

Resource List to Help Understand the Palestinian Struggle Summer 2021

This is a long list: however, titles in red offer suggested starting places. The list was compiled in May 2021 by Maureen McPherson, a member of St. Martin's United Church in Saskatoon. Go to the end of the list to find some ways you can support Palestinian farmers and craftspeople by buying their products.

The following online material offers a good way to start:

- A good way to begin any study is with a short video **called *Israel and Palestine: A Very Short Introduction*** (6 min 27 sec.) 2013. Produced by Jewish Voice for Peace. Israel-Palestinian conflict VERY briefly explained in this animated, historically accurate video. Highly recommended as an introduction to the whole issue This is a short video that would work well during a church service. Would work well to spark discussion in a Youth Group or other gathering, especially combined with Keith Simmonds presentation. Available on YouTube.
- For an up-to-date look at the conflict from a United Church perspective, watch the **presentation by Keith Simmonds**, minister of Duncan United Church in Duncan BC, who served as an Ecumenical Accompanier in Palestine from Dec. 27, 2019 to March 10, 2020. (about 15 min.) Under the auspices of the World Council of Churches, Ecumenical Accompaniers from a variety of countries and faith backgrounds spend time in Palestine and Israel to serve as the eyes and ears of the world. The talk was given to the Pacific Mountain Regional Meeting of the United Church in Oct. 2020. Combining this with the previous video should encourage a rich discussion.
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1TyGfZ5-Csc&feature=youtu.be> or google Special Information Townhall: Palestinian Network
- ***The Present*** is a film directed by Palestinian-British director Farah Nabulsi and co-written by Nabulsi and Hind Shoufani. (2020) 25 min. A father and daughter attempt to buy an anniversary gift in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and encounter many obstacles. Nominated for an Oscar in 2021. Would work well to promote discussion in a Youth Group or other gathering. Available on Netflix. Highly recommended.
- ***Undercurrents*** is an excellent new podcast from MCC Ontario. Listen to Episode 5 David and Goliath. <http://anchor.fm/undercurrents/ep-5-david-and-goliath-ee1ec8>
- ***"The Holy City"***. A beautiful rendition sung in Arabic by the Daughters of Jerusalem choir and in English by the Princeton Girlchoir. The song is part of an album "Daughters of Jerusalem" released in 2018. Accompanied by video of the young Palestinian singers

walking and running through the old part of the city. The choir is composed of 25 young Palestinian music students from families with deep roots in Jerusalem.

<https://youtu.be/Jk9lIWw4ijc>

- ***How are the children? Palestinian children in Israeli Military Detention***. Website by United Church of Christ Palestine Israel Network. www.HATCnow.org
- ***“No Way to Treat a Child”*** is a campaign and petition to protest brutal treatment of children in the Israeli detention system www.nwttac.canada.dci-palstine.org

Good choices for book studies or general reading: The following personal stories are good places to start:

- Abuelaish, Izzeldin, *I Shall Not Hate: A Gaza Doctor’s Journey on the Road to Peace and Human Dignity* (2011) 237 pp. Dr. Abuelaish is a Palestinian doctor whose daughters were killed by Israeli soldiers on Jan.16, 2009 during Israel’s incursion into the Gaza Strip. Instead of responding with hatred, he called for people in the region to start talking to one another. An inspirational and heart-breaking story.
- Nathan, Susan, *The Other Side of Israel: My Journey Across the Jewish-Arab Divide* (2016) 336 pp. In 2003 a Jewish woman, Susan Nathan, chose to move from Tel Aviv to Tamra, an Arab town in northern Israel where she was the only Jew among 25,000 Muslims. She had come to Tel Aviv 4 years earlier to teach and work with progressive social organizations. Once there she became aware of the hardship faced by Israel’s Arab population. She decided to move to Tamra to learn about the lives of the people there.
- Tolan, Sandy, *The Lemon Tree: an Arab, a Jew and the Heart of the Middle East* (2006) 400 pp. National Book Critics Circle Award. In 1967 a 25-year-old Palestinian man travels to Israel to find the old stone house he and his family had fled 19 years before. He meets an occupant of the house, a 19-year-old woman whose family had fled Europe for Israel following the Holocaust. This meeting is the start of a 35-year-old friendship. A story of hope.
- Abulhawa, Susan. *Mornings in Jenin: A Novel*. (2010) 331 pp. A powerful story of a multi-generational Palestinian family displaced from their home village by the newly-formed state of Israel in 1948 to the canvas tents in Jenin refugee camp. Author’s use of language verges on poetic.

For children and young people:

- Explore this website: <https://socialjusticebooks.org/booklists/palestine/>

- For children 9-14 yrs.: ***The Cat at the Wall*** by Deborah Ellis. (2014) 144 pp. A cat sneaks into a small Palestinian house that has just been commandeered by two Israeli soldiers. A thought-provoking novel set in Israel's West Bank.

For further reading and to understand more of the history of the conflict:

- McCann, Colum. ***Apeirogon***. (2020) 463 pp. This is a novel based on a true story about the friendship between 2 men, one Israeli and one Palestinian, each of whom had a child killed by "the other side". They founded the Parents Circle project for Israeli and Palestinian bereaved parents. Look on YouTube under "Apeirogon" for Apeirogon webinar, a book discussion with Colum McCann and the two real-life fathers, Rami Elhanan and Bassam Aramin.
- Zaru, Jean. ***Occupied with Nonviolence: A Palestinian Woman Speaks*** (2008) 144 pp. Zaru, an activist and Quaker leader from Ramallah, describes the complex realities for the peoples of Palestine and presents a religiously-motivated nonviolent path to peace and justice. Highly recommended.
- Pappe, Ilan, ***The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*** (2006) 320 pp. Discusses the events between 1947 and 1949. A good place to start for the history of the conflict.
- Chacour, Elias. ***Blood Brothers*** (1984) 240 pp. Chacour is a Palestinian Archbishop who grew up in Galilee and became a refugee after 1947. He is noted for his efforts to promote reconciliation between Arabs and Israelis.
- Carter, Jimmy. ***Palestine – Peace, not Apartheid***. (2006) 288pp. A thoughtful, readable book by the former US President.
- Pappe, Ilan, ***A History of Modern Palestine: One Land, Two Peoples*** (2nd ed., 2003) 333 pp. History of Palestine from the 19th to the beginning of the 21st century.
- Pappe, Ilan, ***The Biggest Prison on Earth: A History of the Occupied Territories*** (2016) 304 pp. Shortlisted for Palestine Book Awards 2017. Follows events from *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*.
- Valarie Kaur, ***See No Stranger: A Memoir and Manifesto of Revolutionary Love***. (2020) 463 pp. As Kaur describes her life journey she encourages us to imagine new ways of being with one another. Not specifically about Palestine but highly recommended.
- Armstrong, Karen, ***Jerusalem, One City, Three Faiths*** (1997) 512 pp. History of Jerusalem from the time of King David to the end of the 20th century.
- Bregman, Ahron, ***Cursed Victory: A History of Israel and the Occupied Territories, 1967 to the Present*** (2015) 416 pp. History of the aftermath of the Six Day War in 1967.
- Elkana, Yehuda , ***"The Need to Forget"***. (Essay) Available at scribd.com. SCRIBD is a streaming service available free for 30 days, after that \$8.00/month.

- Khaladi, Rashid. ***The Hundred Years' War on Palestine: A History of Settler Colonialism and Resistance 1917–2017*** (2020) 221 pp. "Focused on the Palestinian's lived experience of war, never losing sight of the geographical forces that fostered it, Rashid Khaladi has written a book of comprehensive scholarship with the delicacy and intensity of a novel." A reviewer rated this good for those familiar with the issues, but especially for those not so.
- Halper, Jeff. ***An Israeli in Palestine: Resisting Dispossession, Redeeming Israel***, (2008) Shortlisted for the Palestine *Book Awards* 2016. Israeli anthropologist and activist Jeff Halper throws a harsh light on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from the point of view of a critical insider. While the Zionist founders of Israel created a vibrant society, culture and economy, they did so at a high price: Israel could not maintain its exclusive Jewish character without imposing on the country's Palestinian population policies of ethnic cleansing, occupation and discrimination, expressed most graphically in its ongoing demolition of thousands of Palestinian homes, both inside Israel and in the Occupied Territories.
- Ateek, Naim Stifan. ***A Palestinian Christian Cry for Reconciliation***. (2008) Forward by Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Ateek is a Palestinian Christian priest. Palestinian Liberation theology, like other liberation theologies, takes context seriously. Palestinian context continues to be one of occupation and oppression. The book strikes at the heart of the conflict and addresses the major obstacles to peace. It seeks to engage, educate and challenge readers regardless of what side of the conflict they take. Its closing hope is one of peace for all the people of the land- Israelis and Palestinians alike.

Documentaries: The following may be available at your library. Some are available on YouTube, on a streaming service, or free from Kanopy if your library subscribes to Kanopy (most libraries do). (<http://www.kanopy.com>)

- ***The Wanted 18***. Amer Shomali and Paul Cowan. Documentary. (2014) True story of the Israeli army's pursuit of 18 cows, whose independent milk production on a Palestinian collective farm in Beit Sahour (a district of Bethlehem and the birthplace of non-violent resistance) was declared "a threat to the national security of the state of Israel". "An enchanting, inspirational tribute to the ingenuity and power of grassroots activism". Created by Palestinian artist Amer Shomali and veteran Canadian director Paul Cowan, featuring Beit Sahour citizens as well as the cows. 75 min. Winner of numerous awards. Highly recommended. Not available on YouTube. May be at your public library. Also available on Amazon Prime or IMDbPro. Can be rented for \$6.00 from the NFB.
- ***The Iron Wall***. Mohammed Alatar. (2006) Academy Award nominee. (52 min.) Filmmaker Mohammed Alatar examines the effects of Israeli settlements in the West Bank on the peace process. Good history of the wall. Not on YouTube. May be available from your library.

- **5 Broken Cameras.** Emad Burnat and Guy Davidi. (2012) Award-winning documentary depicting a Palestinian father recording his Palestinian village's resistance to the encroachment of Israeli settlements. 90 min. Available for rent on YouTube or free on Kanopy.
- **The Gatekeepers (Inside Israel's Secret Service).** Droh Moreh. (2012) Multiple awards. Six former heads of the Shin Bet (Israeli Secret Service) reflect on their actions and decisions while in charge of overseeing Israel's war on terror, both Palestinian and Jewish. Contains original historical footage and reportage. 100 min. Available on YouTube and Kanopy.
- **Occupation 101: Voices of the Silenced Majority.** Written and directed by Sufyan and Abdallah Omeish. (2006) "A thought-provoking documentary film on the current and historical root causes of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and U.S. political involvement." 90 min. Multiple awards. Available on YouTube.
- **Jenin, Jenin.** Mohammad Bakri. (2002) Testimonies from refugees in Jenin camp when the Israeli army invaded in 2002 after 48 Israeli had been killed by Palestinians. A UN fact-finding mission was not allowed to enter but Bakri snuck in with a camera. 52 min. Available on YouTube.
- **Imprisoning a generation.** (2019) 50 min. follows the stories of 4 young Palestinians who have been detained and imprisoned under Israeli law. Available at <https://www.anemoia.net>

Additional material is listed below. There is a lot of misinformation on YouTube. The sources listed below are all reliable.

- **Peter Larson** has a thoughtful and respectful blog. <https://canadatalksisraelpalestine.ca/>
- [Any material from Independent Jewish Voices Canada is good.](#)
- **B'Tselem** (The Israeli Information Centre for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories) Lots of good information on this site. <http://www.btselem.org>
- **Wikipedia: "2018-2019 Gaza border protests"** – Describes events in the "Great March of Return" protests.
- **Border protests in Gaza.** Shown at UN Human Rights Council meeting, Feb 28, 2019. <https://m.youtube.com/watch?feature=youtu.be&v=etrqOi0eC2w>
- **"Approaching the first anniversary of the Great March of Return protests in 2019"** (United Nations Report on Gaza) <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/approaching-first-anniversary-great-march-return-protests-gaza>
- Ex-Israeli soldiers speak out about human rights abuses in the Israeli military. <https://www.breakingthesilence.org.il> This is especially relevant as the Israeli army is under investigation by the International Criminal Court for alleged war crimes.

- [Independent Jewish Voices Canada has an excellent webinar “An Army Like No Other” on YouTube. It features Haim Bresheeth Zabner, the author of the book by the same name. The book is about the role of the Israeli Army in shaping Israel.](#)

Websites with many links:

- www.zatoun.com
- www.unjppi.org
- <https://www.united-church.ca/social-action/justice-initiatives/brave-spaces-talking-about-palestinian-childrens-rights>. This site offers workshops originally designed to be used in person but which could be adapted to use on Zoom. It also has a workshop on how to speak to your M.P.
- www.kuminow.com Go to online archives. Week 43 - Defense for Children International; Week 41 - Women in Black and Women under Occupation; Week 44 - Churches for Middle East Peace, Living in Gaza under Blockade (60% of Gazans are children.)
- A Cry for Home - MCC Canada. An MCC advocacy campaign on Palestine and Israel. A wealth of stories and fact sheets.

Websites worth exploring:

- https://www.unicef.org/oPt/UNICEF_oPt_Children_in_Israeli_Military_Detention_Observations_and_Recommendations_-_6_March_2013.pdf
- <https://www.amnesty.org/en/countries/middle-east-and-north-africa/israel-and-occupied-palestinian-territories/report-israel-and-occupied-palestinian-territories>
- <https://mcccanada.ca/sites/mcccanada.ca/files/media/common/documents/acfh-detention-updatefebruary72019.pdf>
- <https://www.united-church.ca/social-action/justice-initiatives/brave-spaces-talking-about-palestinian-childrens-rights>

HOW TO SUPPORT PALESTINIANS BY BUYING THEIR PRODUCTS

- **Support Palestinian farmers:** Zatoun is a charitable organization, based in Canada, which supports Palestinian farmers by selling olive oil, olive oil soap, za’atar (a herb mix of thyme and sumac) and the wonderful Medjool dates. Bulk purchases only. The most economical purchase is the Peace Box for \$240 which contains 10 bottles of oil, 4 bars of soap and 4 bags of za’atar. Comes with lots of information about Palestine. “Zatoun” is the Arabic word for “oil”. <https://zatoun.com> Medjool dates can also be purchased through Karen Rodman at Just Peace Advocates info@justpeaceadvocates.ca You can place a minimum order of 8 boxes (900 grams per box), for \$160 which includes free mailing to one address. Best time to order is in the fall, just after harvest.

- **Support Palestinian craftspeople:** Craftspeople rely on selling their crafts to make a living. Two organizations which support local craftspeople are Wi'am and Touch of Grace. Wi'am is a grassroots organization based in Bethlehem which works to promote peace and justice. It is worthwhile checking out their website. To create their store go to [Shop-Wi'amsmallpdf.com.pdf](#) To contact Touch of Grace go to [touch-grace.com](#) Prices are in US dollars. Shipping is expensive. Add about 25% to the cost of the products for shipping. Both of these organizations also offer tours.