

## *In the Land of Christ*

# Christianity Is Dying

By Grace Halsell

In the Land of Christ, Christianity is dying. Since one can say the spirit lives within, does it matter that there be no Living Witnesses to Christianity — in the land where the faith of a billion adherents was born? How might the removal of all Christians affect the Muslims of the Holy Land? Will they become weaker or stronger, more secular minded or more militant? In short, does the dying of Christianity in the Land of Christ have political as well as religious significance for the world at large?

Today, only about 40,000 Christians remain. In 1948, between 60 and 70 percent of the Palestinian Christians were driven from their ancestral homes with the creation of a Jewish state. Since the 1967 illegal Israeli occupation of their lands, an additional 20,000 Christians have felt a necessity to leave their homeland. Formerly the population of Jerusalem, in Christian tradition the "mother of all churches," was half Christian. Now Christians in the Holy City are so few that "with a couple of jumbo jets you could move

Grace Halsell is author of "Journey to Jerusalem" and "Prophecy and Politics."



*Shepherds Field - Near Bethlehem*

AMEU Photo

them all out," said Jonathan Kuttub, a Jerusalem Christian, U.S.-educated attorney.

Under the British Mandate, Palestine officially was a Christian country, with Bethlehem having a population that was 90 percent Christian. Now the town that gave birth to Christ — and Christianity — has only about 10 percent Christian. And in what remains of Palestine, one finds only one town — Beit Sahour — with a Christian majority. It, too, is being threatened: planned Jewish settlements could change the demography, make it predominately Jewish. "The Israelis have targeted the Palestinian Christian community for extinction," Beit Sahour Christian leader Elias Rishmawi told me. "We are an endangered species."

Wanting Christians — and Christianity eliminated, some Zionist-dominated publishers and institutions already are writing them off the map: "I saw a widely-distributed Atlas, published in New York," Naim Ateek, a Palestinian Christian leader and canon of St. George's Cathedral, said. "It has maps and populations, and for the Holy Land it lists the number of Jews and the number of Muslims, but makes no mention whatsoever of Christians. And I'll give you another example: The Israelis held a conference at Hebrew University — it was on religions of the Holy Land. Topics dealt with Judaism and Islam. They made no mention of Christianity."

(Continued on page 3)

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## About This Issue

The Link strives to present feature articles that have not yet found their way into the mainstream media. This issue is one of them.

Hints of the story have appeared in some papers. Last December, the Mideast correspondent for The Miami Herald reported asking Jerusalem's Mayor Ehud Olmert about the absence of the Christmas spirit in his city. The mayor replied that his is a Jewish state, less than 3 percent Christian, and that Jerusalem behaves no differently "than parts of Miami Beach." It's just not in our sensibilities.

Meanwhile, Israel's confiscation of Muslim and Christian lands around Jerusalem and Bethlehem continues, most recently in the village of Al-Khader. Our office has received an Urgent Action Alert from the St. Ives Society, a Catholic Legal Advocacy Association, asking U.S. citizens to protest the use of U.S. dollars for these illegal confiscations. For the benefit of our readers we have reprinted the fax on page 7.

Grace Halsell has spent much of her professional life telling Americans about those who suffer under military occupation. Her most recent report appeared in our January-March 1994 Link article on Bosnian Muslims. This time she visits Palestinian Christians living under Israeli military occupation.

Unfortunately, we cannot show you any of the pictures Halsell took to accompany her story. At the airport in Tel Aviv, prior to her departure, she was interrogated by four security guards for over an hour. The authorities wanted to see her notes. She refused to surrender them. After going through all her belongings, one of the interrogators, as she handed back Halsell's camera, dropped it on the concrete floor. Whether this damaged the camera is not yet known. What is known is that the film was not damaged. That's because it was not in the camera. It had been confiscated.

The best way, of course, to see these Christian descendants of the first followers of Christ is to visit them in their homes and communities. And, as Halsell reports on page 10, this is what Bonnie Gehweiler arranges through her Volunteers in Mission Program. Participants spend one week helping out in a Christian community and a second week visiting the historic shrines. For Palestinians and pilgrims alike, it is a moving experience. (For A.M.E.U., it is also an honor to note that both Grace Halsell and Bonnie Gehweiler are members of our board of directors.)

We have structured this issue's Book Selection on page 13 - 15 to complement our feature story.

John F. Mahoney  
Executive Director

An American Christian woman, attending the conference, asked, "Why are you not including Christianity?" And an Israeli said, "The numbers of Christians here are insignificant. They no longer matter."

Palestine is known as the land of resurrection. It is Christ's message. Can Christianity in the land of his birth and ministry pass from a dying stage to experience a resurrection? Or has Zionism gained the victory? Do Christians in the West care? I put those questions to Alex Ewad, a Palestinian Baptist minister: "Jerusalem is an issue to 14 million Jewish people, it is an issue to a billion Muslim people — but not yet an issue for the billion Christians around the world. Unless this changes, our Holy Land will become a graveyard of Christianity."

## Why Christians Are Leaving

I made my first journey to Jerusalem in 1979, when I began research on families of the three great monotheistic religions that all sprang from a desert region, with a heartcenter in Jerusalem. Treading the cobble-stoned streets of the Old City, I often thought of my father, a deeply committed Christian, and how much he would have loved to have retraced the steps of Christ. Jesus was as real to him as his own family. And he could visualize the hills around Bethlehem and the manger where He was born and the streets of Nazareth where Christ had His ministry. My father was the most "Christian" man I knew. One day, alone in Jerusalem, thinking of my father, I silently asked: What does it mean — "Christian?" I knew what it meant for my father: a faith that gave him a cheerful heart and a mind cleansed of worry. But what did it mean to me? I had come to Jerusalem initially indoctrinated by

Zionism: the Jews had suffered a holocaust by German Nazis — and they deserved free lands. I did not know about Palestinians. Now around me I saw the Palestinians — Muslims and Christians — who had been forced from their homes, made refugees in their own land. Deprived of their lands, their homes, oppressed by a military regime, they were often hungry, cold and in pain. For me, the meaning of Christianity became clear: Christ would feel their pain. He would bear witness to the pain of all Palestinians.

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Invariably, on that first visit, when I asked a Palestinian: Are you Muslim or Christian, I got the same reply: "We are all Palestinians — struggling to rid ourselves of Zionist occupation." Before 1948, the older residents reminded me, "all of us living here were called Palestinians and we all carried Palestinian ID cards." One citizen of the Old City handed me an old coin, "Even our currency was Palestinian." After Zionists succeeded in moving vast numbers of European Jews into Palestine, the Zionists in 1948 gave birth to a "Jewish state," which by any standards, writes the Israeli scholar Israel Shahak, "must be considered a racist state." The new born state ceded virtually sovereign functions to the World Zionist Organization and affiliates that made non-Jews victims of

a discrimination which, if applied to Jews anywhere else, would be condemned as systematic, state-sponsored anti-Semitism.

The creation of a Jewish state on Palestinian soil meant "thousands of our people were uprooted," Bethlehem deputy mayor Hanna J. Nasser told me. "The war of 1948 forced more than 700,000 Palestinians — 50,000 of them Christians — to emigrate." Since 1948, the emigration of Palestinian Christians is over twice the rate for the overall Palestinian population. Why are so many Christians leaving? Are they "encouraged" to emigrate and if so by whom? Would getting rid of them remove a potentially "dangerous element" that might arouse sympathy from fellow Christians in the West? I learned there were at least four important reasons why Christians were leaving:

First, the Christians have contacts with the outside world. Beginning in the mid-19th century, teachers sent to Christian missionary schools in Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Nazareth provided overseas addresses — those of their own homes and churches — to those indigenous Christians who wished to emigrate. Christian forebears of Bethlehem mayor Elias Freij first traveled to Chile almost 100 years ago. Other Christian Bethlehemites as well as Christian Beit Jalans began emigrating to South America, while Christians from Jerusalem, Jaffa and Ramallah started a trek to the United States. Family members followed those who had gone earlier. Today more Christians from the West Bank town of Ramallah live in the United States than live in Ramallah. "Christian emigration, rather than an individual undertaking, has been a family pattern," noted Bethlehem University's Dr. Adnan Musallam. Thus a visitor to San Diego, Chicago, Detroit, San Francisco, Sydney, as well as Santiago and Bogota can find whole Palestinian communities residing in those cities.

Christian Palestinians spoke of a second reason for emigration: housing, or lack of it. I did not meet a Palestinian who had not experienced, personally or by one of his family members, the loss of a home. Once, on a drive around West Jerusalem, a Christian Palestinian, Ibrahim Mattar, showed me his family home — seized in the 1948 war. His story repeats, tens of thousands of times. Then there was the 1967 seizure of Arab lands including the West Bank. Israelis using military laws have for the past 28 years demolished Palestinian homes with impunity. Fawzi Kiswani, a hotel kitchen steward and father of nine children, watched as bulldozers and Israeli police arrived at his home in southeast Jerusalem. Two hours later, his house was a pile of stones. Kiswani was born where he lived, he had never moved from there. And the same was true with Cirres Nestas, whom I first met in 1979. In that year, I stayed awhile in the family home near Bethlehem. How long, I asked Nestas, had he and his forebears been Christian? "Oh," he replied, "about 2,000 years." In 1985 I returned for a visit. The house where I had stayed had been bulldozed. I saw nothing more than a rubble of stones. On a nearby site, I found Nestas rebuilding. What, I asked, happened to his home? "The Israelis said I did not have a permit to live — over there, so they demolished that house." Still, Nestas feels more fortunate than his Christian neighbors, whose land and homes were seized for a gigantic for-Jews-only settlement called Gilo. I drove through this settlement, accompanied by Jerusalem's Latin Patriarch liaison officer, Joseph Donnelly.

"All that land you see, for miles and miles, with its housing complexes — it's all confiscated land. The Israelis made this part of a string of settlements that wind their way around every dimension of Jerusalem. This was Beit Jala, it was mostly Christian. But the Palestinians who owned this land, they will never get their land back, they will never regain their property. Here the Israelis have built the biggest shopping



*Good Friday Procession. Young Christian Arabs bear heavy cross along Jerusalem's Via Dolorosa.*  
Arab Information Center

mall in the Middle East, the largest in the Jewish state. It is called the Canyon — it is adjacent to Teddy stadium, all built on lands confiscated from Palestinian families — to house tens of thousands of Jews coming here from Russia and Eastern Europe. None had roots in Palestine. And as you see, the units just go on and on — for miles." Donnelly added that when he showed American visitors around such billion-dollar settlements, "they are always surprised that they — the U.S. taxpayers — are paying for these illegal, vast housing units, all built on land taken by force from Palestinians."

Christians spoke of a third reason for emigration: they can't find jobs. Palestinian Christians generally live in urban areas. And about half of the West Bank Christians work in Public Services, that include such areas as education, health and tourism. "It means they are employees, and being an employee becomes precarious when no one under occupation has control over the economic situation — and everyone must abide by laws imposed by Israeli authorities," said Bethlehem University's Dr. Bernard Sabella, who has written extensively on Christian emigration. Since 1967, he pointed out, the Israelis have imposed over 1,300 military rules which restrict movement and turn ordinary tasks into obstacle courses. The laws restrict what Palestinians produce, while making them a captive market for Israeli goods. Fifty percent of Palestinian

men and 85 percent of the women are unemployed. The average annual Palestinian income is only \$1,000. "Those with secure jobs do not think of leaving," said Dr. Sabella.

Palestinians, who have the highest number of college graduates per capita of any Arabs, put a high premium on education and I heard a fourth reason for their emigration: they want a future for their children. "Since 1948, parents began saying: 'an educated mind is the one asset the Zionists can't take from us,'" said Dr. Hind Salman, whose Christian parents sent her to Cairo University, where she earned a degree in economics. She has taught economics at Bethlehem University since soon after the university was founded in 1973 — and is one of 200 women with doctorate degrees from that university. Today, she noted, the university's graduates have a record unemployment rate reaching 50 percent. Studies show Palestinians with a first university degree are those most likely to emigrate. Overall, the Palestinian Christian community, with its emphasis on education and its work experience, fits well the definition by migration experts of a migrant community: "A community with a high educational achievement and a relatively good standard of living but with no real prospects for economic security or advancement will most probably become a migrant community."

## “Jerusalem is Lost”

On my first journey to Jerusalem 16 years ago, I lived within the walls of the Old City, and traveled throughout what remains of Palestine — the territories of the West Bank, Gaza and Arab East Jerusalem, all illegally seized by Israel. I found Christians and Muslims struggling under occupation, but most seemed confident that justice would prevail, that they would gain a Palestine, that their flag would fly over their capital of Arab East Jerusalem. On my most recent visit in November 1994, I found Muslims and Christians totally disillusioned. Many Christians told me frankly: “Jerusalem is lost.”

While I was in Jerusalem, the Patriarchs, Heads of Churches and Custodian for the Holy Land warned that Israelis are violating the rights of free access to the Holy Places. “None can appropriate it in exclusivist ways,” a document signed by the heads of the leading denominations stated. They called for the guarantee of “special status” making Jerusalem an open city that “transcends local, regional or world political troubles.”

Additionally, Protestant leaders and Christian laity living in Jerusalem, in a letter to President Clinton, warned that Israelis are “deliberately changing the status of the city, discriminating against non-Jewish populations in the city, restricting access to it, to its institutions and holy places, and physically enforcing exclusivist control over Jerusalem in the interests of Jews only, to the detriment of others.” They told Clinton that if the West permitted Israeli military force “to dictate a solution favoring only one party, then we will also be responsible for the ensuing violence and endemic instability.”

The Israelis plan to “unify” Jewish West Jerusalem with Arab East Jerusalem. They plan to have a Jewish

capital of a Jewish state that will comprise some 25 percent of the West Bank. A July, 1994 Jerusalem Report magazine article said Israeli planners contemplate a Greater Jerusalem whose municipal boundaries — under Israeli sovereignty — would include such prominent Palestinian towns as Ramallah and Bethlehem. The plan, say Christian Palestinians, go beyond that.

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“The Israelis, because of their interest in tourism, are greedy toward Bethlehem — the Bethlehem area, that includes Beit Jala and our town of Beit Sahour,” said Dr. Majed Nassar, the U.S.-educated director of a Beit Sahour medical center. “They plan to add an additional 40,000 Jewish settlers in this area. If you add that to the number of settlers living in Gilo that borders Bethlehem and a new settlement penetrating into Beit Jala, you will have in three or four years something like 90,000 Israelis in this area — the area surrounding Bethlehem, which is to say the three towns which traditionally have been Christian — Bethlehem, Beit Jala and Beit Sahour. Here today you still have basically the bulk of the Christian community. And here the Israelis are creating a new demography, a new reality, a new geography. Already, the Israelis are considering all of this area as part of Israel. With Bethlehem still being a part of Palestine, the tourists to Bethlehem have to cross through Israeli roadblocks and Israeli soldiers. I don’t think Israel will be allowing tourists to cross borders to go from Jerusalem to

the Church of the Nativity. So that is why we perceive the building of the Jewish settlement here at Beit Sahour as an advance step toward the Judaization of all the Bethlehem area. I think many people are failing to recognize this. People are not shouting about the demise of Christianity. People are not even raising voices.”

All Palestinians with whom I talked said that in signing peace accords that mandated Israeli-P.L.O. negotiations on the final status of Jerusalem in 1996, Rabin pushed an accelerator button calling for such extensive confiscation of Palestinian lands and such extensive Jewish housing that by 1996 there would be nothing to discuss. The city holy to three faiths, and all the land surrounding it, would be under total control of the Israelis. In such an event, said one Palestinian, “one might need an Israeli ‘permit’ to enter the Holy Sepulcher or Al Aqsa mosque.”

The Israelis have confiscated sufficient land for a master plan calling for 17,000 new units of Jewish housing to be built within the next two years in and around Jerusalem. “Many are in construction, many are also completed,” an Israeli official boasted to a U.S. reporter. Eight thousand of the 17,000 units will be in East Jerusalem, all of these planned with a clear target: to ensure there will be “no vacuum between Israeli Jerusalem and Palestinian autonomy” and to establish “a clear-cut fact, that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel.”

Israelis also are expanding construction in the Jewish neighborhoods of Gilo, Ramot and Piscat Zeev, all on land confiscated from Palestinians. At Piscat Zeev, the Israelis are building 4,000 apartments, enough to house 12,000 to 16,000 people.

While confiscating Palestinian lands and giving permits for Jewish housing on these lands, the Israelis are denying Palestinians the right to build and to live in their own Holy City. Some 80,000 Palestinians own property in Arab Jerusalem and many would like

to build there but the Israeli military authorities deny them permits. "We own property in Jerusalem, but the Israelis refuse to give us a permit to build there," said Bethlehem University Professor Salman, whose husband owns a souvenir shop in the Old City. "I see a dark future. We have no land to do anything," said Palestinian geographer Khalil Tufakji. "The Israelis are creating facts on the ground so that tomorrow, when it comes to negotiations, these facts will speak for themselves." An American human rights activist, Jan Abu Shakrah, said, "The Israelis have used a systematic racism in the way they reject building permits for Palestinians and have approved them for Jews."

Beyond confiscation of lands and refusal of building permits to the native people, the Israelis have cordoned off the Holy City to all save their citizens. The Israelis erected huge cement road blocks manned by armed Israeli soldiers. They carefully scrutinize all vehicles that do not bear an Israeli license. Since most Christians live in and around Jerusalem — and have jobs there — the closure has meant a further exodus of Christians who can't get to work. As Dr. Sabella, an authority of Palestinian Christian emigration, explains: "More than twice as many Christians as Muslims work in academic, technical, managerial and clerical jobs. They have job skills and work experience that make them an integral part of the Jerusalem-Bethlehem-Ramallah area. Now they cannot move from one area to another. The Israelis effectively severed these communities — and their workers — from each other."

Doris Salah, who has headed the East Jerusalem YWCA for a couple of decades, told me the Y gave instructions to Palestinian women in computer training and sewing. Most of the instructors and students live on the outskirts of the city. "To get a permit to enter Jerusalem, one must go to an Israeli military office, often wait for several hours and then, reaching an Israeli official, can be told, 'Come

"I am my brother's keeper"



Society of St. Yves

Catholic Legal Resource Center for Human Rights

## URGENT ACTION ALERT JEWISH SETTLEMENT EXPANSION DESPITE PEACE !!!!

Local Palestinians from the el-Khader village in the Bethlehem area whose land has been expropriated for the purposes of expanding the illegal Jewish settlement of Ephrat in the Bethlehem area in occupied Palestine, were arrested for being in a "closed military area" this morning, Tuesday, 27th December, 1994.

Under international law, land expropriation from the native inhabitants of Palestine for the purposes of settling foreigners belonging to the occupying force's country, Israel, is strictly, and unequivocally forbidden.

This is annexation which is contrary to international law and the supposed "peace process" to which Israel, at least nominally, is a partner.

Despite the Israeli promises and assurances given to the American Administration not to expand the settlements in return for receiving loan guarantees up to 10 billion dollars, this promise has been repeatedly and continuously broken.

We ask you to contact the Israeli embassy to protest this violent behavior: 3514 International Drive NW, Washington DC 20008.

back tomorrow." All of our women students and instructors find this time-consuming and humiliating." A Christian minister in Jerusalem told me he asked a young Palestinian Christian in Beit Sabour to become his assistant. "He needs a job, he would like the job. It's a 30-minute drive into Jerusalem. But he can't take the job because the Israelis refuse to give him a permit — to come to Jerusalem."

"The closure is terrible for us," said Constantine Dabbagh of Gaza, who heads the refugee work sponsored by the Near East Council of Churches. "We often need to send a patient to a hospital in Jerusalem — and cannot get a permit to do so."

"Jerusalem is besieged!" declared Bethlehem deputy mayor Nasser. "Christians cannot go there — to pray, to work. This is impossible!" Was Jerusalem then "lost?" Nasser said it could never be lost, in the spiritual sense. I put the same question to the

Jerusalem Christian attorney Kuttab:

"Yes, if you are speaking geographically and demographically. The Israelis have successfully cut off Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank. Palestinians need East Jerusalem for a capital. But the Israelis have prevented our building any infrastructure. We need the right to a process, there needs to be land to develop upon, there should be structures, you don't create a university overnight, you need to build commercial relationships, an economy, a life, a community. But in East Jerusalem the Israelis are totally freezing and denying any development of a Palestinian presence. They are treating Jerusalem in a total, tribal way — one tribe capturing another's land and totally obliterating the first tribe. When Jerusalem was captured in previous days it was destroyed to the ground, and then they would plow salt into it, to prevent anything from growing. Israelis are using modern

planning and zoning laws to do the exact same — to kill the future of the city, as far as Arabs are concerned, to totally obliterate our presence.

“Meanwhile, they are working very hard and in a sophisticated manner to create facts on the ground — that are irreversible. This means that others, even with the best of intentions, would not be able to reverse them. Today with the best intentions in the world, you cannot tell 150,000 Jewish immigrants now living in East Jerusalem that they must leave. And that’s the victory they wanted to achieve: having more Jews in Arab Jerusalem than there are Arabs.”

Does the U.S. administration, which has said it wants peace in the Middle East, believe that an exclusivist Jewish capital of an exclusivist Jewish state will bring peace to the region? Israeli attorney Daniel Seidemann, who does work for Peace Now, said Israelis should remember their “professed values of due process under law and equality before the law.” He said there could be no “exclusively Jewish city unless it turns into Belfast,” a city of divided, violently opposed, populations. Neither the Israelis nor the U.S. administration seemed concerned about that possibility. To the contrary, rumors in Jerusalem were widespread that the Clinton administration had promised the Jewish state to recognize that it owned and controlled all of Jerusalem — and it would do so by building a U.S. embassy — in East Jerusalem.

## The Year 2,000

In five years, we will mark the 2000th anniversary of the birth of Jesus — and to observe the special occasion many Christians will travel to the Holy Land. They will snap photos of the sacred sites — while blocking from their vision their co-religionists, those

Christians who, along with their forebears, have always lived there.

In talking with native Christians, I heard them ask: “Why do Christians travel half way round the world to come to our land — and then refuse to recognize that we as Christians are here? Why do they make us ‘invisible’ — when we are very much a part of the ‘landscape’ through which they are passing?” They were perplexed. Why, they wondered, do American Christians traveling here put an Israeli agenda above their own Christianity?”

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**“Why do Christians travel half way round the world to come to our land — and then refuse to recognize that we as Christians are here?”**

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As a prime example, they spoke of President Bill Clinton’s visit to Jerusalem last October. “We know he prides himself on being a very ‘Christian’ man, we have read that he goes to church and that Mrs. Clinton goes to church. And yet he was here — only a short distance from the most sacred Christian shrines — and he did not visit any of them, he did not meet with a single Christian, he did not choose to go to any of our Christian churches.” Since Clinton had established that Christianity was an integral part of his life, why, they asked, would he negate his co-religionists — and their common faith?

“I was amazed,” said Bethlehem deputy mayor Nasser. “His visit here established how much of a Zionist he really is. How could a Christian come here — and avoid going to the place where Christ was born — and where he was crucified and buried? We would

have welcomed his visit here in Bethlehem. He is the leader of the strongest nation in the world. So, if he had wanted to come here, what would have prevented his doing so? I don’t find any explanation.”

“Judaism is the state religion of Israel,” a U.S. Christian said. “In Jerusalem, Clinton put on a Jewish skullcap or yarmulke — this represents a Judaic religious exercise. And Hillary participated in a Judaic religious exercise by going to the Western Wall, rubbing the stones — and inserting a prayer. They chose to engage in Judaic religious exercises, while at the same time, by ignoring the Christians, they were negating the role of Christianity — and giving first-priority choice to Israel.”

“I felt betrayed that Clinton would not want to visit any Christian shrine or meet any Christian,” said Jerusalem’s Methodist liaison officer Robert Hannum. “We waited for one word, just one word — about the Palestinians. If he as president thought the topic was too political, then Hillary could have met at least one Christian and gone to at least one Christian church. She could have visited the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, or Nazareth where Jesus lived; she might have gone to the Mountain of the Beatitudes, the Sea of Galilee or the site where Christ was crucified and interred — the Holy Sepulcher here in Jerusalem.” At a reception in her honor, Hillary Rodham Clinton said: “I’m so proud of the 40,000 Americans living here — and helping build the state of Israel.” Bill Warnock of Jerusalem’s World Vision office reportedly told her: “I’m here working for Palestinians. If the U.S. government had a more balanced policy, we might achieve real peace.”

In an emotional address to the Israeli Knesset, Clinton said that his pastor on his dying bed told him, “If you abandon Israel, God will never forgive you.” Thus Clinton, observed Jerusalem attorney Kuttub, implied that “it was a Christian position to support exclusive — and racist —

Jewish control over Jerusalem." While Clinton thinks of himself as a peacemaker, Kuttub added, by condoning Israel's illegal actions he is actually sowing seeds of hatred — among the victims of occupation and aggression.

Yet Clinton tends, as do perhaps some 50 million American Christian Zionists, to place Israel on center stage for all of history, past, present and future. Since the Jewish state looms so important, a Christian Zionist easily reduces all of the Middle East to one state — Israel — and "its neighbors." It has been well documented in the Israeli press that the "Clinton court" is filled with American Jews who work for Israeli interests. Many write speeches for Clinton, and in one such speech Clinton referred to the Middle East as "Israel and her Arab enemies." One can imagine the reaction should Clinton have said, "the Arabs and their Jewish enemies."

Back in the 1980s, I became intrigued by Christian Zionists — those who put a cult of Israel above the teachings of Christ. To learn more about Christian Zionists, I began research on the TV evangelist Jerry Falwell. For some years, I made a habit of tuning into Falwell's Old Time Gospel Hour on TV. I learned Falwell talked more about Israel than about Christ. He liked to boast, "The Jewish people in America and Israel and all over the world have no dearer friend than Jerry Falwell." Falwell found many opportunities to tell Americans the fate of the nation stood or fell according to the attitude they took toward Israel. If Americans did not show an unflinching willingness to provide Israel with arms and dollars, Falwell said, America would lose all.

In 1983, I was one of 630 Christians who flew out of New York on a Holy Land tour sponsored by Falwell. In Tel Aviv, after being put in groups of about 50, we began traveling by bus. Throughout the tour, we had Israeli Jewish guides. Not once did we have a Christian guide. Not once was a service scheduled in a Christian church nor the opportunity given to meet a

Christian Palestinian. On the day we approached Nazareth, where Jesus grew up and had his ministry, our guide said, "There is Nazareth." He added we would not stop. "No time," he said. Minutes later, he changed his mind, announcing: "We will stop in Nazareth. To use the toilet facilities." Thus, the only site the Christians saw in all of Nazareth were the toilets.

In 1985, I signed to go on another Falwell-sponsored tour, and again I got a colored brochure, printed in Israel, with no mention of Christ or the Christian sites. While we were in Jerusalem, Falwell gave a banquet, honoring then Defense Minister Moshe Arens. Seated not far from the two men, I heard Falwell say, in an aside to Arens: "By the way, I want to thank you for that jet plane you gave me." Earlier on, in a visit to Lynchburg, Virginia, Falwell's home base, I had seen the jet, and been told by Lynchburg residents: "The Israelis gave the jet to Falwell — as payment for what he's done for them."

When I went on the Falwell-sponsored trips, I presumed it was only right-wing Christian supporters of Israel who put a cult of the land of Israel above the teachings of Christ. But once, at Washington, D.C. Foundry Methodist Church, which Hillary Rodham Clinton attends, I saw a brochure of a Holy Land tour to be led by assistant minister William Shropshire. As with Falwell's brochure, Shropshire's brochure was printed in Israel. I learned his group would have only Israeli guides — and they had no plans to meet Christians. A group called Educational Opportunities of Lakeland, Fla., arranges most all United Methodist group travel. Jerusalem's Methodist liaison officer Hannum volunteered this information:

"Educational Opportunities — I believe it's now in its 20th year of operation — brought over 13,000 Methodists this past year. They use the Israeli airlines El-Al exclusively. They use only Israeli guides. They use only Israeli hotels such as the Ramada Renaissance in Jerusalem. I was told by

someone in a position to know that Educational Opportunities is 51 percent Israeli owned. And they had 49 Methodist bishops on their board. It seems the Methodist bishops are really in the Zionists' camp. Among other things, they get the free trips. Jim Ridgeway, a retired Methodist minister, is the founder. He keeps a home in West Jerusalem." Hannum and his wife Margaret, who have traveled extensively in Palestine and throughout the Middle East, said they opposed such group travel that bypassed Christians. "I do not think the U.S. Christians should come here at all, unless they are willing to experience, to some degree at least, the pain of the Palestinians."

Christians, said Canon Ateek of St. George's Cathedral, should not be shepherded about by Israeli guides. "What do they tell visitors to the Holy Land? They know nothing about Jesus. I am disturbed that Israelis who do not believe in Christ are interpreting — to the visitors — the Christian sites. I think there is a message that goes with the Christian sites, to those stones, these stones can be living stones, also. The message is what happened here and what God in Christ has done. And yet we hear what some of the Israeli guides say, and it is regrettable."

Canon Ateek also said he feared Israelis plan further commercialization of the holy sites: "We don't want this 'touristy' aspect, we don't want the Holy Land to become a religious theme park, a kind of museum, a kind of Disneyland — which is happening. I am deeply concerned about Israel wanting and gaining almost total control over our lives, politically — and as Christians."

The Christian human rights attorney, Raja Shehadeh, also voiced concern over the Israeli control of holy Christian sites and the resulting commercialization. He gave an example of how one might pay Israelis to be baptized: "The Israelis have taken a small tributary of the Jordan, they call it the 'Yardenit Baptismal



Site.' It's open every day for business, except Yom Kippur. Christians from Israeli-arranged tour groups line up. They pay shekels to an Israeli to rent a white garment and towel, step into the water, and get immersed. They also pay \$3 — to an Israeli — for a certificate verifying they have been baptized. I didn't go in the water, but I got one of the \$3 certificates — as an example of the commercialization."

From the moment they arrive until they depart the Holy Land, American Christian tourists generally see only Israelis. On my arrival in the Holy Land, I met a woman from Salt Lake City who had been touring there for two weeks and was leaving that same day. Had she, I asked, met any Christians? Her face registered confusion, as if I had asked: Had she met anyone from Mars? She explained she had been with a tour, and had heard lectures "from Israelis who wore skullcaps. And we had Israeli guides" to the Christian shrines. Then she volunteered she had gone to Egypt for three days. "And in Cairo, I met a Christian." She had chatted with him, found him "a pleasant person." But as for Christians — in the Land of Christ — they had all been invisible.

Most all U.S. Christians are like the woman from Salt Lake City. They book Holy Land tours exclusively with Jewish agencies and use only Israeli guides. "There are 4,000 licensed Israeli guides — and only 40 Christian guides," said Latin Patriarch liaison officer Joseph Donnelly. "A West Bank Palestinian Christian guide has not been given a license since Israel militarily seized the land in 1967." The few Christian guides still operating "are carefully monitored" by the Israelis.

"There are 56 million American Catholics and only 8,000 came last year — and most came with Jewish agencies." Donnelly said he favors having a Catholic pilgrimage office. "Our role would not be to compete with commerce or anyone's right to have a commercial endeavor, but to expose more American Christians and

Catholics to the resources available here in the non-Jewish community — and also to the resources available in the U.S. in the non-Jewish community. We would let those desiring to visit the Holy Land know about experienced pilgrimage leaders, experienced pilgrimage agencies that would enable the people coming here to visit Christian hospices, Christian restaurants, as well as visiting Muslim and Jewish communities. Right now, there's only these package deals offered by Unity Tours and Educational Opportunities. Their package deals are completely exclusive of any encounter with the living church, the living communities that have businesses — but are largely ignored by all the tourists coming here. And certainly a good way to support the community is to patronize its businesses.

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### From the moment they arrive until they depart the Holy Land, American Christian tourists generally see only Israelis.

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"There's a commercial structure that serves the purposes of tourism, but that infra-structure needs to be subservient to the real principles of genuine traditional pilgrimages. You don't need a Five-Star cocktail lounge or 13 TVs playing off the walls to come here and meditate on the gospel."

In 1994, the Israelis began a promotional campaign to bring "millions of Christians" to celebrate the Christmas, 1995 season as well as other millions for the Year 2,000 observation. As Christians pointed out to me, Bethlehem is in Palestine — under military occupation. Tourists going there must pass roadblocks. Often so many Israeli soldiers crowd Manger

Square it appears under siege. Rather than observe Christ's birth in Bethlehem, Israelis are staging promotional campaigns to move them to Nazareth that lies within Israel. "To get ready for a big influx of Christian tourists, the Israelis have a drive spearheaded by Uri Moore, and are asking U.S. Christian churches to 'kick in' to make Nazareth more of a tourist center, as well as to pay for all security guards at the Christian sites," said Baptist Minister Eivad. He added, "I think it is a crime to give money to the Jewish state — to take care of our Christian sites."

The Israelis, in a brochure sent to travel writers and issued by their Ministry of Tourism, state that "in preparation for the Year 2,000, a massive renovation and infrastructure development will take place in Nazareth, birthplace of Jesus." In reading this statement, I am left wondering: did the Israeli writing the brochure not know where Jesus was born? Did the officials with the Israel Ministry of Tourism, some of whom must have read copy on the brochure, not know? Did they not care? Or rather — since they will be able to move tourists in and out of Nazareth more easily than militarily-occupied Bethlehem — that they plan to "sell" the idea he was born where they want tourists to go?

"The Israelis control all our lives — and even our holy sites," one Christian said. Indeed, while permitting the Palestinians to establish a "tourism department," it has no authority over West Bank religious and archaeological sites, such as the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, on the site where Jesus was born. Such sites remain under control of the military government. For Christmas 1994 in Bethlehem, the Israeli army escorted the Christian mayor inside his own church. As for the past 28 years, all the activities for the Christian celebration were directed by armed Israeli soldiers.

Earlier, I mentioned my father being the most Christian man I ever knew.

And how much he would have loved to have traveled in the footsteps of Jesus. Could he have gone, I think he would have looked or acted like most of today's tourists — who go with cameras and return with photos and souvenirs. My father would have traveled light — going not as a tourist but rather as a pilgrim — going on an inner journey. Perhaps sitting by the Sea of Galilee, he would have asked himself, What is Christ's message — for me? I am sure he would have eagerly sought out other Christians, such as Elias Chacour of Galilee who changed so many lives by his moving memoir, "Blood Brothers." I feel sure my Methodist father and Greek Catholic Chacour would have liked breaking bread together, enjoying their communion, as followers of Christ.

There are hundreds of Jewish agencies that book Christian tourists to the Holy Land. But one need not go as tourist. As we approach the Year 2000, one might like to go to the Land of Christ as a pilgrim. Here is a suggestion of how to do so:

Volunteers in Mission (of the Southeastern jurisdiction, United Methodist Church): Bonnie Gehweiler, who serves on Americans for Middle East Understanding's board, spearheads this group. "I was one of 20 Christian volunteers going to Bethany to live among Palestinians in 1992," she said. "And I was also in a group of 20 Christian volunteers going to Beit Sahour in 1993. Our trips are for 13 days. We do work projects for one week and then travel to Christian sites the second week. During our stay in Beit Sahour, we stayed in a small Palestinian hotel, but we took all meals with local Christians — and it was one of the most wonderful experiences I have had in all my life. We got to know the people, and this was most meaningful for all of us."

Last month in Beit Sahour I met several of the Christians who had been "family" for Bonnie Gehweiler and her group. "We were so pleased they wanted to stay awhile among us. They gave us great support — and much



*Father Elias Chacour and Bonnie Gehweiler with Volunteers in Mission participants. Courtesy of Jane Smith*

help," Beit Sahour's Jamal Salameh said, adding "We hope to host many such groups. We are thinking 'grassroots,' people-to-people. We think the experience we had with the groups that came here, and the way we were able to interact with the visitors that we were better than tour guides. We talked about Christianity and being a Christian in this country. We gave an explanation of our lives by talking about our Christian heritage and introducing them to some of the problems we are facing."

"We would also like to accompany pilgrims to other Palestinian towns," said Beit Sahour's Dr. Nassar. "We have beautiful sights, interesting things. There is Hebron. What tourist goes to Hebron? Yet it is a very interesting place, very attractive, it is a city of commerce, 25 to 40 percent of the national product comes from Hebron. Take Nablus, for example. It is a wonderful city, you have the Old City, you have a very old Turkish bath. There are Samaritans there, so one can go and visit them, talk to them and see

how they are living and thinking, it is an experience. You only hear about the Good Samaritan in the Bible, but who are they? There are only 500 left in the world. We want to give the Christians who come here not a chance to meet politicians but some real persons, we need to give something more than that which they can read in any newspaper."

For those Christians wishing to go as a pilgrim on a Volunteers in Mission program, you may telephone, fax or write for further details. Bonnie Gehweiler, 421 Ridge Road, Waynesville, N.C. 28786. Telephone: 704-452-0470. Fax 704-456-9506. She will also send upon request a list of endangered Palestinian institutions, sponsored by Christian communions, that welcome volunteer workers and visitors. Also Gehweiler can provide information on Prepare Him Room, a five year project to prepare for the 2000th celebration of the birth of Jesus in the town where he was actually born: Bethlehem.

## The Future of Jewish-Christian-Muslim Relations

Many Christians told me they felt they were being targeted, that it was apparent to them the Israelis had one goal: a "pure" Jewish state, devoid first of Christians and then of Muslims. The Christians who travel under Israeli sponsorship generally think the Israelis can mean no harm. They see them as people who read the Old Testament and read it in the same way that they, the Christians, do. But that, says Israel Shahak, a moralist and scientist and seminal thinker, is not the case. It becomes vital for American Christians, Shahak says, to understand that Judaism is not a "Biblical religion." Rather than the Hebrew Bible or Old Testament being all important, Orthodox Jews adhere to what they find in the Talmud — which Shahak sees as racist and militant. Christians, he says, must understand this to understand the Israel of today. In his new book, "Jewish History, Jewish Religion: The Weight of Three Thousand Years," Shahak explains:

"One misconception about Judaism which is particularly common among Christians (is) the misleading idea that Judaism is a 'Biblical religion'; that the Old Testament has in Judaism the same central place and legal authority which the Bible has for Protestant or even Catholic Christianity." Rather, Shahak stresses, the interpretation of the sacred texts is all important. The interpretation is rigidly fixed, but by the Talmud rather than the Bible itself." He gives examples of how the Talmudic interpretation often is racist:

"In numerous cases general terms such as 'thy fellow,' 'stranger' or even 'man' are taken to have an exclusivist chauvinistic meaning. The famous verse, 'thou shalt love thy fellow as thyself' (Leviticus 19:18) is understood by classical (and present day Orthodox) Judaism as an injunction to love one's fellow Jew, not any fellow human. The generous injunction to leave the gleanings of one's field and vineyard 'for the poor and the stranger' is interpreted as referring exclusively to the Jewish poor, and to converts to Judaism." In fact, concludes Shahak, the more a Christian person reads the Bible, "the less he or she knows about Orthodox Judaism." In the Talmud, Shahak writes:

"Jews are instructed to burn, publicly if possible, any copy of the New

Testament that comes into their hands." The Talmud is especially critical of Jesus and states that "his punishment in hell is to be immersed in boiling excrement."

"Jews are taught that on seeing a cross, they should spit on it." As for Orthodox Jewish hatred of the cross, Shahak gave me a personal example. He and I were having coffee in Jerusalem. I had briefly escaped from a tour group led by TV evangelist Falwell. "Does he know how Jews are taught to despise the cross?" Shahak asked. "There's a law here that textbooks are not to print the western 'plus' sign." And he drew a "+" on a napkin. "They decided it too much resembled a Christian cross." When I looked incredulous, he jumped to his feet, walked to a nearby bookstore, and on his return, showed me a mathematics book. Indeed, the typical "plus" sign had been changed throughout to an inverted "T."

Shahak warns that as Israel becomes "increasingly Jewish" it becomes "increasingly dangerous, this due to an increase in military power — particularly its nuclear power." Hence, accurate information about "Jewish ideology" — and especially about its teachings on the cruel treatment due non-Jews by Israel — becomes not only important, "but politically vital as well."

$$49-15 = (45-15) + 4 = 34$$

$$49-34 = (44-34) + 5 = 15$$

2. התר ובדק בשתי הדרכים, (בעזרת חלוף מקום המחברים ובעזרת חסור):

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<u>+15</u>	<u>+17</u>	<u>+13</u>	<u>+41</u>	<u>+23</u>	<u>+21</u>	<u>+42</u>

3. התר בשורה בדרכים שונות (ראה למעלה):

*From the Hebrew Math Book Presented to Grace Halsell by Dr. Israel Shahak.*

## To Be Arab . . . And Christian

The Palestinian Christian community is part of a larger one: there are an estimated 12 to 14 million Arab Christians living in the Middle East. Perhaps half of these are Coptic Christians living in Egypt. Other countries with a substantial number of Arab Christians include Syria, Iraq and Lebanon.

Within Israel proper, there are 114,000 Christians. They represent about 2.3 percent of the overall population and 14 percent of all Arabs in Israel.

The West Bank and Gaza Strip Christians are only some 2 percent of the entire Palestinian population in the Occupied Territories. Most of them live in the Jerusalem-Bethlehem-Beit Sahour area. In the Gaza Strip there are said to be less than 2,000 Palestinian Christians.

In numbers of adherents, the most popular denominations are Greek Orthodox, Latins and Greek Catholics. Among other denominations: Protestants, Syrians, Armenians, Copts. Within Jerusalem, the Latins or Roman Catholics come first, then Greek Orthodox.

To be Christian — and Arab — means to live with certain tensions and tribulations. The Palestinian Christian suffers "between biblical loyalty to Hebrew scriptures as part of his Christian heritage and the actualities of contemporary Israel with its enmity to Palestinians *per se*," writes the British scholar Kenneth Cragg in his book, "The Arab Christian." He asks: How relate "the Lord God of Israel" to the Israel today?

How should an Arab Christian deal with "blessing the Lord God of Israel" when the modern entity that came on our maps in 1948 dynamites his home? Biblically, "it is always the Philistines (i.e., Palestinians) who are the obstacles to God's own people."

We all should feel an urgency to know the Arab Christian, Cragg writes, "lest the aura of 'the Holy Land' lead us to think of a spiritual museum rather than of living, dying people in the throes of a deep struggle for survival and fulfillment."

Although "Christian" was a description of Arabs for six centuries before Islam, with its arrival in the seventh Christian century, Islam became the senior partner — "the determinant of Arab existence. So deeply does Arabism involve being Muslim, there are aspects of being Arab that almost necessitate its equation with Islam," says Cragg. The followers of Muhammad gave a vast area a language — Arabic — that became for all Arabs, Christian and Muslim, a key to their identity.

In periods of great stress, as with the advent of Western Christian crusaders (11th to 14th centuries) and in this century, the Zionists, supported by Western Christians, the tensions between Arab Christian and Arab Muslim are exacerbated. Cragg points out that "Israel heightens the burden for Arab Christians by its avid, often cynical welcome to an American Christian Zionism."

Palestinians, the most highly educated of all Arabs, have long been noted for having an open society, with great respect for freedom of thought and freedom of religion. In recent years, Palestinians — Christian and Muslim — were united in their struggle to free themselves from occupiers of their land. In a spontaneous outbreak against oppression — the Intifada — both Christian and Muslim Palestinians fought as brothers.

Tensions have increased, however, since the famous Arafat-Rabin "handshake" on the White House lawn.

Any optimism about peace led quickly to reality: the Israelis were more aggressive in seizing land, in isolating Palestinian communities one from another, in freezing job opportunities. I found Gaza the most tragic place I have seen. In Gaza, Palestinian attorney Raji Sourani, winner of the Robert F Kennedy memorial Award for Human Rights, told me the Israelis still hold 6,000 Palestinian political prisoners: "Israeli torture has gotten even worse." What options are left to the Palestinians?

The more the Christian West supports Zionist aggression, the more militant the Islamists become. They have had, until now, few weapons but their anger. "It is as if the U.S., by its total support of Israel, wants to fuel the Hamas militant movement," said one Palestinian.

What of the future? I had an interview with Hisham Ahmad, a young, blind Palestinian who grew up in a refugee camp, earned a doctorate degree and from long, personal interviews with its leaders has written a timely book on "Hamas." The P.L.O. and Hamas are on a collision course, he told me. Given that the peace process and the secular Authority headed by Arafat have not led to any improvement in the lives of the Palestinians — rather that conditions are worse than they have ever been — "time definitely is on the side of Hamas."

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We should all feel an urgency to know the Arab Christian "lest the aura of the 'Holy Land' lead us to think of a spiritual museum rather than of living, dying people in the throes of a deep struggle for survival and fulfillment."

Kenneth Cragg



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□ **JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM**  
*Grace Halsell, Macmillan, 1982, 193 pp., paper.* Poignant account by the author of current Link article of her first year in the Holy Land. Good book to give to someone approaching the conflict for the first time. Certainly good for someone going on tour to the Holy Land.  
List: \$7.95, AMEU: \$2.50



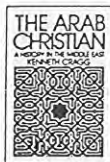
□ **PROPHECY AND POLITICS: Militant Evangelists on the Road to Nuclear War**  
*Grace Halsell, Lawrence Hill, 1986, 210 pp., cloth.*  
Halsell reports on her trips to the Holy Land with the Rev. Jerry Falwell and reveals the links between U.S. fundamentalists and Israeli ultranationalists.  
List: \$14.95, AMEU: \$5.50.



□ **JEWISH HISTORY, JEWISH RELIGION: The Weight of Three Thousand Years**  
*Israel Shohak, Foreword by Gore Vidal, Photo Press, 1994, 140 pp., paper.* Renowned Israeli scholar and human rights activist argues that unless Israel confronts its Talmudic past it will continue to be an apartheid state and an obstacle to peace.  
List: \$17.95, AMEU: \$15.50



□ **JUSTICE, AND ONLY JUSTICE: A Palestinian Theology of Liberation**  
*Naim Ateek, Orbis Books, 1991, 229 pp., paper.*  
A leader of the Palestinian Christian community provides a theological framework for understanding the Palestinian uprising and the interfaith relationship between Christians and Jews.  
List: \$13.95, AMEU: \$10.50



□ **THE ARAB CHRISTIAN: A History in the Middle East**  
*Kenneth Cragg, Westminster, 1991, 336 pp., cloth.*  
The author, an Episcopal bishop and leading scholar on the Middle East and Islam, examines the struggle of Arab Christians to maintain both their Arab culture and Christian distinctiveness in a predominately Arab-Muslim region. He concludes that Christians and Muslims can find a common destiny in the Middle East.  
List: \$29.95, AMEU: \$22.50.



□ **BLOOD BROTHERS**  
*Elias Chacour, Chosen Books, 1988, 312 pp., paper.*  
The moving account by a Greek Orthodox priest who, as a child, was driven from his village on Christmas eve by the Israeli army. Now he works to nurture his Christian community in Galilee. He has inspired many Christian pilgrims, including the wife of former U.S. Secretary of State James Baker.  
List: \$7.95, AMEU: \$7.50

## Others Books & Videos on Christianity in the Middle East:



### □ COME WITH ME FROM LEBANON: An American Family Odyssey

Ann Z. Kerr, with foreword by Albert Hourani, Syracuse University Press, 194, 322 pp., cloth.

This is a personal history of the American University of Beirut, founded by U.S. Presbyterians. It is told lovingly by the wife of Malcolm Kerr, AUB's president who was assassinated in 1984.

List: \$28.95; AMEU: \$22.50



### □ THE JESUITS BY THE TIGRIS: Men for Other in Bagdad

Joseph F. MacDonnell, S.J., Jesuit Mission Press, 1994, 346 pp., 144 illustrations, paper.

History of two Jesuit schools, Bagdad College and Al-Hikma University, along with the history of numerous indigenous Christian rites.

List: \$25.00, AMEU: \$19.95.



### □ WHOSE PROMISED LAND?

Colin Chapman, Lion Press, 1992, 256 pp., paper.

One of the most popular books AMEU has carried is now available in an updated edition. Competing claims of Zionists and Palestinians are presented in their own words. Then, the question is addressed: Are the ancient promises in the Bible relevant today?

List: \$10.95; AMEU: \$6.95.



### □ ANGLE OF VISION

Charles Kimball, Orbis Press, 1992, 122 pp., paper.

While the "angle" of this work is the history of the Christian communities in the Holy Land, the "sweep" is ecumenical. Kimball's aim is to promote knowledgeable advocates for peace in a region that is one of the most militarized on earth.

List: \$7.95; AMEU: \$7.50.



### □ ISRAELI PEACE/PALESTINIAN JUSTICE: Liberation Theology and the Peace Process

Thomas Are, Clarity Press, 1994, 194 pp., paper.

A Presbyterian pastor tells of his visit to Palestine and how it changed his assessment of U.S. Middle East policy.

List: \$14.95; AMEU: \$11.50



### □ CHRISTIAN FAMILIES OF PALESTINE

34 min. video made by the Middle East Council of Churches, 1993.

Profiles two families: one from Taibeh (where Jesus rested after His temptations in the desert), the other from Beit Sabour (where shepherds first heard of Jesus' birth). Film shows how Israeli settlers encroach on the ancestral lands of Christians, forcing many to leave. Good for discussion groups and those preparing to visit the Holy Land.

AMEU: \$25.00.



### □ DISABLED FOR PALESTINE

21 min. video made by the Middle East Council of Churches, 1993.

A Palestinian neuro-surgeon interviews some of the 100,000 Palestinian civilians who have been maimed for life by Israeli bullets, beatings and tear gas. Good for human rights activists and peace groups.

AMEU: \$25.00.



### □ JORDAN'S STORMY BANKS

30 min. video produced by the Presbyterian Church, 1991.

Reviews the history of Jews, Christians and Muslims in the Holy Land. The Palestinian-Israeli conflict is presented from the perspective of Christians living under a military occupation.

AMEU: \$14.95.

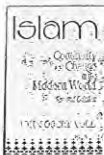


### □ WHO ARE GOD'S PEOPLE IN THE MIDDLE EAST? What Christians are not being told about Israel and Palestine.

Gary M. Burge, Zondervan Press, 1993, 201 pp., paper.

An Evangelical Professor of New Testament at Wheaton College, Burge begins his book: "Once after reading Hal Lindsay's *Late Great Planet Earth*, I stood in the Valley of Armageddon and reflected on Israel's fulfillment of prophecy... Surely God was at work in this place." 200 pages later, he concludes: "A prophetic voice needs to be heard today in the Middle East... Israel has forgotten the voice of God..." Inbetween, Burge answers the "hard" questions: How can an all just God sanction the theft of land? How can an all merciful God condition His Return on the slaughter of innocents? List: \$10.99; AMEU: \$9.50.

## Also Available:



**ISLAM: Continuity and Change in the Modern World**  
 John O. Voll. Syracuse University Press, 1994. 439 pp., paper.  
 Covers history of Islam from the time of the Prophet Muhammad through the significant event of the 1980s and 1990s.  
 List: \$16.95; AMEU: \$16.50



**THE PASSIONATE ATTACHMENT: America's Involvement with Israel, 1947 to the Present**  
 George & Douglas Ball. Norton & Co., 1992. 382 pp., cloth.  
 Noted U.S. statesman and historian son document Israel's manipulation of U.S. Middle East policy and argue that a Palestinian state is essential for Middle East stability.  
 List: \$24.95; AMEU: \$18.50.



**THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM IN INTERNATIONAL LAW AND WORLD ORDER**  
 W. Thomas & Sally V. Mallison. Longman, 1986. 564 pp., cloth.  
 Monumental legal analyses of Zionist political-legal objectives, the partition of Palestine, the legal status of Jerusalem, Israeli settlements and Palestinian rights.  
 List: \$45.95; AMEU: \$10.00.



**ORIGINAL SINS: Reflections on the History of Zionism and Israel**  
 Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi. Interlink, 1993. 227 pp., paper.  
 Author, a professor of psychology at Haifa University, analyses how the dream of political Zionism became both a reality and a nightmare, and how Zionist settlers purposefully ignore their Palestinian victims.  
 List: \$14.95; AMEU: \$13.95.



**DELIBERATE DECEPTIONS: Facing the Facts about the U.S.-Israeli Relationship**  
 Paul Findley. Lawrence Hill, 1993. 348 pp., paper.  
 Former Congressman answers most common pro-Israeli misrepresentations.  
 List: \$14.95; AMEU: \$7.50.



**THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT: A Unit for High School Students**  
 R. Stockton. Univ. of Michigan, 1993. 8" x 11" spiral, paper.  
 Prepared by Center for Middle Eastern Studies at the Univ. of Michigan. Includes primary documentation and statistical data.  
 AMEU: \$9.95.



**ARABS & ISRAEL FOR BEGINNERS**  
 Ron David. Writers & Readers Press, 1993. 218 pp., paper.  
 Author takes the research of Noam Chomsky, enlivens it with wonderful pen-sketched drawings, then traces 12,000 years of history with the irreverence of Saturday Night Live.  
 List: \$9.95; AMEU: \$8.95.



**MOURNING IN BETHLEHEM**  
 Patrick White, 1992. 224 pp., paper.  
 Professor at Bethlehem University stresses that Christians and Muslims share the same victimhood under a cruel military occupation.  
 List: \$12.95; AMEU: \$10.50.



**ANTHOLOGY OF MODERN PALESTINIAN LITERATURE**  
 S. Jayyusi, ed. Columbia Univ. Press, 1993. 745 pp., cloth.  
 Over 70 poets and writers represented.  
 "This anthology admits the Palestinian contribution to world culture at an eminent place," says Edward Said.  
 List: \$34.95; AMEU: \$29.95.



**BEFORE THEIR DIASPORA: A Photographic History of the Palestinians 1876-1948**  
 W. Khalidi. Institute for Palestine Studies, 1991. 351 pp., paper.  
 474 photographs, many from family albums, capture the breadth of Palestinian life prior to 1948. Six color maps trace the Zionist colonization of Palestine from 1878 to 15 May 1948.  
 List: \$ 29.00; AMEU: \$24.95.



**WALKING WITH JESUS IN THE HOLY LAND**  
 I. Bacon. Amoria, 1992. 161 pp., paper.  
 Author maps an itinerary of the Holy Land based on the chronological life of Jesus. Brings the land alive for the traveling pilgrim as well as the home Bible reader.  
 List: \$6.95; AMEU: \$5.95.



**THE MUSLIMS OF AMERICA**  
 Y. Haddad, ed. Oxford Univ. Press, 1991. 249 pp., paper.  
 Authors trace Islam's rapidly expanding minority status in North America.  
 List: \$15.95; AMEU: \$14.50

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