

**An alternate Christian viewpoint to the Canadian Mennonite
University-hosted presentation:**

A Palestinian Theology of Liberation: The Bible, Justice, and the Palestine-Israel Conflict

April 23, 2018

Seventy years ago Israel was re-born after 2000 years of exile. Many see this miracle of Israel's rebirth as fulfillment of Biblical prophecy and as another modern proof that God exists. I agree.

Beware Southern Manitoba Christians. Winnipeg is about to experience a public presentation titled, *A Palestinian Theology of Liberation: The Bible, Justice, and the Palestine-Israel Conflict*. Rev. Dr. Naim Ateek, a Palestinian Christian Anglican priest, KAIROS affiliate and a BDS activist is on a book tour selling his brand of pro-Palestinianism.

Ateek is the founder of the Palestinian Liberation Theology Movement and co-founder of the Jerusalem based NGO, Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center. The reality is that he passionately promotes anti-Israel, anti-Zionist, anti-Semitic bigotry, in the name of Biblical Christianity and effectively re-writes who Jesus is to fit his distorted narrative. Sadly, some Christians who have minimal Biblical understanding buy into Ateek's re-interpretation of the Scriptures and misrepresentation of the reality of the Israel-Palestinian situation.

One of the most disturbing aspects of Ateek's tour is who is promoting it. The Canadian Mennonite University (CMU), the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), and other like-minded organizations are actively leading the way in this attack. For all the good that these organizations do, this support of Sabeel and of such anti-Semitic viewpoints is inexcusable and impossible to reconcile.

CMU, MCC, and other supporting organizations would do well to remember the roots into which followers of Jesus were grafted and into whose family we were adopted. They ought to respect and support the people whose ancestors gave us the Bible, our faith, our Savior. They ought to rejoice in the modern fulfillment of Biblical prophecy we see before our eyes in Israel's re-birth and being a blessing to the world.

On the website of Montreal-based Canadian Friends of Sabeel they state:

WE STAND FOR TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

The Canadian Friends of Sabeel project is committed to standing in solidarity with Palestinians, and raising awareness in Canada of the struggle of Palestinian Christians, while joining all people in Palestine and Israel striving for peace with justice toward reconciliation.

Under the title, *The Crisis*, they state:

Israel's systemic oppression of Palestinians is imposing an apartheid regime on the Palestinian people. Palestinians are brutally deprived of basic human rights and dignity in order to subjugate them, remove them and erase their claim to the land. New laws opposing non-violent resistance have been enacted to stop the effort towards peace. Despite all the promises, endless summits and UN resolutions, Palestinians are still yearning for their freedom and independence, justice and equality.

What can be said of such distorted claims? How do we interpret their definition of truth, peace, justice, reconciliation, freedom, equality? Why do CMU, MCC, Sabeel and their supporters conclude that the existence and defensive and security actions of Israel, so-called by some the 'evil Zionist entity', are the cause of Palestinian Arab suffering? Why do they condemn Israel while being virtually silent about the stated intent and regular efforts of apartheid, racist Islamist and terrorist regimes to slaughter Jews and eliminate Israel? Why do they refuse to identify the true cause of Palestinian Arab suffering – their own corrupt, violent, anti-Semitic leadership who value death instead of life, and are proud of it.

It seems rather ironic that we have partnered with local Jewish organizations to bring in guest speaker, Mosab Hassan Yousef (Son of Hamas) who brings a message from personal experience that directly opposes the bigoted claims of Sabeel and their supporters. And that, from a Palestinian from Ramallah who formerly hated Israel and Jews, and who had a dramatic change of heart.

It is not difficult to find Palestinian Arab Christians and other leaders who can debunk and dismantle the viewpoints and false accusations of Sabeel and their cohorts. CMU, MCC and the others are better than this and their leaders need to repent and practice true Biblical truth, peace, justice, and reconciliation. It's not too late to have a change of heart.

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