

# JOURNEYS TOWARD JUSTICE

**A Guide for Congregational Study  
(Student Packet)**

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# Journeys Toward Justice – Student Handout

## Session 1 - Black Theology and Kairos Theology as Theologies of Liberation (Luke 4:18-19; Mark 1:14-15)

*At the conclusion of Session 1, participants should be able to:*

1. Describe characteristics of liberation theology from a biblical and (African American) historical context
2. Have a shared meaning of liberation theology to current global realities of injustice

### Facilitator’s Guide The Dialogue To:

1. Define Black Theology
  - Discuss the historical and biblical context for black theology
  - Discuss black theology as situated among other liberationist theology movements globally
2. Define Kairos Theology
  - Biblically, discuss the ways in which Kairos time is different than chronos time; offer scriptural examples
  - Discuss the ways in which Kairos time informs Kairos theology
3. Explore the Kairos legacy
  - Explore the ways in which the concept of Kairos has been taken up across time and space
  - Think through common theological concerns across location

**Resource:** Black Theology and Black Liberation reading – Black Theology and the Black Woman reading – Black Theology and Third World Theologies reading– Palestinian Liberation Theology reading – Student Handout Page

*Personal Reflection:* Does your prayer routine regularly include prayers for the fight against injustice? What resources are you using to enhance your spiritual discipline towards justice?

### Worksheet Questions:

1. Do you think the concept of liberation is being widely discussed in places of worship? If your answer is “no,” why do you think this is the case?
2. In your own religious upbringing, how was the concept of liberation discussed?
3. What, if anything, do you feel the Old Testament says about fighting injustice?
4. To the extent that the Old Testament does encourage believers to fight against injustice, do you feel like there is a specific mandate to fight against racial, gender or religious injustice?
5. Have you heard the concept of “kairos time” before? Does it have any present-day applications or helpfulness?

### Suggested Homework:

To student learners, please review the next session’s materials – accessible via the “Black Church Toolkit” folder of the Voices4PeaceNow website ([www.voices4peacenow.org](http://www.voices4peacenow.org)) – in advance of the next session. Come prepared to discuss.

# Journeys Toward Justice – Student Handout

## Session 2 – Old Testament, Cultural Context and Social Location (Exodus 12:31-42)

At the conclusion of Session 2, participants should be able to:

1. Communicate the difference between the Biblical Israel and the political Israel (State of Israel)
2. State the relationship between the content of specific scriptures and the different ways that they have been communicated, preached, taught, etc.

### Facilitator’s Guide The Dialogue To:

1. Discuss Social and Cultural Context of the Old Testament
  - Discuss the importance of understanding scripture in its proper social, historical, and cultural context
  - Discuss the problems with not placing scripture in proper historical and socio-cultural context, and how that has contributed to divisive interpretations of text
2. Explore Social Location of Scriptural Reader/Interpreter
  - Reflect on the importance of the social context of the scripture reader
  - Identify the ways in which dominant Euro-centric cultural interpretations of Biblical text have operated to de-legitimate experiences of people of color and their relationship with God
3. Discuss the Exodus Narrative and its importance/resonance within Afro-Christian communities
4. Discuss the Difference Between the Biblical Israel and the State of Israel
  - Introduce the distinction between Jewishness as a religious identity and Jewishness as a cultural-ethnic identity
  - Consider the fact that Biblical Israel is not the same as the post-1948 political state, and how this reality influences the idea of “Israel as Chosen People”

**Resource:** Beyond Identification reading – Race, Racism and the Biblical Narratives reading – Chosen People Roundtable video – Visualizing Palestine Image – Student Handout Page

*Personal Reflection:* What about the idea of “Israel” makes it difficult to separate the Biblical Israel from the political Israel? Who are your religious ancestors?

### Worksheet Questions:

1. Describe three ways in which understanding scripture outside of its proper historical context might be harmful?
2. Are the land promises made to Israel in Genesis also promised to the present-day Israel?
3. Think of two scriptures that are preached/taught without consideration of proper historical and cultural context. Discuss.
4. What were some of your visceral or “gut-level” thoughts in response to the claim that the sovereign state [of Israel] is not identical to [the] Biblical Israel?
5. Is this educational session the first time you’ve discussed the presence of Africans in the Bible?
6. Being of African heritage, why do you think many African American churches fail to discuss and study the placement of Africans in the Bible?

### Suggested Homework:

To student learners, please review the next session’s materials – accessible via the “Black Church Toolkit” folder of the Voices4PeaceNow website ([www.voices4peacenow.org](http://www.voices4peacenow.org)) – in advance of the next session. Come prepared to discuss.

# Journeys Toward Justice – Student Handout

## Session 3 – Signs of the Times, Pt. 1: Palestine and Israel (Amos 5:10-14; Micah 2:1-2)

*At the conclusion of Session 3, participants should be able to:*

1. Associate injustices in Palestine and Israel with other social injustices
2. Identify the different ways that conflicts in Palestine and Israel are presented in the US national media

### Facilitator’s Guide The Dialogue To:

1. Discuss the “signs of the times” regarding Israel/ occupied Palestine
  - Discuss the ways in which US Americans relate to this conflict
  - Reflect upon the ways in which popular media skews our understanding of the conflict by advancing the idea of the “evil Arab Middle East”
2. Discuss similar “signs of the times” regarding systems of oppression and control under which black Americans suffer
  - Discuss the ways in which the mass incarceration of black Americans mirrors the policing and detention of Palestinians
  - Discuss the ways in which the tracking of black Americans into urban ghettos mirrors the quarantining of Palestinians (emphasize this a good starting point of experience)

**Resource:** Sacrificing the Vulnerable reading – The Palestinian Struggle Is A Black Struggle reading – Israel & Palestine, An Animated Introduction Video – Non-indictment for Police Killing 1 Video – Non-indictment for Police Killing 2 Video – Islamophobia Cartoon Image – Student Handout Page

*Personal Reflection:* What is your personal example of “acting justly”? What is your personal example of “loving mercy”? What is your personal example of “walking humbly”?

### Worksheet Questions:

1. How have you heard the Israel and Palestine conflicts depicted in the national media?
2. After engaging the Session 3 lesson, have any of your ideas about Israel and Palestine changed? Discuss why or why not.
3. Further discuss some of the significant similarities and differences between persons of color in Israel/ Palestine (specifically Palestinians) and persons of color in the US (specifically, African Americans).
4. How do you understand racial supremacy? And do you agree or disagree that it operates globally? How does it play out in the conflict between Israel and Palestine, if at all?
5. How might the God of justice be at work in this stage of human history?
6. With all of the pressing needs of African American communities in the US, should our communities be involved in Palestinian justice pursuits?

### Suggested Homework:

To student learners, please review the next session’s materials – accessible via the “Black Church Toolkit” folder of the Voices4PeaceNow website ([www.voices4peacenow.org](http://www.voices4peacenow.org)) – in advance of the next session. Come prepared to discuss.

# Journeys Toward Justice – Student Handout

## Session 4 – Signs of the Times, Pt. 2: Journeys Toward Justice – Ferguson and Gaza

*At the conclusion of Session 4, participants should be able to:*

1. Identify 2-3 specific similarities between racial oppression in Palestine and racial oppression in the US
2. Explore the possibilities and limitations of coalition-building across different contexts

### **Facilitator’s Guide The Dialogue To:**

1. Discuss the concept of “global race consciousness”—that is, oppressed persons and communities of color tapping into a common understanding of similar histories of racialized and political struggles as other groups
2. Discuss the relationship between the August 2014 killing and aftermath of the killing of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri and/or other current and local examples and the conditions of police violence in Palestine

**Resource:** The Ferguson/Palestine Connection Reading – From Gaza to Ferguson Reading – Palestinian Statement of Solidarity Reading – Hagler ‘Connecting the Dots’ Video - #Ferguson\_#Gaza Image – Free Gaza Image – Palestinian Solidarity Image

*Personal Reflection:* Often times, our own experiences and our own stories help us to better understand and feel the celebrations and the hardships faced by others. What, if any, parts of your own stories help you feel and relate to Ferguson or Palestine?

### **Worksheet Questions:**

1. What do you remember most explicitly about the civil unrest in Ferguson, MO after the killing of Michael Brown, Jr.? What images and language accompanied the moment?
2. How might someone respond to the following question: With ample social, political and economic injustices for African Americans to fight on behalf of their own communities, why be concerned with justice in Palestine?
3. Why might it be important to both draw connections and build relationships across different contexts (in this case, between African American experience and Palestinian or Palestinian-American experience)? Alternatively, what could be some of the limitations or cautions about drawing connections across different contexts?
4. Discuss reasons why certain stories of Black American protest and resistance attain national news coverage and others do not.
5. How, if at all, might moments of civil protest, resistance and unrest factor into understandings of God’s work?
6. What is the historical background of the Parable of the Good Samaritan? Who were the Samaritans and how were they treated by the Jews of Jesus’ day? What message might Jesus be communicating about ‘turning social roles upside down’ and about racially segregated societies such as the United States?

### **Suggested Homework:**

To student learners, please review the next session’s materials – accessible via the “Black Church Toolkit” folder of the Voices4PeaceNow website ([www.voices4peacenow.org](http://www.voices4peacenow.org)) – in advance of the next session. Come prepared to discuss.

# Journeys Toward Justice – Student Handout

## Session 5 –Africans in the Middle East (Micah 2:1-2; Galatians 3:28-29)

*At the conclusion of Session 5, participants should be able to:*

1. Identify some of the lived realities of Africans in Palestine and Israel
2. Share critical similarities between the conditions of Africans living in Palestine/Israel and African Americans in the US

### Facilitator’s Guide The Dialogue To:

1. Recap “global race consciousness” and explore the experiences of Africa-descended persons in the “Middle East”
2. Discuss specific examples of the interconnectedness of these global justice struggles
  - Discuss similarities between the discrimination against Africans living in Israel (not in occupied Palestine), and that of Black Americans in the US, specifically regarding police surveillance and violence.
  - Reflect upon how the Israeli sterilization of Ethiopian women mirrors the sterilization of poor black women in the US.

**Resource:** Israel Forcibly Injected African Immigrants reading – Israeli Minister Vows to Keep Detention Center Open reading – Ethiopian Jews Protest Against Racist Police Brutality video – Israel’s New Racism video – Israel Admits Forced Sterilization of Ethiopians video – Student Handout Page

*Personal Reflection:* There is a phrase that says, “We are only as strong as our weakest link.” Do you see any merit in that phrase? Does this phrase have any relevance when considering the experiences of African and Africa-descended people globally? If you were to write a prayer or hymn for African people worldwide, what would you write?

### Worksheet Questions:

1. This session mentions the concept of “population growth.” Why might this concept be important in a racial supremacy?
2. What might be some additional reasons that Africans in Israel are treated poorly?
3. Why do you think that the stories of Africans and Africa-descended persons in Israel and Palestine are not often told in the US?
4. For African Americans, why is it important that the stories of Africans and Africa-descended persons in Israel and Palestine be told?
5. Every person of color in Israel or Palestine that is discriminated against, oppressed and treated as sub-human is not a member of the Christian faith; How important is it for Christians to consider the welfare of non-Christians? Furthermore, does our consideration of their welfare have a limit?

### Suggested Homework:

To student learners, please review the next session’s materials – accessible via the “Black Church Toolkit” folder of the Voices4PeaceNow website ([www.voices4peacenow.org](http://www.voices4peacenow.org) – in advance of the next session. Come prepared to discuss.

# Journeys Toward Justice – Student Handout

## Session 6 –Theology Matters (Leviticus 25:8-18)

*At the conclusion of Session 5, participants should be able to:*

1. Define Zionism, including ideas about how it operates
2. Identify the buzzwords and phrases that obstruct conversation about Palestine and the race- and religion-based oppression

### Facilitator’s Guide The Dialogue To:

1. Discuss why it is important for Christians to support Palestinian justice
2. Discuss the Christian theologies that communicate how Christians and Jews should relate
  - Discuss supersessionism and Christian responses to Jewish Holocaust theology
  - Discuss Christian Zionism
  - Discuss contemporary Christian responses to Judaism and Zionism
3. Discuss the ways in which theology shapes the current moment in which we live

**Resource:** Jewish and Christian Responses to the Holocaust reading – Black and Activist Ministers Say CBC Should Be Ashamed reading – Beyond Zionism, Pt. 1 video – Black Ministers Welcome Netanyahu video – With God On Our Side video – Student Handout Page

*Personal Reflection:* What experiences have shaped the development of your own theology and who you believe God to be?

### Worksheet Questions:

1. How have you been taught to view the Jewish Holocaust?
2. What are some reasons that Black Christians (or anyone, for that matter) might be reluctant to be critical of the Jewish Holocaust?
3. List or discuss 2-3 biblical or theological themes about Israel and the Holy Land that have been used to cover-up the unjust practices against Palestinians.
4. How do you think the linkage between Biblical Israel and the current political state of Israel came to be?
5. What do you think it means for one to theologize outside of both the church and the academy?
6. What are some unconventional, unusual and unexpected places that you believe God can be found? Interfaith dialogue? Civil protest and resistance?

### Suggested Homework:

To student learners, please review the next session’s materials – accessible via the “Black Church Toolkit” folder of the Voices4PeaceNow website ([www.voices4peacenow.org](http://www.voices4peacenow.org)) – in advance of the next session. Come prepared to discuss.

# Journeys Toward Justice – Student Handout

## Session 7 –The Church, Structural Sin and Assaults on Sacred Space (2 Chronicles 7:14)

*At the conclusion of Session 7, participants should be able to:*

1. Identify instances of violence (physical, mental, cultural or religious) committed by or within the Christian Church
2. Identify recent (within the past 35 or so years) acts of violence committed against Black Churches

### **Facilitator’s Guide The Dialogue To:**

1. Discuss the concepts of structural violence and structural sin
  - Unpack the concept of structural sin
  - Discuss the ways in which we can understand structural sin in terms of the historical and contemporary conditions of both black Americans and Palestinians
2. Explore the dialogue between Palestinian Christians and US American Christians
3. Discuss the recent race-motivated crimes and assaults on sacred places and houses of worship.

**Resource:** Let Our Ears Tingle With Truth reading – Ferguson Fiasco reading – Christianity in Palestine reading – Vatican to Recognize Palestinian state in New Treaty reading – Student Handout Page

*Personal Reflection:* Do the violent assaults on Black churches resonate with you in any way? Does your devotional routine consider the potential costs of being a person of faith?

### **Worksheet Questions:**

1. Discuss a few reasons that might explain why most current churches don’t teach about the Christian history of violence and persecution
2. Why would the historical Christian Church persecute and oppress others, especially if the church is called to love?
3. Are there any current examples of how the contemporary Christian Church (or the black church) persecutes those labeled as “different”?
4. What words and images come to mind when you think of traditional African religions?
5. Do you feel like the Black Church is required to speak truth and advance justice for Palestine and Israel? Why or why not?

### **Suggested Homework:**

To student learners, please review the next session’s materials – accessible via the “Black Church Toolkit” folder of the Voices4PeaceNow website ([www.voices4peacenow.org](http://www.voices4peacenow.org)) – in advance of the next session. Come prepared to discuss.

# Journeys Toward Justice – Student Handout

## Session 8 –Intercultural, Interfaith and Racial Dialogue, Pt. 1: In Black & White (1 Corinthians 12:12-14)

*At the conclusion of Session 8, participants should be able to:*

1. Reflect upon the US process by which select ethnic immigrant groups “became” white
2. Recognize the logic behind AIPAC’s targeted campaign against African Americans

### Facilitators’ Guide The Dialogue To:

1. Identify the process of becoming white that American Jews underwent after WWII
2. Discuss the ways in which the sometimes ambivalent Black and Jewish relationship in the US might affect our understandings of the Israeli – Palestinian conflict
3. Discuss the ways in which Jews stood alongside black Americans during the Civil Rights era
4. On the other hand, discuss the contemporary culture of “competing narratives of suffering.” The traumas of the European Jewish Holocaust are sometimes placed against the traumas of chattel slavery in the US.
5. Reflect upon the function and utility of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC)

**Resource:** Tutu Letter to UC Berkeley Student Leaders reading – The Israel Lobby Finds a New Face reading – Whitewashed video – Student Handout Page

*Personal Reflection:* If you are a Christian as well as a person of color, does it feel difficult to navigate both identities, simultaneously, in the present moment?

### Worksheet Questions:

1. How do you think about race? Is it just skin color? Is it a way of thinking? Is it a way of thinking in addition to a way of being?
2. What are some of the “privileges, rights and responsibilities” that come along with whiteness?
3. What are some reasons – good or bad – that people might seek to compare the European Jewish Holocaust to the Transatlantic slave trade or US slavery?
4. What have you assumed about the historical relationships between Black Americans and Jews in the US?
5. Why do you think AIPAC might want cooperation from the African American/Black American population?
6. Are you familiar with any of the AIPAC or other strategies to politicize African Americans in favor of the pro-Zionist Israeli narratives and policies?
7. What do you make of the new coalition emerging among African Americans, Palestinian activists and Jewish activists around liberation, justice and ending racism worldwide?

### Suggested Homework:

To student learners, please review the next session’s materials – accessible via the “Black Church Toolkit” folder of the Voices4PeaceNow website ([www.voices4peacenow.org](http://www.voices4peacenow.org)) – in advance of the next session. Come prepared to discuss.

# Journeys Toward Justice – Student Handout

## Session 9 –Intercultural, Interfaith and Racial Dialogue, Pt. 2: It Ain't All Black & White (Romans 14:10)

At the conclusion of Session 9, participants should be able to:

1. Connect the (media) narration of the September 11, 2001 NYC attacks to Islamophobia
2. Explore some of the possibilities and limitations of intercultural, multi-faith and/or interracial dialogue

### Facilitators' Guide The Dialogue To:

1. Discuss the concepts of ecumenism, interfaith and why they're important
2. Discuss Islamophobia
  - Discuss Islamophobia as a racial anxiety and a religious anxiety
  - Discuss the ways in which US culture portrays negative stereotypes through media, pop culture, entertainment etc.
3. Reflect upon the ways in which other nations have advocated and continue to advocate Palestinian justice.

**Resource:** Labeling image – The Brown International image – South African Apartheid, Palestinian Apartheid image – Apartheid: South Africa and Palestine image – South African Child Pro-Palestinian Cape Town Rally image – Student Handout Page

*Personal Reflection:* Do your personal and/or public prayers contain inclusive language re: persons of other racial and religious identities? Have you had any experiences that shaped your perceptions, for better or worse, of persons of other faith walks?

### Worksheet Questions:

1. What sorts of things do Americans say or think about persons of Arab descent?
2. When you think of a Palestinian, what images immediately come to mind?
3. Did any of your opinions or actions towards persons of Arab descent and/or Muslim tradition change after the September 11, 2001 attacks on New York City?
4. Have the recent media discussions of ISIS or ISIL shaped your thinking about Islam or the Middle East?
5. Do you think interreligious, intercultural and interfaith dialogue can create lasting change? If so, how?
6. Do you get the impression that Black Christians have generally thought deeply and critically about intercultural, interfaith and racial issues? If so, why? If not, why?

### Suggested Homework:

To student learners, please review the next session's materials – accessible via the “Black Church Toolkit” folder of the Voices4PeaceNow website ([www.voices4peacenow.org](http://www.voices4peacenow.org)) – in advance of the next session. Come prepared to discuss.

# Journeys Toward Justice – Student Handout

## Session 10 –Call to Action (Micah 6:8; James 2:26; Luke 18:1-8)

*At the conclusion of Session 10, participants should be able to:*

1. Recognize nonviolent, direct political action as situated within Holy Scripture
2. Contribute to the education, activism and advocacy work for both the Black and Palestinian justice struggles

### Facilitator’s Guide The Dialogue To:

1. Summarize the importance of both a political solidarity with other racialized peoples (Palestinians and African-descended communities in the Middle East) and a moral solidarity with fellow believer.
  - Discuss the concept of “Loving Resistance”
  - Discuss what we are called to do in our context
2. Brainstorm next steps

**Resource:** Kairos 30th Anniversary Statement reading – Student Handout Page

*Personal Reflection:* Currently, how do you view “work”—as in, coupling your faith with “works” or deeds—to be present in your devotional life?

### Worksheet Questions:

1. What can you do individually to mobilize towards peace and justice in Palestine and Israel?
2. How do you think your church, organization or ministry group could or should contribute to the work of Palestinian liberation, and justice in the region? Is the end goal reasonable, feasible and attainable?
3. How are individuals and/or organizations already getting involved with efforts to mobilize for Palestinian justice? Who are potential partners in your area? How can you get more involved (what are the next steps you can take?)?
4. What can you and/or your church do to increase awareness of the intersectionality and convergence between justice for African Americans and Palestinians? If you have a core group emerging from this study, take a moment to think through the next steps you might take together.
5. How much should one think about personal risk when deciding to stand up for truth?
6. As people of faith, how do we more effectively speak our conscience?

## Session 1: Black Theology and Kairos Theology as Theologies of Liberation

The Scriptural base for Session 1 is Luke 4:18-19, the moment that Jesus stands to read from the prophet Isaiah's scroll. In this moment, Jesus is in Nazareth, commenting on his ministry. He centralizes his ministry on a few key ideals: to preach good news to the poor; to proclaim freedom; to recover sight to the blind and to release the oppressed. It is, perhaps, all of these things together that should constitute "proclaiming the year of the Lord's favor."

Liberation is the central organizing theme of Session 1. We are in a time in which oppression takes many different forms. The present moment offers example after example of oppression against women, racial oppression and violence, oppression against children, social control of a particular group, political imprisonment, oppression of normative sexual preferences and the list never ends.

An important question to all Christian believers should be, "How do I best live out the call and the cause of Christ in my own journey?" In other words, how does one preach good news? How does one proclaim freedom, recovery and release to the oppressed, in one's present context? These are important and, hopefully, lingering questions. In a significant way, they are questions that Session 1's brief readings attempt to address. From its inception as a field of study, Black Theology has attempted to more deeply understand how the God of freedom continues to work in the experiences of those most profoundly impacted by oppression. Together, Session 1's readings and core questions strive towards a more robust understanding of the God that motivated Jesus to preach the revolutionary and Good News of liberation.

## **Session 2: Old Testament, Cultural Context and Social Location**

The Scripture base for Session 2 is Exodus 12:31-42. This passage of Scripture chronicles the infamous “Exodus narrative,” as God’s messenger, Moses, leads his people out of Egyptian captivity. Though this is a familiar story, often taught and cited in Christian churches around the globe, we do not often enough teach its nuances – nuances that could be profound and revelatory for our own faith journeys.

The questions raised and materials assigned for Session 2 should be understood as “inspired” by this Exodus passage. An important theme of this session is cultural context—that is, raising the question, “What was the social, cultural and historical context in which God called Moses to lead the captives out of Egypt?” And why is it important to understand this context in the first place? In this case specifically, analysis of context opens a wider portrait of the many ways that God has worked throughout human history. We discover the conditions that prompted God to demand liberation; we encounter dynamic personalities and stories that God chose to use during this leg of the journey; and we come to learn the lengths to which God will go to ensure that God’s children are equipped for their callings.

Understanding cultural and historical context also aids us in not conflating language that sounds similar, but is very different, such as The Biblical Israel and the contemporary political State of Israel. This distinction is highlighted in the assigned video clip for Session 2.

Indeed, all of Scripture could be more robustly and powerfully unpacked if understood within its proper context. This is not to say that the holy text has little or no relevance in contemporary society; it is to say that interpreting Scripture only through lenses of the present inevitably leads to omissions and incompleteness.

Social location simply identifies how a reader or interpreter is coming to a Scripture text. What experiences inform how one looks at a particular passage? What significant life moments or backgrounds shape how one interprets a particular story in the Bible? And why does that background shape one’s interpretation in that way? These questions all gesture towards the social location of the onlooker/ reader/ interpreter—the “location” from which they approach the text.

In the African American Christian experience, the Exodus narrative is generally very significant. In other words, the social location of African Americans as a cultural group with a collective history often (not always) leads to a close resonance with the Biblical Exodus. Historically, enslaved African Americans invoked the Exodus narrative as a source of strength to battle their bondage. And subsequently, generations of African American Christians have found special value and power in Moses’ triumph as he served his mighty God.

The materials to be reviewed in preparation for Session 2 and the core questions, together, help us understand some of the nuances of cultural context and social location. Collectively, they are intended to help us grow more aware of how we approach the Old Testament, how we approach God’s words in the Old Testament and how we live our lives in the present as a result.

## **Session 3: Signs of the Times, Pt. 1 – Palestine and Israel**

Quite appropriately for a session that begins to unpack conditions of oppression in both Israel and Palestine, the Session 3 Scripture passages come from two prophets, both fervently committed to the work of justice as the work of righteousness.

In Chapter 5 of the prophetic Book of Amos, the prophet is speaking to Biblical Israel concerning its need to repent. The Session 3 base passage arrives with Amos setting forth, to the people, all of the injustices committed by their hands. In his words, they “levy a straw tax on the poor...oppress the innocent... [and] deprive the poor of justice in courts.” Although these are only a few of the evils for which Israel needed to repent, the prophet took great strides to communicate that God knew “how many [were their] offenses and how great [were their] sins.” The second passage repeats a similar refrain. The Hebrew prophets fulfilled their callings by traveling throughout God’s kingdom, communicating that God could see how much a people truly loved Him/Her by looking at how they treated the least among their ranks. All of the Hebrew prophets, in each of their respective journeys, reflected the things that pleased and displeased God. And they consistently returned to the God of justice.

They reflected on conditions of the poor, they gestured towards conditions of the widows and orphans – those who, in traditional Jewish culture, would have been the most oppressed and marginalized. In the Biblical era, the moral compass of a society could only be evaluated by looking upon the conditions of the perceived “least” of that society. This is much like today.

Therefore, these passages frame our entrée into conditions of oppression in Palestine and Israel. The political State of Israel is, among other things, facilitating a racial caste, similar to the United States. In other words, there is a racial hierarchy in which certain groups of people are valued as less human, less worthy and less deserving of decent treatment than others. Groups at the bottom of that hierarchy are darker complexioned: Ethiopian Jews; African refugees and asylum seekers from the Eritrea and the Sudan, seeking Israel as safe haven from political conflict; African Palestinians living in Israel; Palestinians living in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and the occupied Palestinian territories; and all of the other Arab-descended peoples living within Israel or bordering countries. As in the US, this racial ranking plays itself out in matters of healthcare access, educational opportunity, restrictions on movement and travel, juvenile incarceration, electoral politics and every other domain of life.

Knowing that the God of today is the same God that formed the world at the foundations of its existence, how should we – as God’s 21st century disciples, priests and prophets – engage global society’s treatment of the poor, orphaned, oppressed and “least” among the ranks? Session 3 will help us begin to formulate answers for this question.

## **Session 4: Signs of the Times, Pt. 2: “Journeys Toward Justice – Ferguson and Gaza”**

After slaying his brother, Abel, in the field, Cain asked God an important question in Genesis 4:9. God demanded Cain to give account of what he had done to his brother and Cain responded, “I don’t know [where he is]” (Gen 4:9) He then posed the question to God, “Am I my brother’s keeper?” Cain’s question – the Scripture passage base for Session 4 – is relevant even for us today. What truly is our responsibility to our sisters and brothers? Should their well-being be of deep concern to us? Who should we even consider to be our sisters and brothers in the first place? And how much should we commit our lives to caring for them? These are all questions that animate Session 4’s conversations on the interconnectedness of Black America and Palestine, more specifically, Ferguson and Gaza.

The past 2 years have shown the world a new face of resistance movements. Communities of color – fighting for justice, equality, and liberation—have captured our international imagination. And many of these movements are energized by millennial and youth activism. In fact, activism itself looks very different than it did in decades past. With the rising influence of social media-based technologies, information is traveling faster and further now than it ever has before. Organic connections, across time and space, are happening naturally. For instance, within the heart of the 2014 civil unrest in Ferguson, MO (in the wake of the shooting death of Michael Brown, Jr.), youth activists in Palestine communicated to Black activists in the US via social media. In addition to offering specific tactics with which to resist unwarranted police violence, the Palestinian activists expressed a deep sense of solidarity and connection with Black American youth, fighting for their freedom. These moments appropriately raised questions of connectedness, solidarity, brotherhood and sisterhood across contexts, ultimately highlighting a deeper sense of commitment to the welfare of persons thousands of miles away.

This session is intended to challenge the boundaries that we think we know. It is intended to push us to consider what life might be like if we truly felt responsible for those outside of our immediate circle of influence: outside of our homes, our backyards and neighborhoods, our cities, our states and even our country. Are we, alas, our neighbors’ keeper?

## Session 5: Signs of the Times, Pt. 3 – Africans in Israel

The Scripture base for Session 5 is Micah 2:1-2. Here, the prophet is holding God's people accountable for their deliberate conspiracies to commit evil. He accounts, "Woe to those who plan iniquity, to those who plot evil on their beds! At morning's light they carry it out because it is in their power to do it. They covet fields and seize them, and houses, and take them. They defraud people...[and] rob them of their inheritance" (Micah 2:1-2). At once, Micah indicts the arbitrary abuse of power. This passage painfully reminds us that when persons wield an extraordinary amount of power over others, especially those with whom they have no relationship, there will always be an abuse of power. There will be an abuse of power and there will be significant problems. But Micah brings the good news that the people of God have the liberty, ability and responsibility to call these abuses of power by their rightful names – evil – and stand against them.

Unfortunately, the world in which we live has endless examples of the powerful oppressing and abusing the less powerful. Session 5 exposes participants to specifics about Israel's racial caste (racial hierarchy). The State of Israel has a sizeable African population. Some are technically "citizens," albeit second-class citizens (Ethiopian-descended Jews), some are not citizens (Muslims from the Sudan and Christians from Eritrea, fleeing political turmoil), but none of them are wanted by the Israeli state or mainstream culture. Israel is fearful that the wave of impoverished Africans will overwhelm the predominantly (racially and ethnically) Jewish composition of the country.

In response to this fear, Israel has spent more than \$350 million to build a 140-mile fence along its border with Egypt/Africa. This fence is in addition to the infamous apartheid wall. Also in response to this fear, Israel has relegated much of its African population to South Tel Aviv, offering them virtually no development, political representation or governmental interest in their communities. Ethiopian Jews are racially profiled and policed much more brutally than non-African inhabitants (much like Black Americans); they are stripped of their homes and disallowed to return (much like Palestinians in the West Bank); and recently, Ethiopian women were forcibly sterilized by the Israeli health department in an effort to control the growing African population (much like the forced and involuntary sterilization of poor Black women in the US between roughly 1930 and 1980). These are the realities of groups that are not wanted or valued. These are the realities of groups suffering under the arbitrary abuse of power.

Because of a very selective national media effort around turmoil in Israel and Palestine, US citizens rarely hear about Africans living in Israel. National media outlets often focus the conversation around issues of "Israel's safety" as a political entity and "Israel's sacredness and sanctity" as a holy site. While these conversations sometimes do produce legitimate concerns, they far more often veil conditions of oppression and abuses of power. Session 5's readings and video clips, bring these details to light.

What ought we learn from Micah and his fervent campaigns to indict oppression within his corner of God's kingdom?

## Session 6: Theology Matters

The Scripture base for Session 6 is Leviticus 25: 8-18. Biblically, this passage depicts God's instructions for how God's people were to live during the year of Jubilee. In a broad sense, the year of Jubilee was intended to commemorate God's rest after the process of creation. An entire year was to be spent in observance. And what was to be accomplished in that year was extraordinary.

Every 7 years – the 7th year being called the Sabbath year – the land itself rested (Leviticus 24:4). There was no sowing, no pruning of vineyards and no reaping of what grew. The year of Jubilee came on the 7th Sabbath year: i.e. the 49th year. And in this year of Jubilee, in addition to the typical resting of the land, there were a host of other measures of God's goodness towards God's people. Jubilee would bring the release of all personal debts. Every Israelite would be legally restored to the property from which he/she was displaced. The liberty of which people were once stripped was returned to them. In other words, freedom of captives was restored. In the year of Jubilee, all debtors, refugees and all others labeled as estranged were given a clean slate, so to speak. And furthermore, people of the land were instructed to treat one another kindly, not exploitatively. They were not to take advantage of their neighbors.

Theologically, this passage is especially relevant for how we treat those with whom we are in relationship and/or close proximity. It is for this reason that Leviticus 25 is the Scripture base for Session 6. It lifts up and mandates fairness, equality, integrity and truth.

The Biblical year of Jubilee essentially offers us a blueprint for how we are to engage with our neighbors – perhaps locally and globally. It reminds us of the importance of “leveling the playing field.” Returning land to those from whom it was robbed, speaking kindly of one's neighbor and refusing to further alienate an already marginalized group are all instructions that God gave for the year of Jubilee. There are also instructions that God is, perhaps, giving to us today.

Session 6 reflects on how conversations of theology and God at work in human history shape on-the-ground realities and lived experiences. We should not take this responsibility lightly. This session also reflects on some of the dangers in failing to use a Jubilee theology. And it seeks to spark dialogue about the ways in which theology – how we understand God to be speaking and working – could profoundly shape everything else in the world.

## Session 7: The Church, Structural Sin and Assaults on Sacred Space

In this oft-cited 2 Chronicles passage, God is visiting Solomon after completion of the temple. As in our present time, Solomon's God was faithful and just. Therefore, the Session 7 scripture base – 2 Chronicles 7:14 – depicts God communicating, to Solomon, the importance of people walking with repentance and humility before God. In a 21st century moment full of death, destruction and violence – committed by and against the Christian church – God is still calling God's people to righteousness. In order to help think through how standing up for God's righteousness might be applicable today, this Old Testament passage frames Session 7's conversations around structural sin and systemic-structural violence.

On the one hand, the Christian church generally, and the Black church specifically, have never been faultless in facilitating the oppression of others. Christian discourse will more readily talk about how the church "falls short" than it will about how the church actively facilitates oppression. But the latter dialogue needs to occur. Consider, for instance, how the Christian Church has always been in the business of policing the bodies and sexuality of women. In the Black Church, this issue is intensified.

On the other hand, in a very real way, the church is presently under assault. One can look to the recent wave of violence and vigilante assaults on Black US churches in the wake of the Mother Emanuel shooting. This isn't unlike the flurry of vigilante violence – specifically, arson – against Black churches, in the 1990s. Not unique to the United States, violence along religious and ethnic lines is currently all too common. The churches of Palestinian Christians and the mosques of Palestinian Muslims are being assaulted, bombed and burned as we speak.

The culture of racial and religious violence points toward a systemic and structural problem. How should the church be responding? How should the Black church, in particular, stand on its history and legacy as a moral voice? How could racism and Eurocentrism be central to the church's analysis of structural and institutional violence? What do the ideals of humility and repentance – the same directives that God offered to Solomon – tell us about how we should approach the matters of righteousness and righteous indignation?

## Session 8: Intercultural, Interfaith and Racial Dialogue, Pt. 1 – In Black and White

1 Corinthians reminds us that “just as a body, though one, has many parts...all its many parts form one body...” It is so with the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12). Oftentimes, however, this scripture passage is used to eliminate difference. Within (and outside of) the 21st century United States, language of diversity and multiculturalism abound. Given the fact that “racism” is this terrible monster that no one wants to embody – yet very few are willing to interrogate their own deeply rooted assumptions and attitudes about persons of different racial backgrounds – political correctness mandates the acceptance of difference. Consequently, being “color-blind” in a diverse society is the way that many self-identify. “Appreciating diversity” and “accepting difference” become buzz-phrases for the moral high ground. And far too often, for the American Christian, this scripture passage is used to communicate the very same status quo logic. In other words, everyone together constitutes one body in Christ, so therefore difference (especially racial difference) doesn’t matter. But this logic contradicts itself. How can human difference be both appreciated and rendered insignificant at the same time? This is the dilemma.

Session 8 encourages conversations about the possibilities and limitations of dialogue across racial and religious categories. And although the session maintains 1 Corinthians 12:12-14 to be the scripture base, the framing is slightly different than is commonly assumed. The scripture points to both unity and diversity within the body of Christ. It signals that both are unchangeable realities. So, too, is true about these United States. Mainstream America, and mainstream Christianity within America, spends much more energy talking about the quest for unity than about the implications of difference. This session seeks to probe some of those nuances. It explores how certain US-based groups within the Israel-Palestine debate use difference. It investigates how the historical relationships between different oppressed racial/ethnic groups in the US influence current realities. And it exposes participants to the cultural process that essentially “transforms” select ethnic immigrant groups into “Americans,” further reinforcing the ideal of “unity” and sameness.

Participants will then have the opportunity to reflect again on the session’s scripture passage and offer new ideas about how the American Christian ought to think about unity and diversity.

## **Session 9: Intercultural, Interfaith and Racial Dialogue, Pt. 2 – It Ain't All Black and White**

Session 9 engages squarely with the dilemma of Islamophobia—the culture of fear and anxiety directed towards persons of Muslim or Arab descent, stemming from the association(s) made between outward appearance and assumed characteristics (“terrorist” or “vengeful”). Existing prior, but intensified after the September 11, 2001 assaults on New York City, the US culture of Islamophobia influences almost every aspect of the country’s racial and religious landscape. It always looms in the background, in the assumptions, suppositions and automatic reactions of everyday life. And it most certainly influences American perception of the oppression happening in Palestine and Israel.

The scripture base for this session is Romans 14:10. “Why then,” Paul asks, “do you judge your brother or sister? Or why do you treat them with contempt? For we will all stand before God’s judgment seat.” Paul, here, communicates an ideally fundamental Christian conviction. We are not to judge harshly or with contempt. But what does this sensibility mean within the context of an American culture that saturates its constituency with tools to judge with malice, supremacy and contempt? The United States constantly and intentionally invites its citizenry to judge and adjudicate with scorn. This is part of what makes one an American – the presumption that the people and things that constitute these United States are the best, brightest, most noble, most desired and most true. Everything else is relegated to an afterthought. This is the status quo; and it is, unfortunately, far too often also the sentiment in which many Americans reside. American Christians – of any color – are not exempt.

The questions, conversations and materials discussed in this session all, in a unique way, invoke Paul’s important query. In addition to discussing Islamophobia, Session 9 also considers images that represent South Africa’s solidarity with the Palestinian justice struggle. Again, these materials will hopefully encourage discussion about the importance of interracial, interfaith and intercultural conversation and solidarity.

In the end, the reality remains that we will all stand before God’s judgment seat, as the apostle reminds us. How will we look upon our brothers and sisters in the meantime?

## Session 10: Call to Action

Session 10 concludes the congregational study curriculum with a call to action, an admonition to “live out” the assignments to justice that have been informed by the past nine sessions. The scripture bases for Session 10 are Micah 6:8 and James 2:26. If nothing else, these two familiar passages remind us that we must conjoin the work of head, heart and hand. We must combine the faith that fuels our Christian journeys with “working out” that faith in the world. In other words, faith in God and God’s promises should motivate the exercising of that faith in the world. Session 10 will provide resources and ideas about how to get further involved with mobilization that will help bring peace and justice to Israel and Palestine.

## Group Process Techniques

Below, you will find five (5) different methods / exercises for group learning that could be deployed during educational sessions. They will complement the lecture format in a host of ways. Decide what your goals are for the group experience you wish to have and then consider which technique would be most effective in reaching that goal.

### 1. Carrousel Brainstorm

Give each group a large sheet of newsprint, a different colored magic marker, and someone with a timer. Select a major issue in the readings such as “Chosen people.” Break the idea into 4 parts (or 3 depending on class size and number of groups, keeping 3 or 4 in each group to insure participation). Write a different aspect of the larger theme at the top of the paper so you have 4 (or more) subtopics to be discussed (such as: 1. The Jewish people are the chosen people for eternity (give a biblical reference); 2. The Church is the fulfillment of the chosen people and the true chosen ones; 3. Chosenness has responsibilities and demands obedience; 4. Chosenness is extremely problematic and can be mistaken for privilege – and could lead to idolatry).

Start the groups, have them write down their understanding and give Biblical references where possible. After 3-4 minutes, ring a bell, the groups move but take their magic marker (so their comments are always in the same color but on different sheets of newsprint). If time allows, give them an opportunity to comment on each topic, so you have 4 entries in different colors.

Then pull them together and see what they have learned. It is permissible for them to read other entries and learn from each.

### 2. Debate

Give class the readings for following week and introduce them briefly. Set up a conflict that is inherent in the reading, such as Zionism is a form of racism. Make sure the readings present both sides of the argument. Divide the class into pros (A) and cons (B). Tell group A that they should come to class next week ready to make 3-4 points that are well argued to make the point that Zionism is racism. Group B will be prepared to argue the opposite. They must be able to make their case in 3 minutes. Give the class a few tips on debating (a friendly debate). Note that the 3 minute time limit will be carefully monitored. You may want to give each presenter a 1 minute rebuttal, if time allows.

### 3. Elevator Speeches

Select several very specific topics that you hope to cover in the next class. Make a list of them and pass them out the week prior to the class in which they are to be covered. Have enough topics so you will have 2 people on each item. The assignment: each person will have 90 seconds to make a speech. Tell them to research the topic, write it out, and practice at home prior to class with a stopwatch. After each speech, ask the class to review the presentations in terms of content, convincing message, timeliness, and impact.

### 4. Triads

Divide the class into groups of 3. Give them a problem to solve based on the lesson. It could be a scriptural or political dilemma. Make sure there is no easy answer to the dilemma. (Why should African Americans be concerned about the Palestinians and Israelis when there are serious injustices to combat domestically?) Have one recorder and one presenter in each group. Have the groups share and write on a white board or newsprint. You can save time by asking for new ideas as you go around the triads so you don't repeat the same ideas.

## 5. Triangle Logic

Divide the class into groups of 3 or 4. Give each group a problem to solve from a biblical text or a political/moral dilemma based on the week's readings. Remind the class of the dilemma they are to work on (one example may be: the local Board of Rabbis has come to the local pastor who has invited a Palestinian Christian pastor to deliver the sermon next Sunday. They believe he (the Palestinian Christian speaker) is a vicious anti-Semite, and the invitation should be cancelled or the local pastor will be losing support from the Jewish organization. Conversely, they will be going to the local media if the pastor fails to cancel the invitation). The Rabbis will be returning in 48 hours to receive her decision. She has known this particular Palestinian pastor and knows that he is critical of Israeli policies, but is not anti-Semitic. How should she approach the meeting?)

Have the group draw a triangle on a sheet of paper. In the center of the triangle put the central point that the local pastor should make to the Rabbis. This is the core argument or thesis statement. On each corner of the triangle, put one statement that supports the core argument (thesis). Below each supporting sentence (at the corners) put 1-2 stories that support the statements. Each time you tell a story, return to make your key point again in different words. After the triangle is completed, tell them to draw a line from the bottom of the triangle to a point  $\frac{2}{3}$ s down the paper and have the group propose a statement that will search for common ground between the local pastor and the Rabbis (without compromising basic principles).

## Key Terms/Phrase Glossary

1. **African Holocaust** – The ongoing series of crimes against the humanity, culture and heritage of African and Africa-descended people through cultural plunder, chattel slavery, colonialism, imperialism, apartheid, occupation, exploitation and oppression. This 500+ year series of processes have been and continue to be rooted in the European and Euro-American-facilitated hierarchy of “European and non-European.” Another term for the African Holocaust is Maafa.
2. **AIPAC** – The American Israel Public Affairs Committee is a political lobbying group that advocates pro-Israel policies to the Legislative and Executive branches of the US government. AIPAC is arguably the most powerful pro-Israel lobbying group on Capitol Hill.  

AIPAC is significant to the Black Christian movement for justice in Palestine and Israel for two reasons. First, AIPAC continues to target and recruit Black clergy. Secondly, the lobbying group continues to target and recruit students from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). Both demographics are critical to AIPAC’s agenda because they are able to advance pro-Israel rhetoric while possessing the cultural/historical credibility to argue that Israel is not marginalizing, oppressing, discriminating or creating an apartheid state that subjugates persons of color. Regarding Black clergy specifically, AIPAC is able to help secure a theological justification for the Israeli occupation.
3. **Anti-Semitic** – Prejudice or disdain against Semitic people as a racial/ethnic, political or religious group.
4. **Apartheid/Apartheid state** – The term “apartheid” means “the state or condition of being apart or separate.” To facilitate an “apartheid state” is to facilitate a nation that physically, politically, socially, culturally, and economically separates select groupings of people from others. This separation is codified and formalized legislatively and legally.
5. **Bedouin** – An individual or group of people that live a nomadic lifestyle. They move from one place to another.
6. **Black theology of liberation** – A theology that understands God as being especially concerned about the lives of the oppressed. Black theology of liberation centralizes the experiences of Africa-descended people in the US and considers God as actively working towards their liberation from oppression.
7. **Caste** – A system of social distinction in which members of any particular group are generally locked into that group, without the possibility of mobility for themselves or their progeny. Caste is not synonymous with social class. While social class is a marker, caste is a system of hierarchy, ranking and oppression.
8. **Caste among Palestinians** – The racial caste that structures the lives and life chances of Palestinians (living in Palestine and Israel) and Israelis. Since the State of Israel facilitates a racial caste, the guiding force of white supremacy structures all lived experiences, not just those of Palestinians and other people of color. Those of European descent just occupy higher positions in the racial hierarchy.
9. **Christian Zionism** – The belief, among some practicing Christians, that the establishment of a physical Jewish state constitutes the Jewish ‘return to their homeland,’ therefore, fulfilling Biblical prophecy.
10. **Colonialism/Colonization** – A state sanctioned and state facilitated system of governance and social control that usually involves taking over a specific region – domestic or international – occupying it with “settlers,” exploiting it culturally and exploiting it economically.

11. **Competing narratives of [cultural] suffering** – The story (or the impulse to tell the story) that the suffering of one racial/ethnic/cultural group is “greater” or “more significant” than another. In the context of the J2J study resource, the cultural narratives often placed against each other are the Jewish Holocaust narrative and the African/African American Holocaust narrative (the Transatlantic Slave Trade, US chattel slavery and legal Jim/Jane Crow segregation).
12. **Ecumenism** – The act or belief of relating or sharing experiences across denominational boundaries.
13. **European Jewish Holocaust** – The systematic persecution and genocide of roughly 5-6 million of the 9 million Jews living in 1940s Europe. This massive campaign was carried out between 1941 and 1945 by German dictator, Adolf Hitler, his Nazi Party and the regime’s collaborators. Racism was central to the party’s genocidal philosophy and partly because of this fact, the European Jewish Holocaust has achieved notoriety as one of the most vicious moral outrages of the 20th century.
14. **Global race consciousness** – An understanding that the global resistance struggles of people of color, fighting under racial oppression, are interconnected. White supremacy (and other forms of racial supremacy) is not unique to the United States. The US and other nations of the “Western world” have perfected and elaborately advanced systems of racial hierarchy, but similar systems can be found in every other region. The world becoming increasingly global (business, trade etc.), coupled with social media platforms serving as global pathways for information transfer, has accelerated the ability of marginalized communities to draw international connections. Palestinian youth activists reaching out to Ferguson, MO protestors in 2014 is a hallmark example of global race consciousness.
15. **Imperialism** – The process and regulations by which a government extends its own power and influence, by either diplomacy or force.
16. **Intifada** – Palestinian uprisings against the Israeli occupation. The First Intifada occurred in 1987; the second occurred in 2000. The term “Third Intifada” usually refers to the 2014 increase in violence in Jerusalem.
17. **Islamophobia** – The culture of fear and anxiety directed towards persons of Muslim or Arab descent, stemming from the automatic association(s) made between outward appearance and select characteristics (“terrorist” or violent, etc)
18. **Israeli** – A citizen or permanent resident of the State of Israel. The term “Israeli” is a national / citizenship designation. The comparable term for the United States would be “American.”
19. **Jewish/Jew** – The terms “Jewish” and “Jew” can be either religious or ethnic identifiers. Religiously, the terms signify a follower of Judaism. Ethnically and culturally, Jews are groupings of people who identify with similar regional, ancestral, social, or national experiences. Ethnically, there are three dominant categories:
  - Ashkenazi Jews – Jews of Germany and Northern France
  - Sephardic Jews – Jews of Iberia and the Spanish diaspora
  - Mizrahi Jews – Jews descended from local Jewish communities of the Middle East, opposed to those from Europe, Africa or elsewhere
20. **Hermeneutic(s)** – the act or method of interpretation, specifically interpretation of Biblical or sacred texts.
21. **Holocaust theology** – The body of theological and philosophical discourse broadly concerning the role and function of God in light of the European Jewish Holocaust. This discourse – primarily occurring in Judaism, but also in Christian and Muslim theology – wrestles with the existence

of an all-knowing (omniscient), all-benevolent (omnibenevolent), all-powerful (omnipotent) and everywhere-present (omnipresent) God alongside the profound evil of physical and cultural genocide.

- 22. Judaism** – The ancient monotheistic religion, maintaining the Torah as its foundational text. It should be noted that not all persons who are ethnically Jewish are followers of Judaism. In fact, the State of Israel was founded primarily as a “safe space” for persons ethnically Jewish who were persecuted and survived the European Jewish Holocaust. As a result of the unmitigated ethnic cleansing that took place, many ethnic Jews (formerly also followers of Judaism) converted to atheism. For many, it was impossible to reconcile a wholly benevolent God with the genocide of millions. Thus, secular Jews generally populated the State of Israel. But even with this being the case, for decades, the religious culture of Judaism has deeply woven into the social and political fabric of the state.
- 23. Kairos movements** are Social movements for liberation that espouse Kairos theology as their driving force.
- 24. Kairos theology/Kairos movement(s)** – “Kairos” in the ancient Greek language means “the right or opportune moment.” It means the “supreme” or “most ideal” time. In the Holy Bible, there are two phrases that signify time. Chronos time denotes chronology; this is the way in which people in the US tend to think about time – chronologically. For instance, after January comes February, then March and so on. Kairos time, on the other hand, refers to “in God’s timing.” It is a designation that sits outside of linear chronology.

Kairos theology, then, is a broad category that includes different theologies that generally have one fundamental thing in common: their quest for liberation. Kairos theology is always prophetic theology; always concerns itself with the social, political and economic implications of God engaging the liberation struggles of the marginalized. Examples of Kairos theology are Black theology in South Africa in the heart of anti-Apartheid struggles; Black theology in the US in the heart of the Civil Rights Movement; Latin American liberation theology; Dalit- and Womanist theology – all defining their key task as liberation from oppression.

- 25. Military occupation** – The process by which a ruling power (a specific government) exercises control over another territory that is not formally under the auspices of that ruling power. It is a forceful military seizure and governance of a population that is against the will of the territory under siege. Because military occupations are, by definition, temporary, the occupied communities are not offered citizenship rights by the ruling power.

For instance, the International Court of Justice, the UN General Assembly, and the United Nations Security Council consider Israel as the “occupying power,” exercising military control over the Palestinian Territories of the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip.

- 26. Race and Racialization** – The process by which thoughts, attitudes, behaviors, characteristics and assumptions become mapped onto/projected onto people, communities, lands, religious practices etc. For instance, “anger” is an assumption often projected onto certain bodies; “violence” is often a characteristic projected onto inner city ghettos. It is by virtue of these associations that race is “created.” In mainstream culture, then, Blackness comes to look a certain way (pejorative: angry and dangerous Black men, violent Black communities, etc.).

This is true of other racial groups as well. Consider the host of ethnicities represented in the Asian American demographic of the US. In the mainstream, they are often perceived as intelligent, capable and the country’s “model minority.” These perceptions are a direct result of the process of racialization.

- 27. Racial caste** – A system of social distinction in which stigmatized racial groups are locked into inferior social positions by laws, attitudes and customs.
- 28. Structural violence as structural sin**– A culture of unmitigated violence, disproportionately affecting those marked as the most “other” and marginalized, that is deeply woven into the social fabric of the society: for instance, the series of ongoing, unrestrained physical violence (arson and firebombing) against Black American Christian, and Palestinian Muslim and Christian houses of worship.
- Structural violence is woven into the foundational institutions and structures of the society—the educational and penal systems, electoral politics and neighborhood revitalization, religious discourse etc. These unmitigated acts and attitudes of violence committed against the vulnerable are evil; they constitute a culture of structural sin against God and God’s people.
- 29. Whitewashing** – the process by which groups of persons, not previously considered racially white, become identified as white persons. Through assimilation and relinquishing critical aspects of their native cultures, multiple European immigrant groups underwent this process as they migrated into the US during the twentieth century.
- 30. White supremacy/White supremacist rule** – The ways in which (especially Western) nations and their institutions assemble, regulate and sustain a racial hierarchy that privileges “European-ness” and/or whiteness. This privileging does not only pertain to European and/or white persons, but it extends to every aspect of the society. In other words, it is not merely about bodies and skin color. There are explicit or implicit hierarchies in terms of customs and behaviors, values, religious practices etc.
- 31. Zionism** – The political movement of Jews and Jewish culture that supports the establishment of a Jewish homeland in the territory defined as the historic ‘Land of Israel.’



