

Was Jesus Actually a Palestinian?

Most Western Christians think there isn't much difference between them and Christians around the world. This is incorrect and naive. For example, there are certain Middle Eastern Christians who have a starkly different and disturbing narrative. I am referring to those who are commonly called "Palestinians."

During the past several decades, displaced so-called refugees, who in fact are ethnic Arabs from Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon, have been renamed and remade into "Palestinians." This revisionist makeover began with Yasser Arafat, after the Six-Day War in 1967. The "refugees" were caught between countries and Arab nations refused their repatriation, most notably Jordan. Subsequently, Arafat decided to start calling them "Palestinians" in an effort to create a new narrative about them. His intent was to place blame on Israel for their plight. Over the past half-century, the makeover has been adopted by a good portion of the world, especially the 'progressive' media. However, we should not be hoodwinked. They are Arabs, it's as simple as that.

There are no ethnic "Palestinians."

The Remade Are Remaking

Simultaneously, another makeover has been taking place among the "Palestinians" themselves, regarding Christianity and Jesus/Yeshua.

What's taking place goes against mainstream Christian thinking. It's especially problematic to Christian Zionists, who realize the Jewish people have not been replaced as the Lord's covenantal promise holders and have a biblical right to live in the land the Lord gave them. Currently, this is a

minority viewpoint within Christianity.

Supercessionism, or 'Replacement Theology' as it's called, suggests the Lord abandoned the Jewish people after Jesus/Yeshua wasn't corporately accepted by them as Messiah. Additionally, it suggests Christians or "the Church" has replaced the Jews. However, this cannot be found anywhere in the New Testament. Moreover, what can be found is its repudiation. Romans 11:1 (NIV) says "did God reject his own people? By no means!" In my view, replacement theology is merely a "churchy" term for anti-Semitism. Interestingly, most of its adherents do acknowledge Jesus/Yeshua was a Jew.

'Palestinian' Revisionist Narrative

However, in the Middle East, "Palestinian" Christians have come up with something different, and quite disturbing. While Jesus/Yeshua is viewed as Messiah, things go in a much different direction from there.

During recent years there's been a growing effort to promote the "Palestinian Church." Within this narrative, some traditional understandings have been altered to fit their revisionist narrative. For example, instead of Jesus/Yeshua being a Jew, He is considered a "Palestinian.'" This is in stark contrast to the view held by Christians worldwide. Mary, the mother of Jesus/Yeshua has also been remade into a "Palestinian."

The "Palestinian" makeover of Messiah and Mary is shared by many Muslims, as evidenced by these examples:

- "Jesus was the first Palestinian Martyr."
- "Fatah proud of Palestinian Virgin Mary"
- "Palestinians are Jesus' Descendants"

For additional examples of this revisionist claim, [click here](#)

Such outrageous claims negate virtually all known biblical and historical facts about who Jesus/Yeshua is, and portray him as part of an ancient nation of “Palestinians.” In point of fact, such a “nation” never existed.

Altering the Bible

Their efforts go so far as to alter Scripture to fit their revisionist agenda.

For example, on March 9, 2012, speaking at a conference in Bethlehem called “Christ at the Checkpoint,” Jack Sara, a “Palestinian” Christian and president of Bethlehem Bible College, made a speech. In it he offered his own version of Ezekiel 37, a well-known piece of Scripture about “dry bones.” These verses have always been widely accepted as referring to Israel and the Jewish people.

Here’s a quote from his speech- “The hand of the Lord was on me and He brought me out by the Spirit of the Lord and set me in the middle of the [West Bank – Bethlehem], [Jenin and Salvit] and [Nablus and Ramallah]. It was full of bones ... He asked me, Son of Man, can these bones live? Can the [Palestinian people] live?” (Words in brackets are those Mr. Sara inserted.)

For those unfamiliar with the Bible, it does not mention “West Bank,” any of these cities, or the “Palestinian people.” This portion of Scripture is from the Torah, which was written over 3,000 years ago. His statement is a blatant effort to alter the Lord’s word and promote an anti-Semitic, pro-“Palestinian’” agenda. Those unfamiliar with Scripture can easily be deceived by such statements. I believe the Lord would rebuke Mr. Sara for intentionally altering His word, especially if it’s designed to delegitimize His chosen people.

Support From Mainstream Christians

Many Western Christian leaders have stood together with the

“Palestinians” in this effort. Indeed, representatives from dozens of mainstream Christian denominations have regularly attended the Christ at the Checkpoint Conferences, which have been held every two years since 2010. Part of the conference’s goal is to promote the “Palestinian Church,” including a “Palestinian” Jesus. Some Westerners have embarked on speaking tours with “Palestinian” Christians, who along with their revisionist agenda, defend Muslims, referring to them as fellow Arabs sharing a common enemy—Israel. Muslims worship Allah, who according to the Quran, wants to destroy the Jews and the Christians. Allah is not the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. How can any true Christian defend Muslims?

Fake News

Arab population in many Israeli cities, including Bethlehem has been rapidly declining in recent years. The ‘Palestinian’ Christians promoting the revisionist agenda suggest the large decline of the Arab Christian population is due to “IDF checkpoints” and the “occupation.” This is fake news. The sharp decline has nothing to do with Israel. The actual reason is because of Muslim persecution. They frequently target, harass and sometimes murder their Arab brothers who are Christian. Horrific persecution of Arab Christians has been taking place in the Middle East, Asia and throughout the entire Muslim world for some time.

One example of a “Palestinian” Christian who supports the revisionist narrative about Jesus is Sami Awad, Founder of the Holy Land Trust. Awad, who is a defender of Hamas, has said “non-violent demonstrations are not a substitute for the armed struggle.”

Not Condemning Murder

Recently, in Israel a tragedy occurred, when Ari Fuld an activist and TV personality was stabbed to death by a “Palestinian” Arab teenager. I engaged in an email exchange

with a member of Awad's Holy Land Trust following the murder. When I asked if their organization would publicly condemn the murder, he stopped communicating.

Not All 'Palestinians' Are Revisionists

It is noteworthy that not all "Palestinians" align themselves with the revisionist effort. There is a very small number of "Palestinian" Christians who recognize the Jews remain the Lord's chosen people, and Israel was given to them. Some prefer to be identified as Arabs rather than "Palestinian," suggesting they reject the "Palestinian" makeover and hold fast to the fact that Jesus/Yeshua is a Jew rather than a "Palestinian." However, being a tiny minority, they have been subjected to harassment from "Palestinian" Muslims and many "Palestinian Christians" who have adopted the revisionist narrative. Plus, they are harassed by the Palestinian Authority.

In one instance, an Arab Christian pastor who recognizes the Jews as the chosen people, had to relocate his church because of vandalism and the Palestinian Authority refused to renew his operating permit. Many such Christian "Palestinians" are forced to keep a low profile because of threats. This makes gathering support very difficult. Their lives are in danger and they need protection and prayer.

'Tell a Lie Often Enough ...'

The partnership between mainstream western Christians and revisionist "Palestinian" Christians is problematic for more than one reason. Uninformed audiences tend to accept what they hear without fact checking or looking in Scripture for confirmation. They propagate the lies, and soon a new "truth" emerges. The notorious Nazi Joseph Goebbels once said, "If you tell a lie often enough, and keep repeating it, people will believe you." This is precisely what these revisionists are counting on.

Add this to the long-standing concern and hesitancy Jews have about developing close relations with Christians, and the problem compounds.

Need for Healing

In recent years however, efforts to repair these hurts have been made by a growing number of Christians and Christian organizations. They have shown strong support for Israel and have gone to great lengths to establish close relationships with the Jewish people.

Sadly however, when Jews see mainstream Christians aligning themselves with a “Palestinian” effort to delegitimize Israel and the Jewish Bible, the hurt and distrust returns and the effort to repair centuries of pain and mistreatment becomes undermined.

Palestinians and Western Christians associated with the revisionist agenda say they are promoting “peace, justice and reconciliation.” However, how can delegitimizing Israel and the Jewish people, altering biblical scripture, and remaking Jesus/Yeshua into a Palestinian exemplify such noble ideals? Most Jews know Jesus/Yeshua was a Jew. Such revisionist efforts will only make it more challenging for Jewish people to come to faith in Jesus/Yeshua if He is presented as a “Palestinian.”

Let’s work to accomplish true “peace, justice and reconciliation,” and reject the views of those who “tell a lie often enough ...”

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