)
- C. ACT Palestine Forum (<http://actpalestineforum.org/about/videos/>)
- D. When I See Them I See Us, Palestinian Black Solidarity (https://www.washingtonpost.com/video/world/when-i-see-them-i-see-us/2015/10/15/c8f8aa40-72c2-11e5-ba14-318f8e87a2fc_video.html?utm_term=.f74068e56201)

IV. Other Resources

- A. Organizational Websites
 - 1. Peace Not Walls, Evangelical Church in America (http://www.elca.org/Our-Work/Publicly-Engaged-Church/Peace-Not-Walls?_ga=2.75257371.8891468.1513468725-174824025.1496840273)
 - 2. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan & the Holy Land (ELCJHL) (<http://www.elcjh.org/>)
 - 3. Lutheran World Federation department for World Services, Jerusalem (<http://lwfjersulaem.org/wp/>)
 - 4. Churches for Middle East Peace (<http://www.cmep.org>)
 - 5. Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) (<http://www.mec-churches.org>)
 - 6. The Holy Land Christian Ecumenical Foundation (HCEF) (<http://www.hcef.org>)
 - 7. Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center (<http://www.sabeel.org>)
 - 8. Bright Stars of Bethlehem (<http://brightstarsbethlehem.org>)
 - 9. Palestine Portal (<http://palestineportal.org>)
 - 10. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs opt (<https://www.ochaopt.org>)
 - 11. Lutheran World Federation Department for World Services, Jerusalem (<http://lwfjersulaem.org/wp/>)
 - 12. Churches for Middle East Peace (<http://www.cmep.org>)
 - 13. Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) (<http://www.mec-churches.org>)
 - 14. The Holy Land Christian Ecumenical Foundation (HCEF) (<http://www.hcef.org>)
 - 15. Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center (<http://www.sabeel.org>)
 - 16. Bright Stars of Bethlehem (<http://brightstarsbethlehem.org>)
 - 17. Palestine Portal (<http://palestineportal.org>)
 - 18. Btselem (<http://www.btselem.org>)
 - 19. Jstreet (<http://jstreet.org/about-us/mission-principles/#.WjRGJCOZPEY>)
 - 20. Jewish Voice for Peace (<https://www.facebook.com/JewishVoiceforPeace/>)
 - 21. Other Voice (<http://www.othervoice.org/info/eng/about-us.htm>)
- B. Books
 - 1. Kingdom of Olives and Ash: Writers Confront the Occupation (Michael Chabon and Ayelet Waldman)