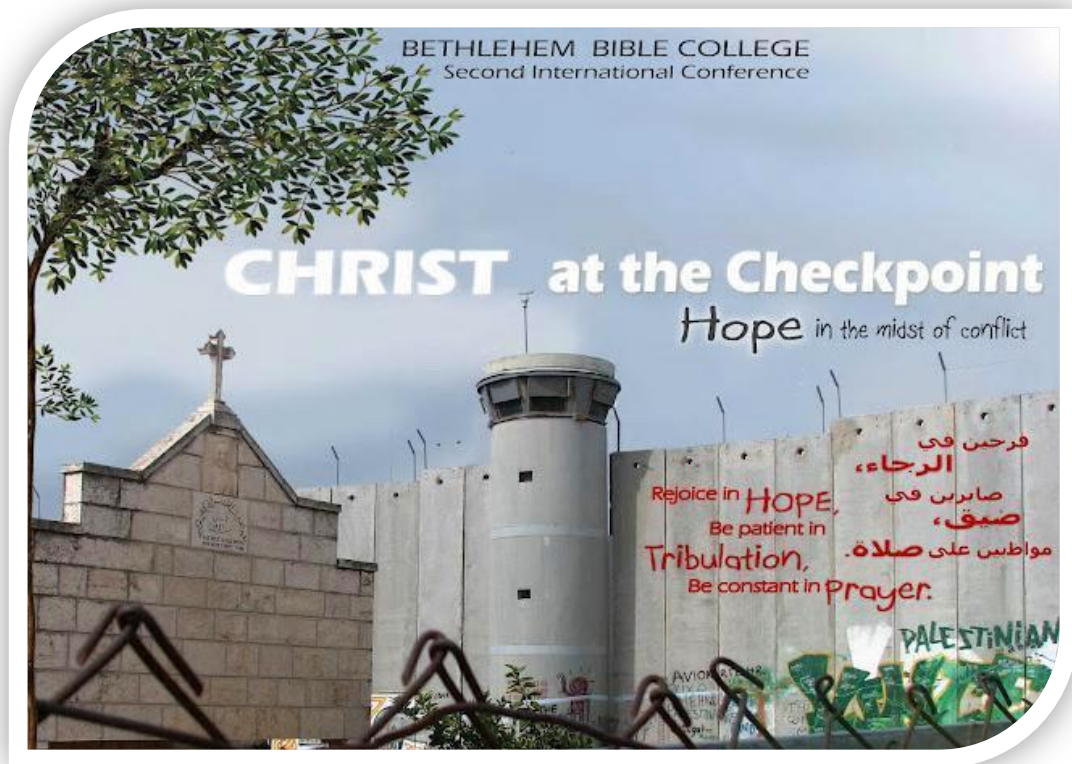


The Church at Christ's Checkpoint



**A Response to the Second 'Christ at the Checkpoint'
Conference in Bethlehem, 5-9 March 2012**

Paul Wilkinson

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Acknowledgements

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I am grateful for the continued support and encouragement which I receive from my brothers and sisters in Christ at Hazel Grove Full Gospel Church, and from all who are connected with The Fellowship of Christian Assemblies here in the UK.

I am grateful for the assistance I received before and during my trip from members of the Jewish community, both here in the UK and in Israel.

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23rd April 2012

Dear Friends,

Just over a year ago we produced *'Prophets Who Prophecy Lies In My Name': Christian Palestinianism and the Anti-Israel Crusade*, a publication which charts the nature and scale of opposition within the Church towards the modern State of Israel. Anglican clerics like English evangelical Stephen Sizer and Palestinian liberationist Naim Ateek, who are in the vanguard of this crusade, insist that Israel has been replaced by the Church in the purposes of God and that the Land promises made to Abraham and his seed have been fulfilled in Christ. The Jewish nation is thus twice robbed through the medium of replacement theology: of its prophetic Scriptures and its promised Land.

In fulfilment of the Deuteronomic law of God, the Jewish people are back in their ancient homeland after centuries of exile (Deuteronomy 30:1-9), but today's neo-crusaders, like their medieval predecessors, are bent on 'liberating' the Holy Land from what they see as unlawful occupation. The crusader ranks swell daily, with members of mainstream churches, Islamic groups, political and secular parties, and a host of others, marching on Israel with a determination to bend the Zionist spirit to their will. Like their historical forbears, today's anti-Israel crusaders are an eclectic mix who find common ground and unity of purpose in their collective condemnation of, and virulent opposition to, the modern State of Israel.

Those who support Israel on biblical grounds, be they Jewish Zionists or Christian Zionists, are subjected to intimidating rhetoric from the anti-Israel camp. In a letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury Dr Rowan Williams (June 2011), Naim Ateek, whose Palestinian Ecumenical Liberation Theology Centre ('Sabeel') was represented at the *Christ at the Checkpoint Conference*, described Jewish and Christian Zionists as "a greater threat to us [Arab Christians] than the extremist Islamists." Stephen Sizer joins the attack, denouncing Israel as an "apartheid State" which he claims is guilty of ethnic cleansing, and demonizing Christians who support Israel as heretical "Armageddonites" whose interpretation of the Bible "provides a theological endorsement for racial segregation, apartheid and war." These are outlandish sentiments.

This booklet makes for sober reading, but we believe it is of paramount importance that the *true* agenda underlying the pro-Palestinian, anti-Israel *Christ at the Checkpoint Conference* and associated forums is brought to the attention of both Christian and Jewish communities. One of our purposes therefore is to take the reader behind the scenes to reveal the high level of interconnectedness that exists between Conference speakers, their respective constituencies, and the wider anti-Israel, and in some cases, anti-Semitic world. It is imperative that we recognise that we are not simply dealing with an isolated, self-contained conference with stand-alone presentations, but with a highly sophisticated pro-Palestinian network, in which the *Christ at the Checkpoint Conference* sits. In my opinion, anti-Zionism is nothing less than politically-correct, internationally sanctioned anti-Semitism. Those who defend their anti-Israel position with a “My best friend is Jewish” gambit, need to explain how that works when their circle of ‘friends’ also includes known anti-Semites.

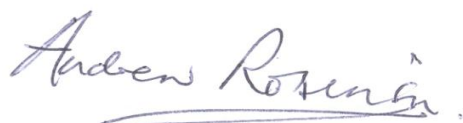
Early in 1932, Sir Oswald Mosley, the English fascist leader, attended a business dinner at the home of British industrialist, Zionist and philanthropist, Israel Sieff (of Marks and Spencer fame). Mosley was looking for financial support for his newly formed political party from the industrialists attending the dinner. He shared his plans for the New Party, stressing that “a new movement must find somebody or something to hate. In this case it should be the Jews.” Sieff writes: “He did not seem to think he had said anything particularly unacceptable, but the effect on the company was instant. I said, ‘I must ask you to leave, Sir Oswald’. He strode out... and I never saw him again.... Until that time I did not know what he felt about the Jews.”

There are many Christian Palestinianists, *Christ at the Checkpoint* speakers included, who **do know** what some of their ‘friends’ feel about the Jews, and yet are still willing to engage with them in platform sharing, press conferencing, political rallying, petition signing, and policy making, if it serves their anti-Zionist purposes. As a Christian pastor, I challenge the basis of such friendships, and urge those who seek to court the enemies of the Jewish State in furtherance of their pro-Palestinian agenda, to think again.

I pray that the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will use this document to inform and alert, warn and challenge, encourage and enlighten; that by His grace many eyes will be opened to the true scale of the anti-Israel crusade, which is paving the way for wholesale condemnation of the international Jewish community.

May the Lord bless you from Zion,

In the service of His Son, the Lord Jesus,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Andrew D. Robinson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Andrew D. Robinson
Senior Pastor

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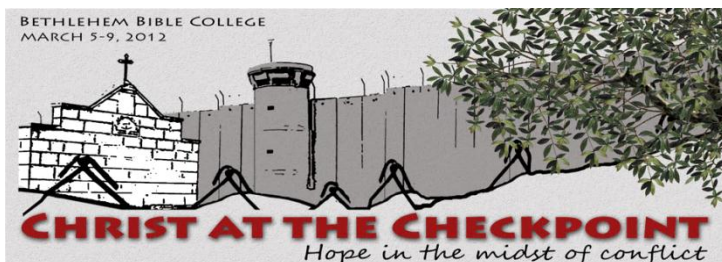
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Scripture quotations are taken from the Holy Bible, English Standard Version, unless otherwise stated.

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(Revised May 2012)

Introduction



At the beginning of March 2012, I attended the second 'Christ at the Checkpoint' Conference in Bethlehem. Over 600 delegates from 20 nations gathered at the 5-star

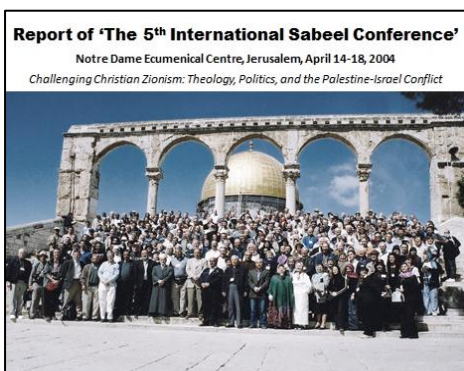
Intercontinental Jacir Palace hotel, in what is today classified as an 'Area A' zone administered by the Palestinian Authority. Organised by Bethlehem Bible College, the five-day event built on the first conference, which was held in March 2010. Representative organisations included the World Council of Churches, the World Evangelical Alliance, the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries, Christian Aid and World Vision.

The conference took place during the global Israeli Apartheid Week ... and the Jewish festival of Purim!

The stated aim of the conference was "to provide an opportunity for evangelical Christians who take the Bible seriously to prayerfully seek a proper awareness of issues of peace, justice, and reconciliation." As this report will show, the conference was informed and underpinned by a Replacement Theology which denies that the modern State of Israel was established



by God's sovereign intervention. The conference also gave a platform for speakers to delegitimize the State of Israel by rejecting its biblical, theological, historical and legally-established foundations. The strategy adopted by the conference organisers was more subtle than previous conferences of a similar nature, in which anti-Israel sentiment was more blatant.



In 2004, I attended the 5th International Sabeel Conference in Jerusalem, which included a meeting with Yasser Arafat. In my report, I wrote of "the union of mainstream Protestant churches with Rome and the Islamic world" in their opposition to Jewish and Christian Zionism. I cited some of the prime movers, notably Naim Ateek, Stephen Sizer and Gary Burge.

In 2011, I wrote 'Prophets Who Prophecy Lies In My Name,' a document which highlights the developing trends within what I have labelled the 'Christian Palestinianist' movement. This movement has become increasingly politicized over the years, and today enjoys wide-ranging support from individual Church leaders, denominations, charities, and associated mission and humanitarian groups. The document emphasized the speed with which alliances have been forged by Evangelicals with secular, political and non-Christian religious groups, in what can only be described as a mounting anti-Israel crusade.



(These documents, which help to provide a theological and historical backdrop to the 'Christ at the Checkpoint' Conference, are produced by my home church and are available free of charge from the address on the back cover.)

Christ at the Checkpoint: Conference Goals

1. Empower and encourage the Palestinian church.
2. Expose the realities of the injustices in the Palestinian Territories and create awareness of the obstacles to reconciliation and peace.
3. Create a platform for serious engagement with Christian Zionism and an open forum for ongoing dialogue between all positions within the Evangelical theological spectrum.
4. Motivate participants to become advocates for the reconciliation work of the church in Palestine/Israel and its ramifications for the Middle East and the world.

Organising Committee

Bishara Awad Founder and President of Bethlehem Bible College (right)

Munther Isaac Conference Director; Vice-Academic Dean at Bethlehem Bible College

Jack Sara Vice-President (and incumbent President) of Bethlehem Bible College; Senior Pastor of the Jerusalem Alliance Church

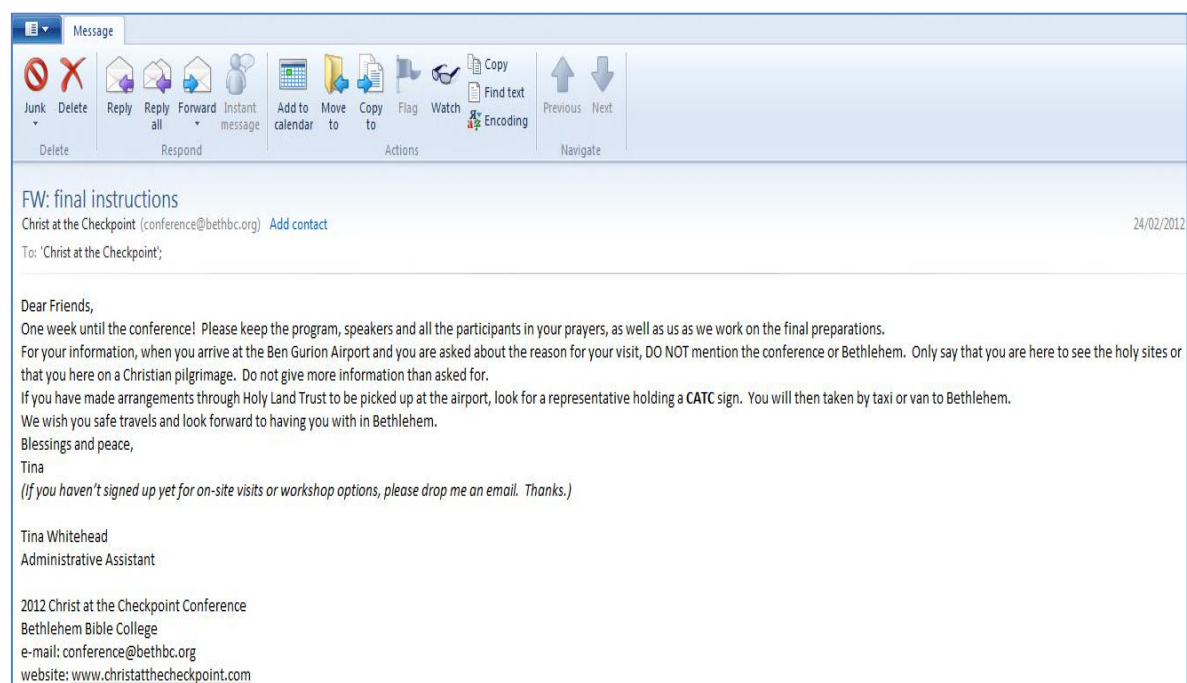
Alex Awad Dean of Students at Bethlehem Bible College; Board Member of the Council of Local Evangelical Churches in the Holy Land

Yohanna Katanacho Academic Dean of Bethlehem Bible College and of Galilee Bible College; Co-author of the Kairos Palestine Document (2009)



Salim Munayer	Founder and Director of Musalaha Reconciliation Ministries for Israel & Palestine; Faculty member of Bethlehem Bible College
John Angle	Anglican Minister; associated with Bethlehem Bible College
Manfred Kohl	Chairman; formerly in leadership with World Vision; Vice-President of Programs & International Development with Overseas Council International
Steve Haas	Vice-President of World Vision
Sami Awad	Executive Director of Holy Land Trust
Stephen Sizer	Vicar of Christ Church, Virginia Water, in England; Patron of the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions; Trustee of Friends of Sabeel UK; Member of the Palestine Solidarity Campaign; press accreditation with Holy Land Trust

Final Emailed Instructions from Conference Organisers, 24 February 2012



I would like to draw particular attention to the instruction given in the above email, which effectively told conference participants to lie when they arrived in Israel:

“For your information, when you arrive at the Ben Gurion Airport and you are asked about the reason for your visit, DO NOT mention the conference or Bethlehem. Only say that you are here to see the holy sites or that you are here on a Christian pilgrimage. Do not give more information than asked for.”

Underlying Political Agenda

Opening Address: Prime Minister of the Palestinian National Authority, Dr Salam Fayyad (Formerly the Minister of Finance under Yasser Arafat)

- ✚ Fayyad (right) was introduced by the conference director, Munther Isaac, as someone who has “worked so hard to prepare Palestine for statehood”
- ✚ Opened with “Welcome to Palestine,” and spoke of the opportunity delegates had to see “what it is like for Palestinians to be living under occupation”



- ✚ Condemned Israel’s “capricious regime” and “monstrous wall”
- ✚ Conveyed greetings from ‘Palestinian’ President Mahmoud Abbas, the same Abbas whose 1982 doctoral thesis was entitled *The Connection between the Nazis and the Leaders of the Zionist Movement 1933-1945*. It was published in Arabic in 1984 under the title al-Wajh al-Akhar: al-‘Alaqat as-Sirriya bayna an-Naziya wa’s-Sihyuniya (*The Other Side: the Secret Relationship Between Nazism and Zionism*). Critics of his work have accused Abbas of Holocaust denial.

This is how Munther Isaac (seated in picture) introduced Prime Minister Fayyad:

- ✚ “Palestinian Christians have always enjoyed the support of the Palestinian leaders. We worship with freedom and exercise our rights like all Palestinians. To emphasise this, we are deeply honoured to have with us the support of Prime Minister of the Palestinian Authority, Dr Salam Fayyad ... Dr Fayyad is a man of vision, and his vision is one of prosperity and peace for the Palestinian people. And it is only fitting that his name in Arabic literally means ‘abundant peace’. It is my privilege and honour to invite to us here to the stage to speak to us, Prime Minister of the Palestinian Authority, Dr Salam Fayyad.”



During his address, Fayyad spoke of how his government defended the rights of Christian minorities in 'Palestinian'-controlled territories. This, he proudly asserted, is what it means to be 'Palestinian.' It has since been reported that the First Baptist Church of Bethlehem, pastored by Revd Naim Khoury (right) and openly supportive of the State of Israel, has been denied legitimacy by the Palestinian Authority. Fire-bombed fourteen times in the past, the church has been told that any birth, death, or marriage certificates it issues will not be recognised. According to a report on *The Algemeiner* website (an American Jewish newspaper), posted 13th March 2012,



- ✚ "The irony is that the PA's announcement comes right after the Christ at the Checkpoint Conference."
- ✚ "It seems more than coincidence that the Christ at the Checkpoint conference ended and now the Khourys are being targeted."



One of the dignitaries who followed Salam Fayyad onto the platform was Victor Batarseh (left), the Mayor of Bethlehem. In December 2011, following his annual Christmas address, Batarseh appealed to the international community to boycott Israel – a tactic he said had "worked with South Africa."

In his conference address, Batarseh, a professing Roman Catholic, spoke of how "As Christians and Muslims we always have hope that God will give us the right to self-determination." He went on to speak of the death of Christ, before declaring:

"We the Palestinian people are also crucified now."

As stated in 'Prophets Who Prophecy Lies In My Name,' identifying the 'Palestinian' people with Jesus on the cross has become a powerful propaganda weapon in the hands of the Christian Palestinianist. In his Easter message in 2001, Naim Ateek, who was absent from this 2nd conference but whose Sabeel organisation was represented, declared:

- ✚ "Here in Palestine Jesus is again walking the via dolorosa. Jesus is the powerless Palestinian humiliated at a checkpoint ... In this season of Lent, it seems to many of us that Jesus is on the cross again with thousands of crucified Palestinians around him ... The Israeli government crucifixion system is operating daily."



Artwork: ar-ar.facebook.com

Mayor Batarseh was followed onto the 'Checkpoint' platform by Dr Hanna Issa, General Secretary of the Islamic-Christian Committee for Protecting Jerusalem and the Holy Sites. Anticipating a 'Palestinian' State with Jerusalem as its capital, Issa declared:

"Jerusalem is under occupation and the Palestinian people are under siege."

Issa began by greeting delegates in the name of the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, and "in the name of the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem." No stranger to controversy, the Grand Mufti, Sheikh Muhammad Hussein (right), received international condemnation following a speech he gave on 9th January 2012 at a ceremony commemorating the 47th



anniversary of the founding of the 'Palestinian' political party Fatah. Palestinian Media Watch, who posted his speech on their website, reported that the Mufti was welcomed onto the platform by the chair of the Fatah ceremony, who declared: "Our war with the descendants of the apes and pigs [i.e. the Jewish people] is a war of religion and faith. Long live Fatah!" In the spirit of his notorious predecessor and ally of Adolf Hitler, Haj Amin al-Husseini, Sheikh Hussein took the microphone and, citing the *Hadith* (traditional Islamic teaching attributed to Muhammad), declared:

✚ "The Hour [of Resurrection] will not come until you fight the Jews.
The Jew will hide behind stones or trees.
Then the stones or trees will call:
'Oh Muslim, servant of Allah, there is a Jew behind me,
come and kill him.'"



Pictured with the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem is Stephen Sizer (2nd from right). On the far left is Mohammed Sobeih, the Assistant General Secretary of the Arab League in Cairo. Sizer posted this photograph on his blog in February 2012.

Kairos Palestine: The Time Has Come

Yohanna Katanacho

Title of Paper: Introduction to the Church of the Arabs

- ✚ Academic Dean of Bethlehem Bible College
- ✚ Ordained with the Christian Missionary Alliance Church in the Holy Land
- ✚ Theologian and Author



Katanacho's book, *The Land of Christ: A Palestinian Cry* (2012), was promoted during the conference. In it he challenges the biblical distinction which Christian Zionists have made between Israel and the Church, describing any identification of the modern State of Israel with biblical Israel as "a common error". He argues that in both Testaments there are "multiple meanings" and "a spectrum of nuances" whenever the names 'Hebrew,' 'Israel,' or 'Jew' are mentioned, and that there is a "territorial fluidity" with regards to the Land – an argument clearly designed to break the inextricable link which exists between the Jewish people and the Land of Israel.

Katanacho is one of the authors of the 'Kairos Palestine Document' (December 2009), which appears as an addendum in his book. He claims that the Document "guides Christians as stewards of the land that Christ owns," and calls on all believers to be advocates for biblical hope, love, and justice to both 'Palestinians' and Israeli Jews, suggesting that an "appropriate step would be endorsing the Palestinian Kairos Document."



This document was published in the wake of international conferences convened in Jordan (2007) and Switzerland (2008), which condemned the so-called "Israeli occupation," called upon the international community to act against Israel, and criticized any interpretation of the Scriptures which connects the modern State of Israel with biblical Israel. These conferences provide the immediate backdrop to the 'Christ at the Checkpoint' Conference, and were alluded to from the platform:



The Amman Call

(Amman, Jordan, 20 June 2007)

Issued at the World Council of Churches International Peace Conference 'Churches together for Peace and Justice in the Middle East'

✚ “For the last forty years the Christian churches have called for an end to the Israeli occupation of Palestine ... The Palestinian Christians from Gaza to Jerusalem and to Nazareth, have called out to their brothers and sisters in Christ with this urgent plea: ‘Enough is enough. No more words without deeds. It is time for action’ ... Thus, in Amman, Jordan ... we

representatives of Christian churches and church-related organizations from every corner of the earth, affirm the decision of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches and launch the ‘Palestine Israel Ecumenical Forum’ as an instrument to ‘catalyze and co-ordinate new and existing church advocacy for peace, aimed at ending the illegal occupation in accordance with UN resolutions, and demonstrate its commitment to inter-religious action for peace and justice that serves all the peoples of the region.’”

The Bern Perspective

(Bern, Switzerland, 13 September 2008)

Issued by the World Council of Churches, the Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches, and the Reformed Churches Bern-Jura-Solothurn

✚ “After decades of dispossession, discrimination, illegal occupation, violence and bloodshed in Palestine-Israel, Christians are challenged to continue to study, critique and re-vision theologies of land ... A central issue for the conference was how the Bible is



read. We are called to ... recognize distinctions between biblical history and biblical story as well as distinctions between the Israel of the Bible and the modern State of Israel ... Let us affirm that a new discourse on these issues develops as a new generation emerges. Therefore, our churches should commit themselves to ecumenical and inter-religious formation ... so that we might more rigorously analyze the conflict, interrogate ideologies like antisemitism and Christian Zionism, and contribute toward peace making and peace building in Palestine-Israel.”

Kairos Palestine Document: A Moment of Truth

A Word of Faith, Hope and Love from the Heart of Palestinian Suffering
(Bethlehem, Israel, 11 December 2009)

Issued by the 'Palestinian' Christian community

In his 'Christ at the Checkpoint' presentation, Yohanna Katanacho declared:

✚ “Love is an opportunity to pursue justice ... and the Kairos Document is a document of love, because we talk about where sin is ... It is a document of hope ... We faced, and face, radical Islam at some times as well as Israeli occupation at other times. We believe, and I believe, the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza strip is a sin, and people need to repent from that sin.”

This statement is extremely significant (1) because of the way the alleged occupation is portrayed as “sin”, and (2) because it represents an example of MORAL EQUIVALENCE, which forces comparison between “radical Islam” and the alleged “Israeli occupation,” in order to say that the one is as evil as the other.

Presented as “the Christian Palestinians’ word to the world about what is happening in Palestine,” the ‘Kairos Palestine Document’ is the ‘Palestinian’ equivalent of the original ‘Kairos Document,’ which was released in 1985 by a group of 150 black South African liberation theologians in Soweto, who issued a plea to the churches in South Africa to stand against the Apartheid regime. Not surprisingly,



Signing Ceremony in December, 2009

‘Palestinian’ theologians and human rights activists have formulated their own version of this document by capitalising upon South African history as a basis for laying the blame for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict squarely at the feet of the Israeli government. According to the authors of ‘Kairos Palestine’:

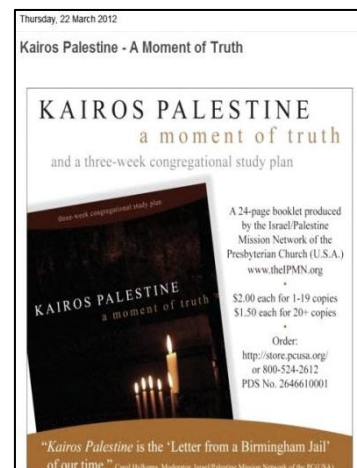
✚ “the document requests the international community to stand by the Palestinian people who have faced oppression, displacement, suffering and clear apartheid for more than six decades. The suffering continues while the international community silently looks on at the occupying State, Israel. Our word is a cry of hope, with love, prayer and faith in God. We address it first of all to ourselves and then to all the churches and Christians in the world, asking them to stand against injustice and apartheid, urging them to work for a just peace in our region, calling on them to revisit theologies that justify crimes perpetrated against our

people and the dispossession of the land ... [The document] seeks to be prophetic in addressing things as they are without equivocation and with boldness, in addition it puts forward ending the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land and all forms of discrimination as the solution that will lead to a just and lasting peace with the establishment of **an independent Palestinian state with Al-Quds [Jerusalem] as its capital.**" (emphasis mine)

The authors of 'Kairos Palestine' are:

His Beatitude Patriarch Michel Sabbah, His Eminence Archbishop Atallah Hanna, Rev. Dr. Jamal Khader, Rev. Dr. Rafiq Khoury, Rev. Dr. Mitri Raheb, Rev. Dr. Naim Ateek, Rev. Dr. Yohanna Katanacho, Rev. Fadi Diab, Dr. Jiries Khoury, Ms. Cedar Duaybis, Ms. Nora Kort, Ms. Lucy Thaljieh, Mr. Nidal Abu El Zuluf, Mr. Yusef Daher, Mr. Rifat Kassis.

The document, originally written in Arabic, presents "the Palestinian Christian narrative" by providing "a list of various oppressive Israeli measures taken against Palestinians," and by presenting "the real nature of the conflict," which is not "an Israeli war against terror" but "an Israeli occupation faced by Palestinian legal resistance" (emphasis mine). Conspicuous by its absence is any censuring of 'Palestinian' suicide bombers, 'Palestinian' terrorist groups such as Hamas and the Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, and other Islamic fundamentalist groups. Section 4.3 gives us a clue as to why this is so:



- ✚ "The roots of 'terrorism' are in the human injustice committed and in the evil of the occupation." [Note how the word terrorism is placed within quotation marks]

At the time of writing (23 April 2012), the Kairos Palestine Document boasts 2797 signatories and 2131 endorsees, including Stephen Sizer, who is actively promoting the document on his blog, along with an accompanying study plan (see above picture). The document has the full endorsement of the World Council of Churches (WCC). According to former General Secretary of the WCC, Revd Dr. Samuel Kobia,

- ✚ "This cry of the Palestinian Christians and their church leaders provides the fresh basis and reference point in this renewed struggle for justice. It is, therefore, inevitable, that the Kairos document is affirmed and its implications be actively pursued in the particular contexts that member churches of the WCC are located in ... The Kairos is an instrument and its launching is the beginning of a new phase of work."

The Bethlehem Call

(Bethlehem, Israel, 13 December 2011)

Issued by the Kairos Palestine committee, following a Kairos conference in Bethlehem which hosted more than 60 delegates from 15 countries



Mary and Joseph denied access to Bethlehem

According to the Preamble, “The cry for justice in Palestine reached a pivotal moment when, in December 2009, Palestinian Christians launched the Kairos Palestine document.”

The ‘Bethlehem Call’ begins with the following instruction to the reader:

“Read and interpret this text with a Kairos consciousness and gaze of prophetic anger.”

Key Statements

- ✚ “As witnessed with our own eyes, the treacherous conditions imposed by the Israeli occupation on Palestinians and their land have reached a level of almost unimaginable and sophisticated criminality. This includes the slow yet deliberate and systematic ethnic cleansing and the geo-cide of Palestinians and Palestine as well as the strangling of the Palestinian economy”
- ✚ “The government and state of Israel is now regarded as an apartheid regime in terms of international law”
- ✚ We “call the Israeli occupation of Palestine a crime and sin. We reject any theological or political justification for the Occupation”
- ✚ We “reject any argument aimed at convincing Palestinians and the international community that the problems are caused by Muslims rather than the Occupation”
- ✚ We “demand that the Right of Return for all Palestinian refugees be enforced”
- ✚ We “support and commit ourselves to the dismantling of Israeli apartheid”
- ✚ We “commit to engage in creative, non-violent resistance in response to the call from our Palestinian sisters and brothers to this end, including BDS [boycott, divestment, and sanctions against Israel].”

The Bethlehem Call ends with a Roman Catholic ‘Franciscan’ Benediction.

A Most Serious and Reprehensible Document

In the 'Kairos Palestine Document' (2009) we read the following:

"the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land is a sin against God"
(2.5)

"The aggression against the Palestinian people, which is the Israeli occupation, is an evil that must be resisted. It is an evil and a sin that must be resisted and removed"
(4.2.1)

Those responsible for writing and endorsing such statements seem to be completely unaware that what they are actually doing is accusing *God* of "an evil and a sin," by denying that Israel's re-establishment was in accordance with His sovereign will and purpose as revealed in the Hebrew Scriptures.

According to a 'Christ at the Checkpoint' reading of history, the momentous events which paved the way for the establishment of the modern State of Israel in 1948 were a grave mistake, the consequences of which need to be undone:



Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions

In Section 4.2.6 and Section 7 of the 'Kairos Palestine' document we read the following:

- ✚ "Palestinian civil organizations, as well as international organizations, NGOs and certain religious institutions call on individuals, companies and states to engage in divestment and in an economic and commercial boycott of everything produced by the occupation ... [W]e call for ... the beginning of a system of economic sanctions and boycott to be applied against Israel."



In 'Prophets Who Prophesy Lies In My Name' I document how, in recent years, an increasing number of Church denominations and ecumenical organizations have issued statements which condemn the alleged Israeli "occupation," and which have supported campaigns to boycott Israeli goods and/or divest from multinational companies operating within Israel. These include the Church of England, the Methodist Church of Great Britain, the Presbyterian Church (USA), the United Methodist Church, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. It is striking to note that many of the denominational synods and councils were influenced in their decision by reports based on the writings of men like Stephen Sizer and Gary Burge, two of the main theological linchpins of the 'Christ at the Checkpoint' Conference.

- ✚ In September 2009, the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches (WCC) met in Geneva and released its 'Statement on Israeli Settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.' The Statement called for "an international boycott of goods produced in the *illegal* Israeli settlements in the *occupied* territories." (emphasis mine)
- ✚ In an interview with Stephen Sizer during the first 'Christ at the Checkpoint' Conference in March 2010, Revd Naim Ateek, the founder of Sabeel, spoke of the way Christians in the United States were enthusiastically supporting "B.D.S. – Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions." As Ateek stated, "I feel that that's the way forward – it's the way of resisting non-violently".



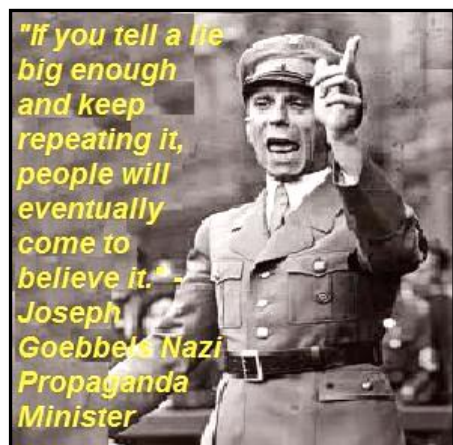
Clearly defending himself against the charge of anti-Semitism, White, a freelance journalist, asserts:

"I do not consider myself an anti-Semite, *yet I can also understand why some are*. There are, in fact, a number of reasons. One is the state of Israel ... I have just provided a by no means comprehensive list of reasons why 'I can understand very well that some people are unpleasant towards Jews.'" (emphasis mine)

"English anti-Semitism has nearly always been an underground movement, protected by the pretense that it does not exist ... Journalists have become as expert in avoiding the charge of anti-Semitism as they are in dodging the law of libel." (Malcolm Hay, *Europe and the Jews: The Pressure of Christendom over 1900 Years* [1992], p.292)

In his books, *Israeli Apartheid: A Beginner's Guide* (2009) and *Palestinians in Israel: Segregation, Discrimination and Democracy* (2012), White states the following:

- ✚ "For political Zionism to come to fruition ... it was necessary to carry out as large a scale as possible ethnic cleansing of the country's unwanted Arab natives ... Since 1948, Israel has maintained an apartheid regime over the territory it controls". (*Israeli Apartheid*, pp.39,91)
- ✚ In a video which Stephen Sizer posted on his blog, White stated how "honoured" he was to have received endorsements for his new book "from fantastic people who work in this area, from Professor Ilan Pappé [author of *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*], to Ali Abunimah [co-founder of 'Electronic Intifada'] ... also Omar Barghouti [founding member of the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel, and author of *Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions*]".
- ✚ In her foreword to White's *Palestinians in Israel*, Haneen Zoabi, the first 'Palestinian' woman elected to the Knesset, describes Israel as a racist, colonialist, and fascist state. In 2010 she participated in the Gaza flotilla.
- ✚ "One of the important aspects of the Boycott Divestment Sanctions (BDS) campaign is the way in which the three simple demands ... are focused on rights: The right of Palestinians to be free from military rule in the post-1967 occupied territories. The right of Palestinian citizens of Israel to full equality. The rights of Palestinian refugees to return and reparations." (*Palestinians in Israel*, p.90)



Nothing New Under The Sun



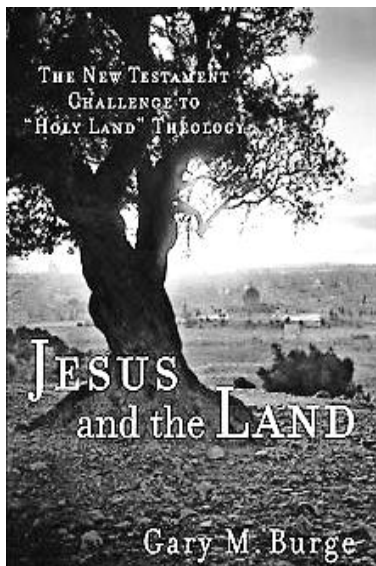
On April 1, 1933, one week after taking power in Germany, Nazi leader Adolf Hitler ordered a boycott of Jewish shops, banks, and businesses. This order was implemented by Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels. The same anti-Semitic spirit which drove the Nazi regime in 1933 and beyond, is today driving the 'Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (B.D.S.)' campaign, with its often menacing and intimidating methods.

The Leopard Tries To Change Its Spots

Gary Burge

Title of Paper: Theology of the Land in the New Testament

- ✚ Professor of New Testament at Wheaton College, Illinois, USA
- ✚ Advisory Board member of the Holy Land Christian Ecumenical Foundation
- ✚ Board member of Evangelicals for Middle East Understanding



Burge was introduced by Sami Awad, who described his book, *Jesus and the Land* (2010) as “one of my favourite books” – not surprising, since Burge presents the classic Replacement Theology view concerning the Land of Israel. For example, in his book Burge writes: “Jesus does not envision a restoration of Israel *per se* but instead sees himself as embracing the drama of Jerusalem within his own life ... In some manner, the initial restoration of Israel has already begun inasmuch as Christ, the new Temple, the New Israel, has been resurrected” (p.60)

In his conference paper Gary Burge made a number of statements, often with an element of mockery in his voice:

- ✚ “This country may be the only place in the world where millions of people have chosen to justify their claim on land by appealing to a single man *who died* somewhere around 2000BC, and they are dead serious.”
- ✚ “Immediately some of my friends will accuse me of Replacement Theology or supercessionism.”
- ✚ Burge presented a diagram proposing “another way to write this equation”. He said, “I think I might call it ‘Messianic Fulfilment’. What I mean by this is that we have another way in which we need to see it [i.e. Replacement Theology].”

By changing their terminology to “Fulfilment Theology” or “Messianic Fulfilment,” Burge and his ‘Checkpoint’ colleagues are hoping to disarm their premillennial, pro-Israel opponents and parry the criticism they have received on account of their replacementist views.

✚ Using revisionist language, Burge never referred to 'Israel' when speaking of the future salvation of the Jewish people. Bewilderingly he used the term 'Judaism' instead, as the following example illustrates: "But Judaism holds an incomparable place in history. Because of its legacy it is not rejected ... There'll be a great consummation of history when Judaism then accepts its Messiah, joins the Church, and then all Israel will be saved."

✚ During the Q&A session that followed Burge's presentation, Jerusalem-based pastor Wayne Hilsden (pictured right with Burge and Isaac) stated his belief that Israel's re-establishment in 1948 was "part of God's prophetic fulfilment," to which Gary Burge replied:



"And I think that's where we differ because I think then I would look at that and I would say many of the passages that you read from the Old Testament strike me as post-exilic passages, and I would see many of the anticipations coming from the Old Testament realised in Christ. We both have very traditional positions on this, but it would be easy from where I stand then to recognise the *political* legitimacy of Israel, but *not* concede the spiritual significance of what God is doing in Israel."

The 'Palestinian' Wailing Wall



"so-called peace activists have turned the concrete sections of the security barrier in Bethlehem into a canvas for their propaganda"

(Dexter Van Zile, 'Exclusive: Baptist Church in Bethlehem Declared Illegitimate by Palestinian Authority,' *The Algemeiner*, 13 March 2012).

Munther Isaac

Title of Paper: 'Help Me Shine!' A Palestinian Christian Response to Christian Zionism



Munther Isaac was the director of the conference. He is the Vice-Academic Dean at Bethlehem Bible College, and a graduate of Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia.

On his blog, Isaac lists among his favourite works “anything NT Wright writes”. Wright, a British theologian and former Anglican Bishop of Durham, stands within the amillennial tradition, reinterpreting and redefining the Scriptural promises which were given by God to Israel.

In what was essentially a personal testimony of his journey to faith in Christ and his struggle to understand the theology of the Land he calls ‘Palestine,’ Isaac outlined his replacementist beliefs and pointed an accusing finger at Evangelical Christians who interpret the prophetic scriptures literally. Here are a few of the statements he made in his address:

- ✚ Through Christ “I joined biblical Israel,” and “the Old Testament becomes mine”
- ✚ Old Testament prophecies which speak of the restoration of the Jewish people to the Land “were *all* conditional” and “*all* spiritual in nature ... and this is why I challenge Christian Zionism” (emphasis his)
- ✚ “One thing that really makes me angry about many forms of Christian Zionism is its certainty”

Sami Awad

Title of Paper: Non Violence

Sami Awad, the son of Bishara Awad, is the Executive Director of Holy Land Trust (HLT), a ‘Palestinian’ non-profit organization which he founded in Bethlehem in 1998, and with which Stephen Sizer has press accreditation.

Holy Land Trust seeks to empower the ‘Palestinian’ people to resist the alleged “occupation” non-violently. This call to “non-violent resistance” echoed throughout the conference.





One of the 'International Associates' of HLT is Ben White, whose books are promoted on its website. In 2010, at an event hosted by the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in London, White (left at the 'Checkpoint' conference with Stephen Sizer) called on students to boycott Israel. He was sharing a platform with Islamist 'Palestinian' academic and advocate of 'Palestinian' terrorism, Azzam Tamimi, with whom Sizer has also shared platforms.

In his conference address, Sami Awad spoke of his vision of Jerusalem becoming a city where everyone can worship – Jews, Christians, and Muslims. Like many of the speakers, Awad claimed to speak for the Lord regarding the future of Jerusalem. He maintained that Jesus told him: "I will give you this [vision] when I see Jews, Christians and Muslims stop looking [at] and blaming each other for everything and begin to look at me". Awad was not alone in advocating a 'multi-faith' Jerusalem.

Several speakers, including Awad, poured scorn on the notion that "security" was the main reason for the checkpoints and the wall. But what would happen if the wall did come down? Ryan Jones, an Israeli journalist who attended the conference, answered that question in an article for *Israel Today* (7 March 2012):

✚ "It is indeed an imposing, intimidating and even depressing structure. Passing through is a great inconvenience compared to how easy it was to move from Jerusalem to Bethlehem, and vice versa, just 10 years ago ... And I can sympathize with those whose only crime is being born Palestinian, but nevertheless have to endure such hardships. But you know what else is depressing, inconvenient and insulting? Being blown up while riding the bus."

Ron Sider

Title of Paper: Biblical Justice

'Non-violent resistance' was also a theme of Ron Sider's paper. Sider's book, *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger* (1977), has been hailed as one of the most influential Evangelical books of the last 30 years. In his conference address he shared his utopian dream, suggesting that if leaders like the Pope, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and Desmond Tutu joined together in a call for non-violence, then there would be a way forward in achieving a non-violent solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Millions of dollars, he said, would be needed to make this utopian dream a reality.



Standing on the Shoulders of Goliath

Stephen Sizer

Title of Workshop: Seven Biblical Answers to Popular Zionist Assumptions

In my book, *For Zion's Sake: Christian Zionism and the Role of John Nelson Darby* (Paternoster: 2007), I detail the theology and some of the political/religious associations of the Evangelical Anglican vicar, Revd Dr Stephen Sizer. Sizer is the "champion" of the Christian Palestinianist movement, which relentlessly crusades against Israel and her Christian allies.

These photographs, which Sizer has published on his own website, illustrate how deeply involved he is with pro-Palestinian/Islamic groups. From top to bottom:

1. *The 5th International Sabeel Conference, held in Jerusalem, 2004.* Sizer with Yasser Arafat in the Muqata'ah compound in Ramallah (photo from Sizer's own Powerpoint presentation).
2. *Lecture tour of Iran, October 2007.* Sizer receiving gifts from Zahra Mostafavi Khomeini, daughter of the late Ayatollah Khomeini who led the Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979. She is allegedly a supporter of Hezbollah and an advocate of child suicide bombers.
3. *Evangelical-Muslim Dialogue Conference in Toronto, May 2010.* Sponsored by the World Islamic Call Society, which was founded and funded by Libyan dictator Colonel Gaddafi.
4. *Palestine Solidarity Campaign Summer Conference, 2011.* Sizer actively supports "boycott, divestment, sanctions" against Israel.
5. *Guest in June 2011 at the Malaysian branch of the British-based charity Viva Palestina, which was co-founded by British Member of Parliament George Galloway.*



During his 2011 visit to Malaysia, an Islamic country, Sizer posted on his website an article based on an interview he gave to a Malaysian newspaper. The article begins,

✚ “Absolute rubbish, replies Reverend Dr Stephen Sizer when asked about the popular Christian view that Jews are the chosen people and that Israel is the Holy Land which gives them the right to return.”



During his visit to Malaysia, Sizer interviewed Syafiq (left), a young Muslim representative of the Hamas-supporting Malaysian branch of *Viva Palestina*, who stated that his organisation, which supports ‘Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions’ against Israel, was currently targeting four companies – McDonalds, Coca Cola, L’Oréal and Nestlé. The reason, he said, was because these companies “channel their profits to the Zionist agenda”. Sizer can be heard agreeing with him. (*I found a link to this interview on the Rosh Pina Project website*)

At the time of writing, *Viva Palestina Malaysia* has posted on its website an article from the web pages of the notorious Holocaust denier and former Ku Klux Klan leader, David Duke, which proposes that all Jews living in ‘Palestine’ be relocated to Birobidzhan in Siberia.



In two separate interviews for Malaysian television, Sizer equated Zionism with racism, and called upon Malaysians to support the ‘Gaza Freedom Flotilla.’ The flotilla hit the headlines in May 2010 when IDF soldiers were attacked as they attempted to board the Turkish ship, the MV *Mavi Marmara*. In his interview, Sizer made the following remarks:



✚ “Getting behind the flotilla is a fantastic way people here in Malaysia can help ... It embarrasses America and it embarrasses Israel. The ordinary human beings are willing to risk their lives to sail supplies into Gaza ... So we’re really excited about what we can do together.”

On 23rd March 2012, the *Jewish Telegraph* newspaper ran the following front-page headline: **‘Flytilla’ To Invade Israel**. Mimicking the flotilla of 2010, the newspaper reported that the ‘flytilla’ had been organised by the ‘Welcome to Palestine Initiative,’ and was being supported by members of the Palestine Solidarity Campaign to which Sizer belongs. Over one thousand activists were scheduled to fly into Israel on Sunday 15th April, in a publicity stunt designed to create as much havoc as possible as Jewish people returned to and from Israel after Passover.

Another 'Tonge-lashing'

In 2011, Sizer was a signatory to a letter condemning the British government's decision to sever diplomatic relations with Iran, following the storming of the British Embassy in Tehran in November that year. The letter appeared in the *Guardian* newspaper on 23rd December, calling on the government "to reinstate its diplomatic relations with Iran and engage with the Iranian authorities to address all outstanding issues." Other signatories included notable anti-Israel campaigners George Galloway, Bruce Kent, Lauren Booth (Tony Blair's sister-in-law), and Moazzam Begg, a former detainee at Guantanamo Bay accused of supporting al-Qaeda and receiving military training in al-Qaeda-run camps in Afghanistan.



Stephen Sizer describes himself as an "active member" of the Palestine Solidarity Campaign, which promotes 'Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions' against Israel. One of its patrons is Baroness Jenny Tonge (left), a former Liberal Democrat Member of the British Parliament. Tonge was sacked as children's spokeswoman for the Liberal Democrats in 2004, after

suggesting that she would consider becoming a suicide bomber if *she* was a 'Palestinian'. Speaking at Middlesex University's Free Palestine Society in February 2012, she declared:

"Beware Israel!

Israel is not going to be there forever ... Israel will lose its support and then they will reap what they have sown."

Israel's UK Ambassador, Daniel Taub, gave his response to this latest 'Tonge-lashing' against Israel: "It was shocking to hear a member of the House of Lords saying 'Israel will not be there for ever.' I'm sure I speak for everyone here when I tell Baroness Tonge we have no intention of going anywhere." Tonge's unbridled anti-Israel comments drew widespread condemnation. When her parliamentary party leader Nick Clegg asked her to apologise for the offense her remarks had caused, she refused and duly resigned.

Sizer says: "Jesus is Israel"

During the 'Christ at the Checkpoint' Conference, Stephen Sizer gave a workshop entitled, 'Seven Biblical Answers to Popular Zionist Assumptions,' which he has posted on his website. It was originally given at the Evangelicals for Middle East Understanding Executive Briefing in Fremont, California, in November 2011. Sizer made the following allegorical statements:

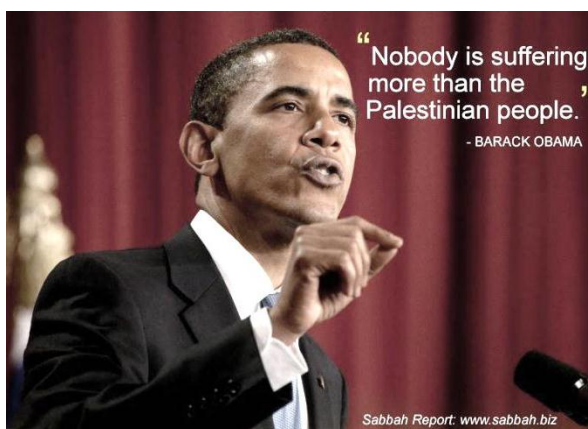


- ✚ “When we talk about Israel in the Hebrew Scriptures, we are not talking about a racial identification ... Israel as a racial identification, as a national people, was *never* how the Old Testament understood God’s people”
- ✚ “In my Bible when Christ died on the cross, he was Israel, he was the remnant ... When he says ‘I am the vine’ he is saying ‘I am God and I am Israel’ ... When Jesus says ‘I am the vine’ he is replacing Israel”

When Sizer presented this workshop in California, he was introduced by Tom Getman (right), a former staff member in the U.S. Congress who later served as Executive Director for International Relations with World Vision, and who was responsible for World Vision’s liaison activities with the UN and the World Council of Churches. Getman enthusiastically thanked Sizer for what he had done “to put steel in our spines and give us hope”.



In an interview conducted at a conference in St. Mark’s Episcopal Church on Capitol Hill, Washington D.C., Sizer asked Getman about his hopes for the Obama administration in relation to the Middle East. Getman made a revealing statement:



“We have friends in the Mitchell team [George Mitchell was Obama’s ‘Special Envoy to the Arab-Israeli Peace Process’], we have friends inside the White House, we have friends in the Senate, like people in this room today, who really are intent on putting steel in the spine so that

Obama can follow through on what he has said ... so we’re trying to encourage the Christians who are in the administration, or active Jews within the administration, to really stand up and let Obama be Obama in terms of what his heart says we must do in terms of dialogue.”

[In 2007, then *Senator* Barack Obama (above) declared:

“Nobody is suffering more than the Palestinian people.”]

In his interview with Stephen Sizer, Getman stressed the scale of impact which the pro-Palestinian conferences he and Sizer had participated in were having:

- ✚ “This is pebbles in the pond. You’ve got some of the most senior leaders here, strategic leaders and others that are interested in reading your [Sizer’s] books and reading your [Sizer’s] blogs and so on that will help build this movement.”

Foul Play on Facebook

On 4th October 2011, Stephen Sizer posted on his Facebook page the following link to 'The Ugly Truth', a blatantly anti-Semitic website:



On 13th March 2012, the Council of Christians and Jews (CCJ) issued a statement in response:

- ✚ “We consider this to be wholly unacceptable. We cannot accept it was an accident, because Mr Sizer was alerted to the antisemitic nature of the website in November [2011] and again in December, but only removed the link in January [2012] when contacted by the Jewish Chronicle.”
- ✚ “The content and the delay in removing the link from Mr Sizer’s Facebook page was disgraceful and unbecoming for a clergyman of the Church of England to promote. Members of the CCJ have described the website as ‘obscenely antisemitic.’” (Rt. Revd Nigel McCulloch, Bishop of Manchester and Chairman of the CCJ)
- ✚ “The Revd Stephen Sizer is fully entitled to his views on the Israel/Palestine conflict but he has to be aware that criticism of Israel is one thing while publicizing websites with antisemitic content goes beyond what is tolerable.” (Revd David Gifford, Chief Executive of the CCJ)

The statement concludes:

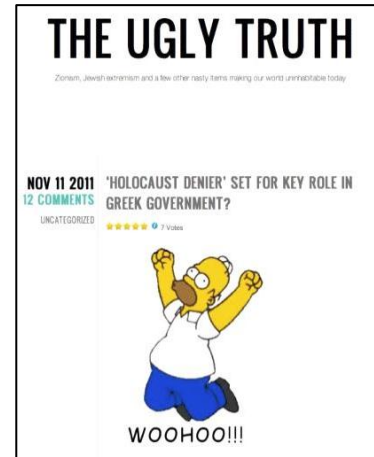
- ✚ “CCJ has expressed grave concern to the Bishop of Guildford in whose diocese Mr Sizer is a priest – and has drawn the attention of the Surrey police to what they claim was an action tantamount to encouraging race ‘hatred’.”

Sizer's website activities have been tracked by Anglican minister Nick Howard (the son of former Conservative Party leader Michael Howard). Here is a sample of the incriminatory evidence which Howard compiled in his 2011 report, 'The Church of England must take action against Rev Stephen Sizer':

- To the right is one of the more moderate images featured on 'The Ugly Truth' website, to which Howard and the CCJ have drawn attention. On 11th November 2011 the headline read:

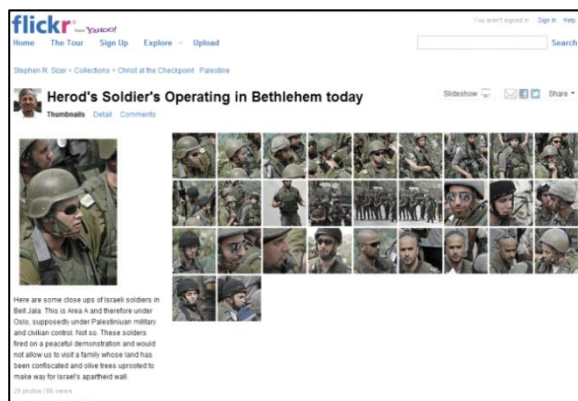
'Holocaust Denier' Set For Key Role in Greek Government?

Homer Simpson, a cartoon character from the animated American t.v. show 'The Simpsons,' expresses his delight at the news.

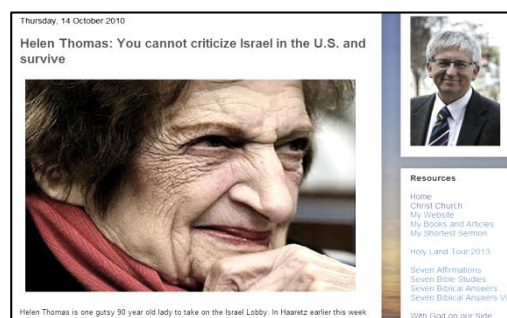


- During the first 'Christ at the Checkpoint' Conference in 2010, Sizer posted these photographs of Israeli soldiers in Beit Jala on his 'flickr' page [photo sharing website], under the headline:

Herod's Soldiers Operating in Bethlehem Today



- In October 2010, Sizer reported on former White House correspondent Helen Thomas (right), who retired from journalism after being recorded outside the White House calling on Jews to "get the hell out of Palestine" and return to "Poland, Germany and America and everywhere else". Describing Thomas as "one gutsy 90 year old lady," Sizer concluded with the words: **"Bring it on."**



- In March 2010, Sizer reported on Hillary Clinton's criticism of Israel's decision to build new settlements in East Jerusalem. He headlined his report, **Payback for Monica? Clinton Rebukes Israel Twice in Two Weeks**



Nick Howard comments: “This unbelievably tasteless insinuation that Monica Lewinsky’s Jewishness motivated Hillary Clinton’s criticism of Israel shows how Rev Sizer’s mind works.” Summing up in his ‘prosecution’ of Sizer, Howard writes:

✚ **“It would have been perfectly possible for Stephen Sizer to criticise Israel without posting links on Facebook to racist websites; or joining forces with recognised anti-Semites across the world; or, when accused of anti-Semitism, turning to a known anti-Semite for support; or alluding to the archetype of the Christ-killing Jew; or downplaying the Holocaust by using the same word to describe Israel’s actions towards the Palestinians; or promoting the global Zionist conspiracy myth; or endorsing a disgraced journalist’s call for Jews to ‘get the hell out of Palestine’; or spreading the outrageous myth of Israeli involvement in 9/11; or making distasteful references to Monica Lewinsky’s Jewishness; or backing the anti-Semitic hate preacher Sheikh Salah. Each of these actions defiantly crosses a line. They do not demonstrate permissible criticism of the state of Israel. They demonstrate a mixture of explicit anti-Semitism; implicit anti-Semitism; and complicity with anti-Semites ... Stephen Sizer is bringing disgrace on the congregation of Christ Church Virginia Water, who happily put up with him; the wider Church of England, which springs to his defence; and this nation, of which the Church of England is the established church.”**

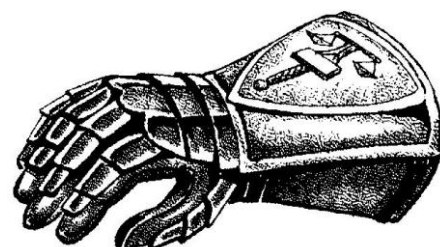
Sadly, when presented with this evidence, Sizer’s bishop, the Rt. Revd Christopher Hill, retreated behind ecclesiastical lines and issued this response to Howard: “I see nothing which would merit disciplinary matters, not least because differing political opinions are definitely exempted from disciplinary proceedings in the Church of England according to the Clergy Disciplinary Measure.”

✚ [Sizer is currently doing all he can to vindicate himself, by appealing to Jewish, Christian, and political leaders for support]

Throwing Down The Gauntlet

Standing on the shoulders of Goliath, today’s ‘Palestinianist’ champions are taunting those in the pro-Israel camp. In his endorsement of Stephen Sizer’s book, *Christian Zionism: Road-map to Armageddon? (2004)*, Colin Chapman issued the following challenge:

“Sizer has thrown down the gauntlet in a way that demands a response from those who support the state of Israel for theological reasons.”



Colin Chapman – Defending the Indefensible

Title of Paper: A Christian Response to Radical Islam

Former lecturer in Islamic Studies at the Near East School of Theology, Beirut. Author of several books, most notably *Whose Promised Land?*, which was first published in 1983 and has been reprinted several times. Chapman plays into the hands of the Islamists with the following irresponsible and misguided statements:

- ✚ “In many cases I believe they [Muslims] have good reason to be angry”
- ✚ “I have begun to understand a little of the anger that led to 9/11 ... I have to say that if I were a Muslim, if I were an Arab, I would feel some of this anger ... and would have to add that in many cases I believe they have good reason to be angry”
- ✚ “I would dare to suggest that if Israel had complied with the famous UN Resolution 242 in 1967, Hamas might never have come into existence, and if Israel had not invaded Lebanon in 1982, there might be no Hezbollah today”
- ✚ “If I had time I would also want to look at the Koranic verses about the Jews”
- ✚ “I suggest we need to be careful of trying to tell Muslims of how to interpret *their* scriptures. We should be willing to listen to how *they* interpret their scriptures”
- ✚ “There are strong similarities between Islamic fundamentalism and Jewish fundamentalism”
- ✚ “Dare I say that perhaps the rest of the world needs to be more patient and give Islamists time to show whether they can run a modern state”.



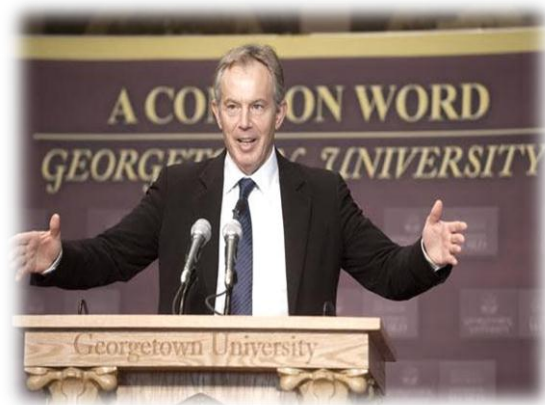
What Has Light In Common With Darkness? – ‘A Common Word’



Colin Chapman was a signatory to the 2007 document, ‘Loving God and Neighbour Together: A Christian Response to “A Common Word Between Us and You”,’ which was drafted by scholars at Yale Divinity School in the United States. Rick

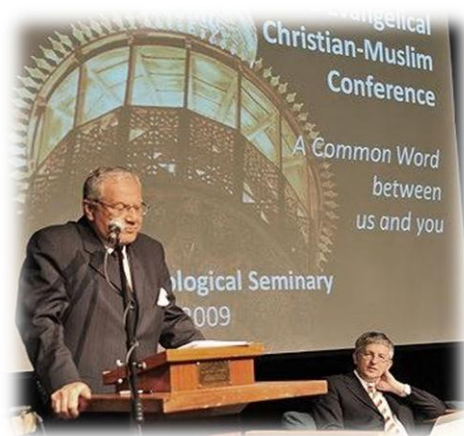
Warren was another notable signatory. The document was presented as a *Christian* response to ‘A Common Word Between Us and You: An Open Letter to World Christian Leaders from World Muslim Leaders’ (October 2007), which was sent to Church leaders on behalf of “138 influential Muslim clerics representing every school and sect of Islam from around the world.” It has been hailed as “the world’s

leading interfaith dialogue initiative between Christians and Muslims.” The principal architect of ‘A Common Word’ is Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad of Jordan, Chief Advisor to King Abdullah II of Jordan and allegedly a direct descendant of Muhammad. Tony Blair (right at Georgetown University in Washington D.C. – America’s oldest Catholic and Jesuit university) is one of the leading advocates of the ‘Common Word’ initiative.



Extracts from ‘A Common Word’

- ✚ “The future of the world depends on peace between Muslims and Christians.”
- ✚ “Thus in obedience to the Holy Qur’an, we as Muslims invite Christians to come together with us on the basis of what is common to us, which is also what is most essential to our faith and practice: the *Two Commandments* of love.”



In April 2009, Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California, hosted the Third Evangelical Christian–Muslim Conference. The theme was ‘A Common Word Between Us and You.’ Speakers included Stephen Sizer (seated left), Gary Burge, and Colin Chapman.

Along with Chapman, other signatories to the ‘Loving God and Neighbour Together’ document include ‘Checkpoint’ speaker Chris Wright, committee member Salim Munayer, and conference chairman Manfred Kohl.

Manfred Kohl

Title of Paper: ‘Very Stupid and Very Ecstatic’ – Creating Our Own Conflict Regarding the Theology of the Land



- ✚ Focus on land is “very stupid” and “very ecstatic”
- ✚ Jesus “showed no interest in Israel as a kingdom”
- ✚ “In Paul’s Christology the land, like the law, becomes irrelevant”
- ✚ “The term Replacement Theology is correct,” but “an even better term is ‘Fulfilment Theology’”
- ✚ The “true people” of God “is a worldwide community, not an ethnic group associated with a particular land”

The Seduction of Messianic Christianity

According to the 'Christ at the Checkpoint' organising committee, "A unique aspect of the conference was the presence and presentations by members of the Messianic community including Richard Harvey, Evan Thomas and Wayne Hilsden, who provided an integral contribution to the dialogue." These men had been challenged by the wider Messianic community about the appropriateness of their involvement. Two weeks prior to the conference, on 17th February 2012, leaders of the Messianic Jewish Alliance of America (MJAA), the Union of Messianic Jewish Congregations (UMJC), the International Messianic Jewish Alliance (IMJA), and the International Alliance of Messianic Congregations and Synagogues (IAMCS), issued a joint statement raising "deep concerns" over the "anti-Israel and indeed unbiblical nature" of the 'Christ at the Checkpoint' Conference.

Wayne Hilsden

Title of Paper: The Place of the Jewish People in God's Purposes



"I think I'm with you there [Gary Burge], I want to talk to you more about that later, but I think I'm with you on that ... I love that diagram, I want to get a copy of that, and that's why I think we're on the same page."

Wayne Hilsden is the Senior Pastor of King of Kings Community in Jerusalem. In his paper he outlined the biblical basis for understanding the ongoing purposes of God for Israel as a nation. However, one statement he made gives cause for concern. At one point he unexpectedly paused to address the previous speaker, Gary Burge, whom he commended for having done "a wonderful job." Referring to Burge's theology of 'Messianic Fulfilment,' Hilsden declared: "I think I'm with you there".

As stated above, Gary Burge's theology of 'Messianic Fulfilment' is nothing more than Replacement Theology dressed in new garments. I had a brief opportunity to speak with Pastor Hilsden afterwards, and questioned his public affirmation of Burge, respectfully suggesting that he had not understood Burge's theology of Israel, which, to reiterate, has no place for Israel's *national* restoration.

Evan Thomas

Title of Paper: The Day I Choose



“It has been a very Messiah/Christ-centred conference. I go away so built up in my faith and so enormously challenged.”

Evan Thomas is the Pastoral Elder at Beit-Asaph Messianic Congregation in Israel and is a member of the Board of Musalaha, an organisation which “seeks to promote reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians”. The founder and director of Musalaha is Salim Munayer (pictured behind Thomas), who shared the platform with him. Thomas’ naïve comments about how “Messiah-centred” he felt the conference had been, were made in an interview with Stephen Sizer, which Sizer has posted on his website.

Richard Harvey

Title of Paper: Reconciliation from a Messianic Jewish Perspective



“I’m here to listen, to learn, to make new friends.”
“I’m here to ask you to help me make the journey.”
“We need to see Jesus within his Palestinian context as well.”

Richard Harvey is the Academic Dean and Tutor in Hebrew Bible and Jewish Studies at All Nations Christian College in Hertfordshire, UK. He has served as UK Director of Jews for Jesus and as President of the International Messianic Jewish Alliance, and is currently Vice-President of the British Messianic Jewish Alliance. He is also a member of the Lausanne Consultation on Jewish Evangelism.

Stressing that he was not attending the conference on behalf of any group, Richard Harvey began by expressing gratitude to Chris Wright for his earlier presentation, and commended him for his continued leadership within the Lausanne Movement. He also said how “overwhelmed” he had been by the welcome he had received at the conference.

In what was largely a philosophical and sociological presentation, Harvey drew upon the writings of the Trappist monk and mystic, Thomas Merton, and concluded by asking what his “heroes” – Karl Barth, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Martin Buber, and Moses Ben-Maimon (‘Maimonides’) – would be saying if they were at the Bethlehem checkpoint. His own reason for being at the conference was “to listen and to learn and to make new friends,” and “to ask *you* to help *me* to make the journey to reconciliation”. He continued, “I’m looking for my reconciliation partners within the Church,” identifying two of those partners as ‘Christian anti-Zionists’ and ‘anti-Christian Zionists.’ Suddenly turning his attention to two of the anti-Israel speakers, he made what can at best be construed as an astonishingly naïve declaration:

✚ “And then I’m going to – please forgive me Stephen Sizer if you’re here – I need reconciliation, and within the Church as the Body of Christ we need reconciliation, between what I would label ‘Christian anti-Zionists’ – actually Ben White, if you’re here, and he’s a good friend as well, I’m labelling you just for the moment Christian anti-Zionist ... Stephen Sizer, if you’re here, and I count you a friend as well ... ‘anti-Christian Zionist’ ... And then the ‘Christian Zionists,’ we even need to love Christian Zionists, do you know that?”



In the light of their proven pro-Palestinian track record, Richard Harvey’s acknowledgement of Ben White and Stephen Sizer as his “friends” was troubling to say the least. Not surprisingly, however, he received a standing ovation, at which point he broke down in tears and was physically embraced by several of the conference organisers. For all his sterling work within the Messianic community, it was sad to witness what had all the appearance of being a capitulation.

In a subsequent panel discussion led by Stephen Sizer headlined, ‘Where do we go from here?’, Harvey stated his personal commitment to continue “the wonderful and beautiful conversation” he had begun with his ‘Palestinian’ brethren. In his closing address, Jack Sara, Vice-President of Bethlehem Bible College, drew particular attention to Richard Harvey, commending him for his presentation.

Student Solidarity

One notable feature of the conference was the presence of a sizeable student delegation from Wheaton College, Illinois (where Gary Burge is based), and Eastern University, Pennsylvania (where Tony Campolo is based). Many students expressed their solidarity with the 'Palestinian' cause by wearing the black and white headdress known as the *keffiyeh*. It was sad to see so many young people being caught up in the 'spirit' of this conference, a 'spirit' which was exemplified in the highly politicized words of **Len Rogers** (left), who declared:

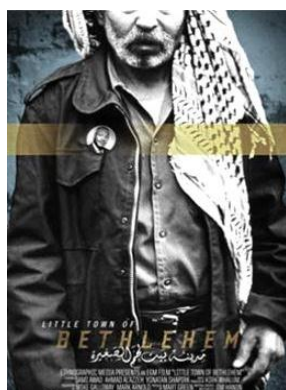


"I'm an American, but in my heart I'm a child of the Arab."

Rogers, the Executive Director of Evangelicals for Middle East Understanding (EMEU), is credited with having introduced the Christian relief organisation, 'World Vision,' to the Middle East. He was given recognition by Bishara Awad during the conference.

Checkpoint Propaganda

Along with short films produced by Porter Speakman Jr., two documentaries were also screened during the conference:













1. **With God on Our Side**
2. **Little Town of Bethlehem**

In 'Prophets Who Prophecy Lies In My Name,' I reported on the screening of *With God On Our Side* by Speakman Jr. and Stephen Sizer (left) at an event hosted by Irish republican party Sinn Fein in Belfast in November 2010.

✚ A recorded interview with Revd Samih Mouris (right) was also shown during the conference. Introduced as "the most influential Evangelical in the Arab world," Mouris is the senior pastor of Kasr El Dobra Church in Cairo, the largest Christian Arab church in the Middle East. After greeting delegates, he spoke of his belief that the 'Arab spring' was a good thing, and condemned Christian Zionism.

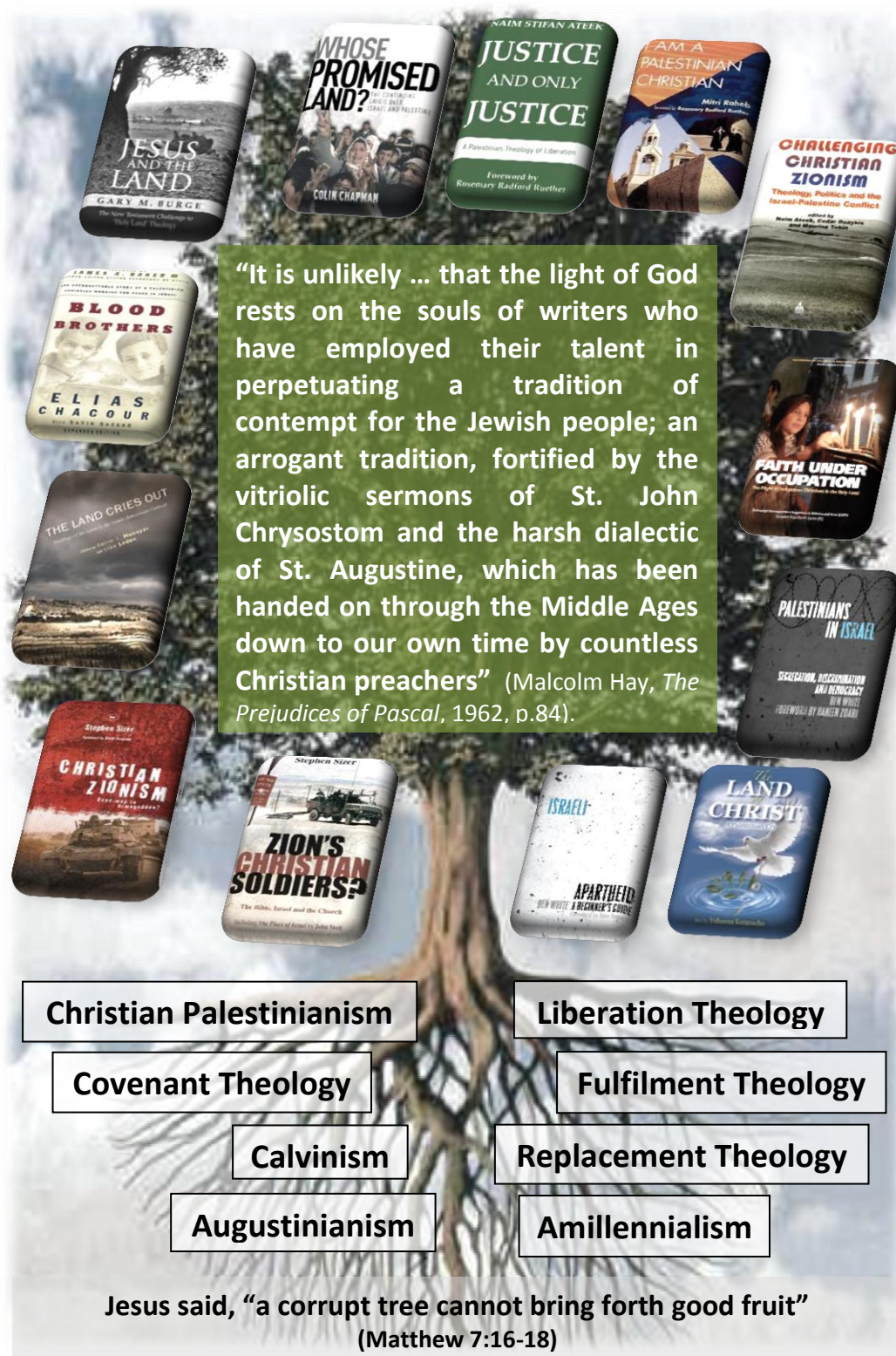


Solidarity with the ‘Palestinian’ cause was further nurtured during the conference through the following optional workshops and “on-site” visits:

WORKSHOPS	TOURS
<p>Alex Awad <i>ABC of Palestinian Israeli Conflict</i>  for “those who have no previous knowledge or experience”</p>	<p>Tent of Nations – Daoud Nassar  visit to the home of the Nassars, to hear their story of resistance to Israeli settlement policy</p>
<p>Imad Shehadeh <i>Global Implications of the Middle East Conflict</i>  “harmonizing the implications of the Abrahamic Covenant and the Mosaic Covenant” to the present</p>	<p>ICAHD (Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions)  tour of East Jerusalem to “witness the effect that the Wall, settlements and home demolitions have had”</p>
<p>Stephen Sizer <i>Seven Biblical Answers to Popular Zionist Assumptions</i>  “Want to know how to refute Christian Zionism simply and clearly from the Bible? This seminar will show you how.”</p>	<p>Hebron  trip to the old city, including meetings with the Hebron Rehabilitation Committee and the Christian Peacemakers team, and a visit to the Ibrahimi Mosque</p>
<p>Paul Alexander <i>Jesus’ Third Way: Neither Passive Nor Violent</i>  “the transformative power and hope of nonviolent direct action”</p>	<p>Beit Jala, Walaja, Refugee Camps and the Wall  tour of Bethlehem area to hear stories of non-violent resistance</p>
<p>Ben White & Daoud Kuttab <i>Media: Which Story Do They Tell?</i>  “debunking the myths about Palestinians, Palestinian Christians, and the conflict”</p>	<p>Holy Sites Visit to the Old City of Jerusalem</p> <p>I opted for this tour. Our guide, who was also one of the organisers, drew attention to the Bethlehem checkpoint, condemning Israel for “herding” ‘Palestinians’ like animals into “cages”. This thought came to mind: but they are not herded onto cattle trucks, transported to camps, gassed in chambers, and thrown into ovens!</p> <p>There is absolutely no moral equivalence between what Palestinians have endured, and what happened to the Jewish people in Nazi Europe.</p>
<p>Yohanna Katanacho, Father Jamal Khader, Gary Burge <i>The Palestinian Kairos Document/Kairos USA</i>  exploring the Document released in December 2009 by ‘Palestinian’ theologians and activists, and endorsed by the leaders of ‘Palestinian’ churches</p>	

A Long Theological Tap Root

Much was left unsaid, or toned down, during the 'Checkpoint' Conference because of the 'reconciliation' agenda being pursued. However, the anti-Israel message rings loud and clear in the books, articles, websites, blogs, Facebook pages, letters, petitions, sermons and manifestos of many of the conference speakers:



Evangelical Graffiti

During my time in Bethlehem, I visited the walled section of Israel's security barrier and saw some of the anti-Israel graffiti that had been daubed across it. Far more disturbing, however, is the amount of *Evangelical* graffiti which appears in the writings of many of the 'Christ at the Checkpoint' speakers. The following is merely a sample of *their* highly provocative graffiti:



From White House to Fun House

The following speakers are listed here not because of any overtly controversial statements they made about Israel, but because of their influence within the Evangelical world – as theologians, pastors, authors and, in one case, as a spiritual advisor to the U.S. President. What they will undoubtedly take back from the conference, to their considerably large constituencies, is a deepening solidarity with the pro-Palestinian, anti-Israel movement.

Joel Hunter

Title of Paper: A Western Reading of Scripture

- ✚ Senior Pastor of a 15,000 mega-church in Orlando, Florida
- ✚ Prayed with Barack Obama on the day of his inauguration (Hunter seated left). He remains one of Obama's spiritual advisors. In 2009 Hunter was appointed to Obama's Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighbourhood Partnerships



Chris Wright

Title of Paper: Pray for the Peace of ... Babylon?!

- ✚ International Ministries Director of Langham Partnership International, succeeding the late Evangelical theologian John Stott (left of picture with Wright). Stott uncritically endorsed Stephen Sizer's writings
- ✚ Former Principal of All Nations Christian College in Hertfordshire, England
- ✚ Chairman of the Lausanne Theology Working Group which issued the following statement before the 3rd Lausanne Congress in Capetown in 2010:

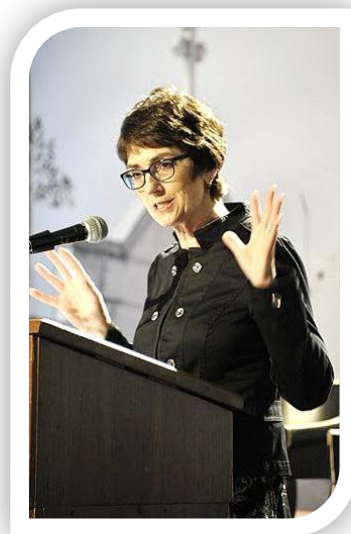


"... no single ethnic identity can claim to be 'God's chosen people.' God's election of Old Testament Israel was for the sake of the eventual creation of this multi-national community of God's people ... We strongly affirm, therefore, that ... *no single ethnic group holds privileged place in God's economy of salvation or God's eschatological purpose*. Thus, we strongly believe that the separate and privileged place given to the modern Israeli state, in certain forms of dispensationalism or Christian Zionism, should be challenged".

Lynne Hybels

Title of Paper: Daughters of Abraham

- ✚ Wife of Bill Hybels, founding pastor of Willow Creek Community Church in South Barrington, Illinois, which has been cited as the most influential church in America
- ✚ Spoke mainly about 'Palestinian' women whose stories have inspired her, describing women as "the greatest untapped resource in the world." Described 'Palestinian' politician Hanan Ashrawi as inspirational, quoted Mother Teresa, and concluded with a Chinese proverb: "When sleeping women awake, mountains move."



John Ortberg

Morning Bible Studies

- ✚ Senior Pastor of the 4000-member Menlo Park Presbyterian Church in California
- ✚ Best-selling author
- ✚ Graduate of Wheaton College, Illinois, and of Fuller Theological Seminary, California
- ✚ Although Ortberg said very little about the theological issues being discussed during the conference, he did



on one occasion hail the British supercessionist academic, N.T. Wright, as "a great writer" [NOTE: Munther Isaac, Stephen Sizer, and Gary Burge have all expressed their debt to Wright who, in his book, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (2001), writes: "The promises to Jerusalem, to Zion, are now transferred to Jesus and his people."]

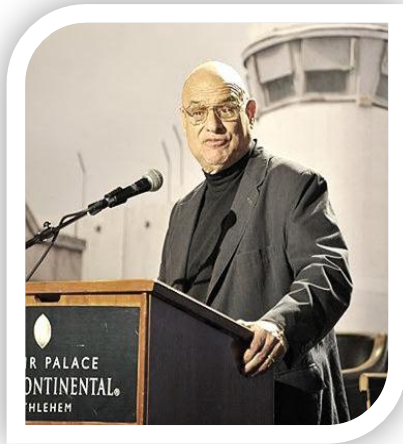
- ✚ John Ortberg 'tweeted' the following statement on his twitter page:

"Unforgettable trip to 'Christ at the Checkpoint' in Bethlehem."

He expressed how he had been particularly inspired by Gary Burge's presentation.

Tony Campolo – In The Fun House

Title of Paper: Using the Red Letters of the Bible as Guides to Peace and Reconciliation

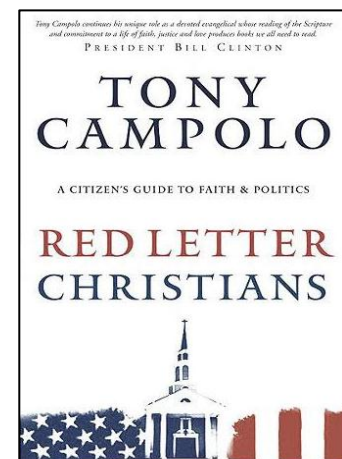


- ✚ Ordained Baptist minister; author
- ✚ Professor Emeritus of Sociology at Eastern University in St. David's, Pennsylvania
- ✚ Spiritual advisor to President Bill Clinton during the Monica Lewinsky scandal
- ✚ Subject of an informal 'heresy' trial in 1985 based on his statement that Jesus is "actually present" in everyone. (He made similar statements in his address.)

Tony Campolo was introduced by Manfred Kohl as "a real witness to the cause of Christ at the Checkpoint".

Campolo began by describing himself as "a red-letter Christian" [based on the red letters of Jesus' words in some Bible translations], a term he prefers to 'Evangelical.' He and some of his 'red-letter' colleagues acquired this new name "from a secular Jewish country-and-western disc jockey in Nashville, Tennessee".

Despite referring to Israel as "a little nation that has survived primarily because of the wealth and the war materials supplied by the U.S. government," his address was controversial not for any overtly anti-Israel or anti-Zionist statement he made, but because of the crudeness of his language, his unwholesome 'biblical' humour, and the way he flaunted a kind of 'spirituality' which finds no basis in Scripture (his unorthodox testimony of salvation is recorded in his 2006 book, *Letters to a Young Evangelical*). The conference hall was frequently filled with laughter, and he received a standing ovation at the end.



The 'spirituality' which Tony Campolo advocates, and which he promoted during his address, has come to characterise the latter-day apostasy known as the 'Emerging Church'. His 2004 book, *Speaking My Mind: The Radical Evangelical Prophet Tackles the Tough Issues Christians are Afraid to Face*, has a back-cover endorsement from Brian McLaren, one of the recognised leaders of the 'Emerging Church' movement and an avowed anti-Christian Zionist.

Tony Campolo made the following statements in his address (emphasis mine):

“Salvation comes by having a mystical encounter with the resurrected Jesus”

“I wanted to be filled with the Spirit. Strangely it was a Roman Catholic that helped me along the way ... He introduced me to the writings of St. Ignatius [founder of the Jesuits], and I began to learn other ways of praying”

“I do understand a kind of praying where you say nothing and you hear nothing but in quietness and stillness you centre down on Christ, and you wait patiently for the Spirit to flow in and to envelope you and penetrate you and saturate you with his, or her, presence”

“My Catholic friend taught me other ways of praying. One of the ways I pray these days is ... to be absolutely still, to centre down on Jesus”

“I have to create what the Celtic Christians called ‘the thin place’”

“I see the sacredness in every human being, and if there is a sacred presence there, then there is something of God in every person waiting to be encountered ... I think the Spirit equips us to enter into the sacredness of the other.”

“the God you want to love comes to you sacramentally through the poor and the oppressed. That’s an interesting phrase, it comes from the Franciscans.”

You need to “look into your enemy’s eyes and feel Jesus staring back at you”

It was notable throughout the conference how speakers named particular historical and present-day figures from whom they had derived inspiration. Tony Campolo referred to the Celtic Christians, the Franciscans, Ignatius of Loyola, an anonymous Roman Catholic friend, Erich Fromm (a disciple of Sigmund Freud), and Mother Teresa. The following page presents a somewhat disturbing gallery of politicians, philosophers, pacifists, and theologians who, on account of their endorsement by ‘Checkpoint’ speakers, are in some way spiritually ‘feeding into’ this movement:



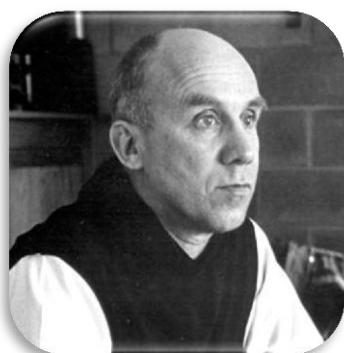
Ignatius of Loyola
(16th century founder
of the Jesuits)



Mother Teresa
(Roman Catholic nun)



Ghandi
(Hindu pacifist)



Thomas Merton
(Trappist monk)

GALLERY of INSPIRATION

“For the time will come
when they will not suffer
wholesome doctrine: but
after their own lusts shall
they (whose ears itch) get
them a heap of teachers and
shall turn their ears from
the truth”

(2 Timothy 4:3-4, William
Tyndale's New Testament 1526)



Martin Buber
(Jewish philosopher)



Karl Barth
(Swiss theologian)



Maimonides
(12th century Jewish sage)



Desmond Tutu
(South African archbishop)



Martin Luther King Jr.
(Civil Rights leader)



Hanan Ashrawi
(‘Palestinian’ politician)

Global Affirmation of the Conference

Sang Bok David Kim

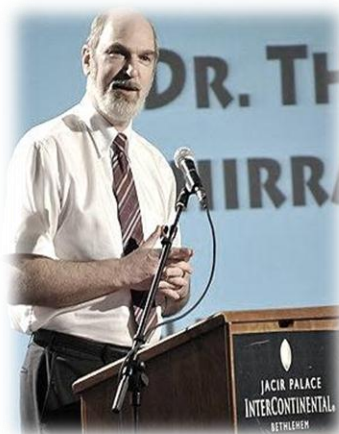
- ✚ Chairman of the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA), which represents approximately 600 million professing Christians
- ✚ Likened the 'plight of the Palestinians' to what happened in Korea under Japanese and Communist rule



"We feel the pain for you."

Thomas Schirrmacher

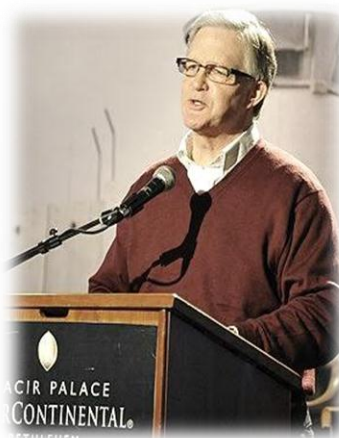
- ✚ Executive Chair of the Theological Commission of the World Evangelical Alliance



The WEA is "willing to do everything," including co-operate with the Palestinian Authority

Doug Birdsall

- ✚ Executive Chairman of the Lausanne Movement
- ✚ Organised the 3rd Lausanne Congress in Cape Town in 2010, which denounced Christian Zionism / Dispensationalism



God has brought together in Bethlehem "the best minds of the Church"

Revising History, Reinterpreting Prophecy

In the wake of Israel's establishment as a modern state in 1948, the myth of a 'Palestinian people' was born. When Jewish forces retook East Jerusalem in 1967, it became even more politically expedient for the 'Palestinian' authorities to promote this myth; they did so by revising history.

In AD135, following Bar Kokhba's defeat, Judaea was renamed 'Syria Palaestina' by Roman Emperor Hadrian, Palaestina being a Latinised corruption of the Greek name 'Philistia,' the land of the Philistines. Hadrian's goal was to sever all Jewish connection with the Land. Thereafter, until 1948, the Jewish homeland was referred to as 'Palestine.' It is important to note that in 1908 the World Zionist Organisation established a *Palestine* office in Jaffa; during WWII the British Army had a *Palestine* Brigade comprised solely of *Jewish* volunteers; the *Palestine* Symphony Orchestra was a *Jewish* orchestra; the *Palestine Post*, today the *Jerusalem Post*, was a *Jewish* newspaper; and postage stamps were issued bearing the inscription 'Palestine-El', where El represented *Eretz Israel* (the Land of Israel).

"The web of lies and myths that the Arab propaganda machine has created plays an important role in the unrelenting quest to destroy the State of Israel. What a shame that the world has accepted most of it!"

('Arabian Fables (1): How the Arabs soften up world opinion with fanciful myths,' FLAME, 2002)

The 'Palestinian' myth has become so deeply embedded in the Arab consciousness that Arab believers who spoke of their 'Palestinian' identity during the conference not only paraded this historical revisionism from the platform, but also overlaid upon it a mixture of traditional Replacement Theology and modern 'Palestinian' Liberationism. Listen to the way in which Jack Sara, Vice-President of Bethlehem Bible College, revised Ezekiel 37 in his closing address:

✚ "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, Qalqilya and 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?' Then He said to me, 'Prophesy to these bones, and say to them, "Dry bones, hear the word of the Lord"' ... You see, the Palestinian people were, and a lot are still like this valley of dry bones that is in need of the Church to come and prophesy life on them, and I think through the Christ at the Checkpoint conference there was a lot of prophesying life over the Palestinian people. Will you agree with me?" [applause]

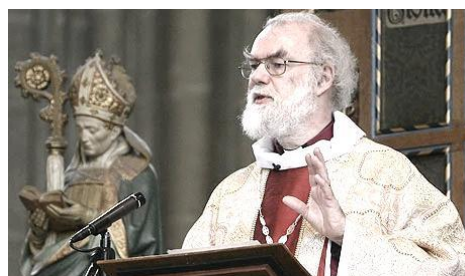


Playing the Moral Equivalence Card

One of the major playing cards in the anti-Israel pack is the moral equivalence card, which equates the suffering of 'Palestinian' Arabs with that of the Jewish people. Several 'Christ at the Checkpoint' speakers made reference to the Holocaust, and a few mentioned their visits to Auschwitz, which was commendable. However, some of the speakers have insisted that for 'Palestinians' to truly engage with Auschwitz, the Jews must *in the same manner* engage with 'Palestinian' suffering under the so-called 'occupation'. To draw such a comparison is unacceptable.

Recent examples of how the moral equivalence card is being played against Israel include the Easter sermon preached by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Rowan Williams, on 8th April 2012, in which he made the following statement:

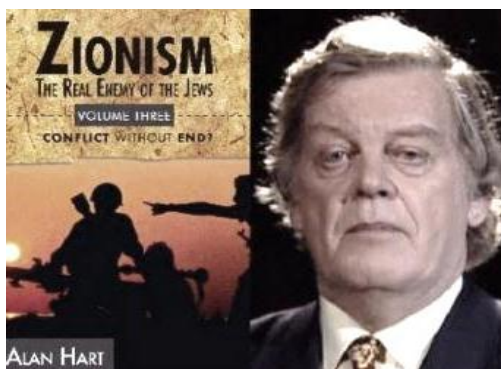
✚ “A visit to Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Museum in Jerusalem, will convince you why the state of Israel exists and must go on existing. A visit to any border checkpoint will convince you that the daily harassment and humiliation of Palestinians of all ages and backgrounds cannot be a justifiable or even sustainable price to pay for security. Listening to a rabbi talking about what it is like to witness the gathering up of body parts after a terrorist attack is something that can't be forgotten; neither is listening to a Palestinian whose parent or child has been killed in front of their eyes in a mortar bombing.”



In June 2011, Rowan Williams came under surprising fire from Revd Naim Ateek, the founder and director of Sabeel. In a letter to the Archbishop (which Stephen Sizer duly posted on his blog), Ateek expressed disappointment on behalf of all 'Palestinian' Christians over a BBC interview which the Archbishop had given about the dwindling presence of Arab Christians in the

Middle East. He wrote the following:

✚ “you singled out the extremist Islamists as a threat to Christian presence, but neglected to mention two other extremist groups, namely, Jewish extremists represented by the religious and racist settlers on the West Bank ... and Christian extremists represented by the Western Christian Zionists that support Israel blindly and unconditionally. With candour the last two groups of extremists, i.e. Jewish and Western Christian Zionists are *a greater threat* to us than the extremist Islamists.” (emphasis mine)



In a 2009 interview which Stephen Sizer posted on his website, and which was broadcast on Iran's television network, Press TV, the moral equivalence card was played to full effect. The interviewer on that occasion was Alan Hart (left), a former correspondent for Independent Television News (ITN) and presenter for the BBC's Panorama programme.

(I found a link to this interview on the Rosh Pina Project website)

During the interview, Hart expressed his view that the State of Israel was “created mainly by Zionist terrorism and ethnic cleansing”. He then asked Stephen Sizer the following question: “Have we ever had a senior, mainstream Christian church leader using the phrase ‘ethnic cleansing’?” To which Sizer replied: “No, I’m afraid not, yet.” Sizer himself has consistently exploited this phrase to condemn Israel.

The interview targeted Zionism in general and Christian Zionism in particular. At one point Sizer was asked: “Are they [Christian Zionists] merely in error in their interpretation of the Bible, or are they actually deluded to the point of clinical madness.” Sizer replied: “Probably both.”

When the subject of the Holocaust was briefly raised, Sizer took the opportunity to play the moral equivalence card by making this statement:

✚ “the Holocaust has been perpetuated over the last forty or fifty years; it’s the Palestinians who are going through *their* Nakba [‘catastrophe’] now, and one wrong doesn’t right another wrong”.



Alan Hart went even further than Sizer in a January 2009 article he wrote and posted on his own website. In his article, which appeared on the website of Press TV, he made the following chilling statement:

✚ “It’s time to give Israel’s hardcore Zionists their real name. They are the New Nazis. Europeans and Americans could have stopped the original Nazis and prevented the extermination of six million Jews. If Europeans and Americans don’t stop the New Nazis, it’s likely that their end game will be the extermination of millions of Palestinians.”

The Manifesto

In the 'Press Release' issued by the organising committee on the final day of the conference (March 9th), 'Christ at the Checkpoint' 2012 was described as "a major breakthrough in the evangelical world" which "exceeded all expectations". The following 12-point 'Manifesto' was drawn up by the organisers and released to delegates at the close of the conference:

1. The Kingdom of God has come. Evangelicals must reclaim the prophetic role in bringing peace, justice and reconciliation in Palestine and Israel.
2. Reconciliation recognizes God's image in one another.
3. Racial ethnicity alone does not guarantee the benefits of the Abrahamic Covenant.
4. The Church in the land of the Holy One, has born witness to Christ since the days of Pentecost. It must be empowered to continue to be light and salt in the region, if there is to be hope in the midst of conflict.
5. Any exclusive claim to land of the Bible in the name of God is not in line with the teaching of Scripture.
6. All forms of violence must be refuted unequivocally.
7. Palestinian Christians must not lose the capacity to self-criticism if they wish to remain prophetic.
8. There are real injustices taking place in the Palestinian territories and the suffering of the Palestinian people can no longer be ignored. Any solution must respect the equity and rights of Israel and Palestinian communities.
9. For Palestinian Christians, the occupation is the core issue of the conflict.
10. Any challenge of the injustices taking place in the Holy Land must be done in Christian love. Criticism of Israel and the occupation cannot be confused with anti-Semitism and the delegitimization of the State of Israel.
11. Respectful dialogue between Palestinian and Messianic believers must continue. Though we may disagree on secondary matters of theology, the Gospel of Jesus and his ethical teaching take precedence.
12. Christians must understand the global context for the rise of extremist Islam. We challenge stereotyping of all faith forms that betray God's commandment to love our neighbours and enemies.

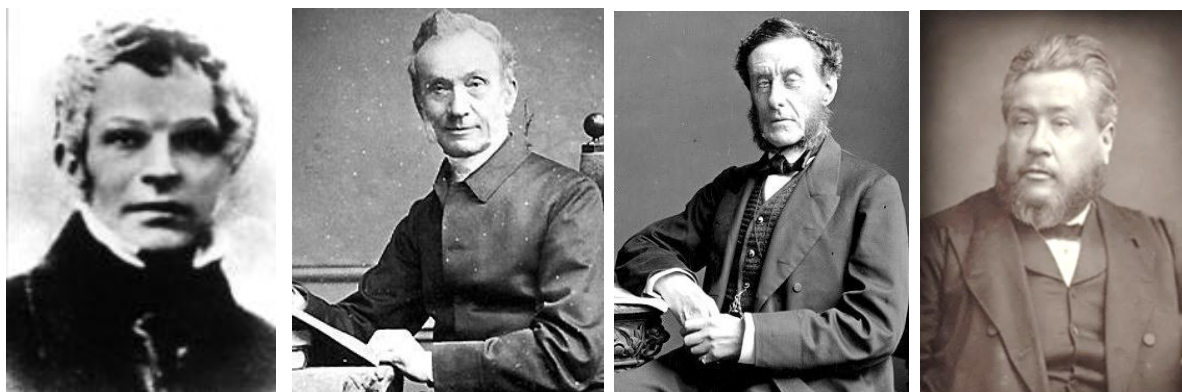


Members of the Organising Committee

Weighing the Evidence

Christians who have not fallen foul of the allegorical, predominantly amillennial, and fundamentally supercessionist approach to biblical interpretation which underpinned the 'Christ at the Checkpoint' Conference, understand that there can only be one explanation for the establishment of the modern State of Israel in 1948, and that is the faithfulness and integrity of a covenant-keeping God who does not change!

Throughout the history of the Church the Lord has called faithful witnesses to the stand to speak up on behalf of the Jewish people. The following are just a few who faithfully represented the Lord and His Word concerning Israel's promised restoration. Sadly their evidence has been rendered inadmissible by 'Christ at the Checkpoint' speakers:



"I wish never to learn the art of tearing God's meaning out of His own words ... Let this be settled ... that if there be meaning in words, Israel is yet to be restored." (Charles Spurgeon)



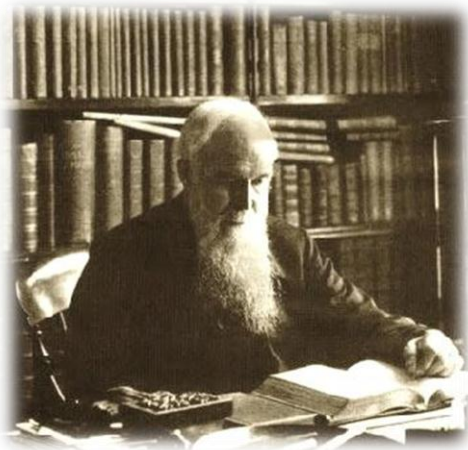
Top (left to right): John Nelson Darby, George Müller, Lord Shaftesbury, Charles Spurgeon
Bottom (left to right): J.C. Ryle, E.H. Bickersteth, F.B. Meyer, G. Campbell Morgan



Bishop Edward Henry Bickersteth (1825-1906)

‘Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again
the kingdom to Israel?’ (Acts 1:6)

“The emphasis is on the words *at this time*. They had no manner of doubt, nor ought we to have, that the kingdom will one day be restored to Israel ... But they knew not, nor were they designed to know, how long an interval the times of the Gentiles should interpose, during which Jerusalem should be trodden down ... Haply, even apostolic faith might have quailed at the prospect of eighteen hundred years of waiting and of conflict. Our Lord’s reply (ver.7), does not countenance the rash charge of carnal expectations, which has been too often levelled against the apostles for their question. He restrains, indeed, their eager gaze into futurity: ‘It is not for you to know the times or the seasons ... which the Father hath put in his own power’ ... But his answer implies that when the fullness of the time was come, national supremacy should be again restored to Israel.” (*The Holy Bible, With a Devotional and Practical Commentary by the Rev. R. Jamieson and the Rev. E.H. Bickersteth* [London: 1861-65]).



Bishop John Charles Ryle (1816-1900)

‘And so all Israel shall be saved’ (Romans 11:26)

“God has many witnesses to the truth of the Bible, if men would only examine them and listen to their evidence. But you may depend on it there is no witness so unanswerable as one who always keeps standing up, and living, and moving before the eyes of mankind. That witness is the Jew ... The inspired volume which you have in your hands supplies a full and complete explanation. Search it with an honest determination to put a literal meaning on its prophetic portions, and to reject traditional interpretation, and the difficulty will vanish away ... Cultivate the habit of reading prophecy with a single eye to the literal meaning of its proper names. Cast aside the traditional idea that Jacob, and Israel, and Judah, and Jerusalem, and Zion must always mean the Gentile Church, and that predictions about the second Advent are to be taken spiritually, and first Advent predictions literally. Be just, and honest, and fair. If you expect the Jews to take the 53rd of Isaiah literally, be sure you take the 54th and 60th and 62nd literally also.”

(J.C. Ryle, ‘And So All Israel Shall Be Saved,’ in *Are You Ready for the End of Time?* [Fearn: 2001], pp. 149-157.)

The Verdict

“Have you not observed that these people are saying, ‘The Lord has rejected the two clans that He chose’? Thus they have despised my people so that they are no longer a nation in their sight” (Jeremiah 33:24).



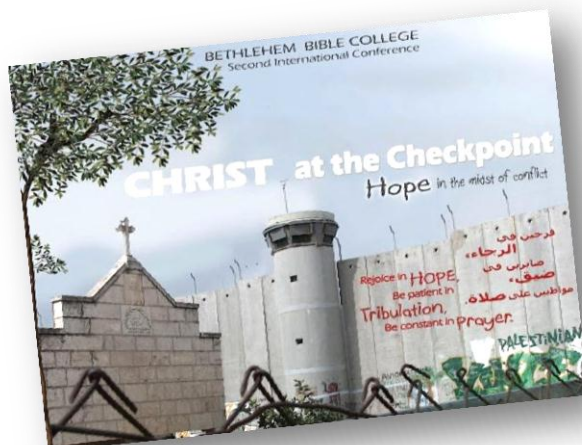
Whose ‘Checkpoint’ did people pass through in Bethlehem?

I believe that the fundamental issue is this: by revising Middle Eastern history and spiritualising God’s prophetic Word, ‘Christ at the Checkpoint’ speakers are guilty of propagating a theological or spiritual form of anti-Semitism which is damaging the Church, demonizing Israel, and dishonouring the integrity and Name of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Conference organisers, along with the majority of speakers and delegates, believed that Christ was at the *Israeli* checkpoint sanctioning their Evangelical, pro-Palestinian solidarity gathering. On the contrary, it is our belief that the Lord Jesus Christ established *His* checkpoint in Bethlehem in order to inspect the hearts and minds of all who confess His name, but condemn His people Israel.

During the preparation of this document my pastor was led to Amos 7:7, a scripture which we believe applies directly to the flawed foundations upon which the crooked theological walls of the Bethlehem conference stand:

“and behold, the Lord stood upon a wall made by a plumb line, with a plumb line in His hand” (Amos 7:7, KJV).



Contact Details

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Also available free of charge, together with a variety of other resources, are the 2004 'Sabeel Report,' the 2011 booklet 'Prophets Who Prophesy Lies In My Name,' and DVDs on 'Christian Palestinianism.'

The book, *For Zion's Sake: Christian Zionism and the Role of John Nelson Darby* (Paternoster: 2007), is available at the cost price of £10.



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