

A Guide for Congregational Study:

JOURNEYS TOWARD JUSTICE

Facilitator Guide

Taurean J. Webb, Author

Itihari Toure, PhD, Editor

Iva E. Carruthers, PhD, General Secretary
Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference, Inc.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Overview 1

Journeys Toward Justice:

Instruction and Administration Notes..... 3

To The Facilitator: Potential Pedagogy	4
Examples for Effective Delivery	5
Proposed Session Format.....	7
Characteristics of an Effective Facilitator	8
Materials Included and Needed.....	9
Feedback from Facilitators	11
Learning Outcomes	12
How to Contribute	14

Journeys Toward Justice: Outline and Curriculum15

Regional Map	16
Topical Study Outline and Objectives	17
Quick Reference Materials Sheet	20
Study Curriculum	21
S1 – Black Theology and Kairos Theology as Theologies of Liberation	
S2 – Old Testament, Cultural Context and Social Location	
S3 – Signs of the Times: Palestine and Israel	
S4 – Signs of the Times: Ferguson and Gaza	
S5 – Signs of the Times: Africans in the Middle East	
S6 – Theology Matters	
S7 – The Church, Structural Sin and Assaults on Sacred Space	
S8 – Intercultural, Interfaith, and Racial Dialogue	
S9 – Intercultural, Interfaith, and Racial Dialogue	
S10 – Call to Action	

Facilitator’s Summary.....42

Appendix.....52

Scriptural Reference Description Pages	53
Group Process Techniques	63
Key Terms/Phrase Glossary	65

Notes69

Overview

Our Vision: *Strengthening Churches...Empowering Leaders...Transforming Communities
With Vision...By Faith...Through Action*

Our Mission: *The Vision of the Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference (SDPC) is to nurture, support and mobilize African American faith, civic, corporate and philanthropic leaders to address critical needs of human and social justice within local, national and global communities. SDPC seeks to strengthen the individual and collective capacity of thought for leaders and activists in the academy, church and community through education, activism and advocacy.*

Congregational Study

Journeys Toward Justice: A Guide for Congregational Study is a comprehensive curriculum study plan, specifically designed to aid predominantly Black congregations as they become more aware of the Palestinian crisis and begin to take action on behalf of Palestinian freedom and justice. The curriculum aims to take the nuanced and complex issues pertaining to on-the-ground realities of oppression, exploitation and resistance in Palestine and Israel, and ask if they are partially or fully relatable to the African American experience. It will also examine how several Biblical passages need to undergo a deeper study and hermeneutical process in light of how they have been used to justify the oppression of the African American and Palestinian people. Finally, the study will offer suggestions as to how you and your congregation can become more involved with the Palestinian justice struggle, locally, nationally, and globally.

Recognizing the importance of highlighting the interconnectedness of global struggles across a range of categories— theologically, sociologically, experientially, and ecclesiological, among others – the *Journeys Toward Justice* curriculum is divided into the ten sessions (S1-S10) that attempt to touch upon a variety of interrelated issues. The session breakdown is as follows:

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

- Scripture base: Luke 4: 18-19; Mark 1:14-15

Session 2: Old Testament, Cultural Context and Social Location

- Scripture base: Exodus 12: 31-42

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

- Scripture base: Amos 5: 10-14; Micah 2: 1-2

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

- Scripture base: Genesis 4: 9

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

- Scripture base: Micah 2: 1-2; Galatians 3: 28-29

Session 6: Theology Matters

- Scripture base: Leviticus 25: 8-18

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

- Scripture base: 2 Chronicles 7: 14; Matthew 6: 9-13

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

- Scripture base: 1 Corinthians 12: 12-14

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

- Scripture base: Romans 14: 10

Session 10: Call to Action

- Scripture base: Micah 6: 8; James 2: 26; Luke 18: 1-8

Since the teaching intervals and timetables are at the discretion of the congregation and/or instructor, these sessions can correspond to a ten-week course; a twenty-week, bi-weekly meeting; or any other arrangement that best fits the needs of the congregation.

Several different components constitute the full curriculum set. Following a few housekeeping items, the Instruction and Administration Notes section is intended to help the instructor best facilitate the learning experience. It begins by offering a few recommendations as to what, oftentimes, contributes to effective facilitation. These suggestions are followed by a more detailed explanation of the materials included and needed for the curriculum set. This section also charts the critical suggested learning outcomes, per session. Since each learning session is designed with the ability to be taught alone (as a one session workshop, for instance) or in sequence (Sessions 1-5; Sessions 1-10 etc.), the outcomes can be viewed as functioning internally and in relationship to the outcomes of other sessions. Additionally, instructions about reporting protocol (reporting back to the SDPC regarding the successes and challenges of your educational experience) are included for your information.

Finally, the Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference understands the process of education to be a mutually constitutive process. In other words, collaborative learning is paramount to successful mobilization and movement building. As such, this project identifies the process by which persons can contribute writings, images or clips of their own choosing to the expanding archive of study resources engaged by this initiative.

The most robust section of the set is entitled, *Journeys Toward Justice: Outline and Curriculum*. The first item in this section is a map of the region. Following the map, there is a topical study outline and reference chart (for assigned materials) intended as a guide through the learning process. Instructors have full discretion over how and when to use these items: they can be utilized for the instructor's own preparation, studied by class participants in advance of the actual lessons or deployed during the course as a roadmap for the 10-session learning experience.

Following the topical outline and chart, facilitators will find the study curriculum itself. It is separated into ten sections, corresponding to the ten class sessions. Within each session breakdown, there are a few key components with which instructors can build their own lesson plans. First, the curriculum lists required articles, images, photos and video clips necessary for robust discussion. It then poses 4-6 critical questions that are intended to summarize key themes and ideas from the respective session's discussion. The facilitator is not bound to these questions, but they are offered as a roadmap, especially as facilitator and student are mutually familiarizing themselves with possibly new issues pertaining to Palestine and Israel. Following these questions, the curriculum offers potential answers, again as an additional resource for discussion. There is a brief note about the import and relevance of the topic, and each session breakdown concludes with posing 5-6 open-ended "Worksheet Questions," intended to guide post-lesson discussion in small or large groups.

Since this study is a bible-based, congregational resource, the guide offers "Scriptural Reference" descriptions. These are one-page reflections about the relationship between each session's readings, clips, images and the scripture base. In addition, facilitators will find instructions for optional group processing exercises. The project then offers a "Key Terms and Phrase Glossary" that provides working definitions of commonly used words and phrases. Finally, facilitators will be able to access session-specific bibliographies online (via our project-specific website, www.voices4peacenow.org), in the event that facilitators and/or students desire further material for study. The scriptural reference narratives, group processing exercises and key terms glossary are all found in the curriculum's appendix.

In addition to this *Journeys Toward Justice: A Guide for Congregational Study* (which will be disseminated via hard copy, and also accessible on the project-specific website for download to registered congregational patrons), the *Journeys Toward Justice* project provides all of the study materials referenced herein. Material referenced (short articles, video clips, animated images, photos, session bibliographies, "Key Terms," "Scriptural Reference Descriptions," and "Plug In/ Plug Out" documents) can be accessed via the "Black Church Toolkit" section of the website.

JOURNEYS TOWARD JUSTICE:
INSTRUCTION AND ADMINISTRATION
NOTES

To The Facilitator: Potential Pedagogy

What Is the Outcome for this Guide?

To provide a structured path for information-sharing, critical thinking and, creative discussion on the physical, social, spiritual and moral injury to God's people living in what is known as Israel and Palestine;

Why Is This Guide Necessary for Faith-based Justice Work?

Issues of injustice are often complicated and connect to multiple systems of domination and exploitation. We have learned through the work of many justice leaders that these systems are interdependent. Consequently, we can effectively combat injustice by learning all of the ways unjust systems exist, operate and commensurate.

How to Use This Guide?

The guide is divided into ten general topics (or sessions), which can be used in multiple ways. For instance, the sessions can be used independently- (e.g., one session as a special workshop); in groups of two or three sessions; or in the sequence of all ten.

The curriculum guide can be part of a one-day experience, a quarter- or semester-length class or a special focused teaching series. Furthermore, sessions, broad topics or more specific ideas from any of the sessions can be utilized in the process of sermon preparation, private study or a host of other ways. Our goal is to make it accessible to multiple contexts of education.

The *Journeys Toward Justice: A Guide for Congregational Study* is intended as an educational resource to better equip congregations and religious communities, specifically African American congregations and religious communities, as they seek to become more aware of the justice issues in the Holy Land today and how they parallel African American experience in the United States.

NOTE: To facilitators, we strongly advise that you familiarize yourself with the materials contained in the “Black Church Toolkit” folder (found at www.voices4peacenow.org) in advance of beginning the course.

What Is The Journey?

This curriculum begins and ends with the concept of “journeying.” It begins the journey by posing the first step as (1) reviewing the “God” talk (theological underpinnings) about liberation and our existence as human beings. The second step on the journey situates what is worth knowing (the epistemology) about the liberation of God's people, especially for occupied Palestine and African-descended people in the United States. The third step provides resources (including our witness as an oppressed people and as followers of the Christ) and asks us to add to these resources so that we can have/share in sacred conversations about God's plan for humanity, including those who are in occupied Palestine.

This curriculum primarily aims to take a set of very nuanced and complex issues arising in Israel and occupied Palestine, and communicate them in a way that is relevant, transferable, and intelligible to the African American experience in the US. Although the two contexts have important differences and divergences, there are critical similarities that point towards the interconnectedness of populations fighting against racial (specifically, white) supremacist systems. We as African Americans can only benefit from a study that offers greater awareness of what God might be calling us to do and be in the global Kingdom of God.

Examples for Effective Delivery of This Curriculum

As you review the suggested lesson format, keep in mind that the more opportunities for multiple person participation increases and sustains each participant's confidence to share the journey!

Opening: In those first ten minutes, let the Welcome, Prayer, Scripture Reading, Invocation, and Session Objectives be shared by those in attendance; use music/songs/images/movement to reflect the opening.

Introduction: In addition to you as facilitator making the lesson recap (as a monologue), try deploying it as a storytelling exercise. Determine one key word or phrase that was central and have participant share how they remember it, what the word brings to mind or communicate another story that they associate with the given word/phrase. Using these 20 minutes to hear what participants retained from the previous lesson is also an effective way to assess the overall progress of the curriculum; you can also learn what may need to repeat in future sessions.

Lesson: Ask students to read 1 or 2 Scripture passages, and Scriptural Reference Pages. There are thinking questions provided (Core Questions/Response) with each lesson to assist you in framing active discussion in the session. Additionally, there must be a "Divine Dance" between souls and hearts in order for this education to be more than an "analysis" of injustice and justice. You know the people of your community and congregation; it is important that the testimonies, situations, experiences and desires unique to your community show up in the lesson facilitation. Do not wed yourself solely to the questions/responses as presented; tap into what you already know about the participants and build the lesson objectives upon those ideas, actions, previous teachings/sermons/experiences that make it real to their recollections. In other words, use this 15-minute segment of the lesson to construct the learning on prior knowledge (constructivism).

Discussion & Presentation: As you decide whether to have a large group or small group discussion using the worksheet questions provided, consider what you need as the outcome of the discussion. For example, if you want to achieve a common meaning/definition/understanding from the information presented, a large group discussion will likely work well. Small group discussions, on the other hand, facilitate the generation of diverse perspectives. Choose the worksheet questions that best achieve the desired learning outcome.

"Why this Matters to Me" & Personal Reflection: As an optional activity, each learning session includes a few reflection questions ("Why this Matters" & Personal Reflection), geared towards raising the simple query, "so what?" The facilitator should not necessarily assume that student learners will ask these questions automatically; in which case, deployment of questions in this segment can be an actual class or small group activity. Or, of course, the facilitator can bypass them altogether if the flow of class organically raises these matters.

Furthermore, as African and Africa-descended people, we do not separate how we feel from what we think – there is no separation between head and heart. With this being said, going beyond the intellectual communication of fact and information, SDPC and the Journeys curriculum study values the ways in which human emotion resonates with this learning process. In other words, in engaging the "so what?" question, we affirm the power and value of human feelings. Personal reflection questions attempt to highlight precisely this point.

Closing Prayer and Salutation: This is another way to connect the topic of the lesson to the heart and soul of the participants. Often times we use the closing prayer as our spiritual "send-off." So, have this five-minute closing include the spiritual charge for reflection, practice and conversation that participants should carry with them until the next session.

Please keep in mind that we are very eager to hear from you regarding what delivery worked best! Please share with us either via the *Voices4PeaceNow* discussion board or during your completion of the facilitator feedback questionnaire at the end of your course.

Proposed Session Format

Session duration: 90 minutes

Develop a clear lesson plan with a timeline for each class session so that you can manage the primary goals and learning exercises within the allotted class time. However, always be alert to where the energy in class is heading. If there is a “hot topic” that everyone has engaged, please be flexible and, within reason, extend the discussion.

Suggested session breakdown:

Opening: Welcome, Prayer, Scripture Reading, Invocation, Session Objectives	10 mins
Introduction: Recap of Readings, Brainstorming, Thoughts about Session (use a variety of methods to involve student participants)	20 mins
Lesson: Ask students to read 1 or 2 Scripture passages, and Scriptural Session Pages. Think about how you can spark a stimulating discussion (use the Core Questions/ Responses for ideas)	15 mins
Discussion: Large or Small Group Discussion(s) around Worksheet Questions	25 mins
Presentation: Presentation of Small Group Points or Continuation of Large Group Discussion	15 mins
Closing Prayer and Salutation	5 mins

Characteristics of an Effective Facilitator

It is important to stress education as a mutually constitutive and collaborative process. In other words, the process of education is not only epitomized in the unidirectional “lecture” teaching model. It is essential that facilitators strive to engage the entire class in participatory learning and see themselves as co-equals in the educational process. Effective facilitation also occurs when students/ participants are encouraged to engage in an ongoing dialogue with the facilitator; the foundational assumption here is that everyone has potential to both teach and learn. As facilitators, we learn by listening and stimulating class engagement as well as imparting knowledge. Effective facilitators create a safe space for this type of dialogue. Facilitators are responsible for setting the tone of mutual respect and inspiration during each learning session: this will involve the facilitator having a solid lesson plan, including 3 primary goals for each session; familiarizing herself/ himself with the participants and the curriculum materials (readings, images, video clips etc.) in advance of each learning session; employing different group learning methods, so as to bring a variety to the learning process (small groups, debates, interviews, power point presentations, the creative use of video, a simple research project that divides the class into small study groups etc.); leading or assigning each session’s opening devotional, scripture reading and/or prayer; organizing the class content, being sensitive to fluidity of dialogue and flexible if certain conversations need to be extended or curtailed; creating the space wherein collegial, God-led and Spirit-filled conversation is possible; inviting guest speakers or presenters; and managing time allotments to ensure that each session stays within or as close to the time parameters as possible. Though not an exhaustive list, these responsibilities are critical and foundational to effective community awareness-raising, activation and mobilization via education.

Effective facilitators should – in addition to the material and instructions present in the curriculum manual and study guide – initiate their own independent research regarding topics discussed in each learning session. Think carefully about the assignments for the following week, take time to go over them at the end of class, and you may wish to suggest a debate; or note a guest speaker that will be attending, etc. Try to offer the class a variety of stimulating assignments each week that complement the readings, images, video clips and other materials.

Effective facilitators should be good listeners, critical thinkers, welcoming to the different learning methodologies and sensitive to the various abilities and learning needs of students/participants.

Materials Included and Needed

Materials Included

The following *Journeys Toward Justice* guide is separated into several sections, with multiple items designed for achieving facilitation and learning outcomes. They include:

- *Topical Outline and Objectives Sheet* – this outline is a resource for both facilitators and student/participants. It outlines the interrelatedness of multiple themes that are present in both the Palestinian and African American context. This tool is intended to be an independent study tool, not necessarily a guide to be followed in class session structure.
- *Quick Reference Materials Sheet* – this brief chart serves as a quick reference guide that facilitators can view that lists the assigned materials for each session. By using this reference chart, facilitators do not need to flip through the curriculum guide in order to quickly obtain the list of class study materials.
- *Facilitator’s Summary Pages* – these one-page lesson descriptions serve as quick references for facilitators before and during class sessions.
- *Session Core Questions and Narrative Responses* – each session asks a set of core questions (generally, 3-5) that frames and guides the logic of the session. These questions are outlined. Following the questions, the study guide narrates potential answers. These are not exhaustive answers, but explanations to both help facilitators delve more deeply into critical subject areas and help students/participants enter into conversation. Core questions and responses can be read orally during each class session (as the lesson), should the facilitator so choose.
- *Worksheet Questions* – questions follow each set of Core Questions and Narrative Responses. These are open-ended questions, designed to spark small or large group dialogue.
- *Scriptural Reference Description Pages* – this page, designed to help offer a more comprehensive vantage of each session’s constitutive elements, accompanies each session. For instance, each of the ten (10) education sessions include one or more scripture passage that frame the session’s main points and a host of materials (readings, images, diagrams, photos or video clips) that should be reviewed by students/participants in advance of the session. The Scripture Reference Description Page briefly explains why it makes sense for those particular scripture passages and materials to be studied together.
- *Group process and classroom learning tools* – facilitators should be prepared to employ a variety of different participatory exercises that spark deeper class engagement with discussed topics and materials. We offer a few activities that might prove helpful in this regard.
- *Key Terms and Phrases Glossary* – this glossary identifies and offers working definitions for several critical terms and phrases that often arise in discourse about Israel and occupied Palestine.
- *Readings, images, photographs, diagrams and video clips referenced in curriculum study guide are all accessible on the Journeys Toward Justice project site (Voices4PeaceNow.org). On the home page navigation bar, select “Black Church Toolkit” and you will be taken to a page containing multiple thematic folders as well as a link to download this congregational study. The folders correspond to the session titles. Materials for each session can be found in the session’s corresponding thematic folder.*

Materials Needed

- *Chalkboard, white-board or flip chart will be necessary for facilitator notes or notes arising out of small or large group discussion*
- *The facilitator might choose to utilize Power Point presentations during some education sessions. Do not overuse this method. Power Point presentations should be kept brief and focused on the learning objectives for that particular lesson. Though not required, Power Point presentations might be helpful. In this case, technological capabilities will need to accommodate facilitator needs.*
- *Internet access, laptop or pc, speaker and projector will be necessary to display video clips;(we recommend downloading video clips prior to class sessions to avoid technical gaps with internet connections)*
- *Bibles should be available for study and quick reference during education sessions*
- *Students/ participants should have hard copies of Topical Outlines; Scripture Base Session Pages; Session Core Questions and Narrative (if facilitator chooses to deploy this material to be read aloud in class); and study materials.*
- *Consider having a readily accessible map of Palestine – Israel in front of the class each week. The simplest method is to project it from your computer.*

Feedback from Facilitators

The Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference seeks to gather feedback from facilitators/instructors regarding their own perceptions about facilitating this curriculum.

As a part of the *Journeys Toward Justice: A Guide for Congregational Study* package, facilitators were provided with specific login credentials to use on the Voices4PeaceNow website—the electronic home, where the congregational study and electronic materials that accompany the study, can be downloaded (in the *Black Church Toolkit* folder). These login credentials will not only allow you access to the downloadable congregational study, but will also allow you access to the feedback questionnaire to be completed at the conclusion of your study.

Remember, the feedback questionnaire is intended to gather *perceptions of the facilitator, regarding their experience of deploying the congregational study*. This particular feedback questionnaire is about facilitator perception of the their/ the curriculum’s effectiveness—the ease of navigating the material, the effectiveness of delivery, the robustness of class dialogue etc. This survey is not focused on the degree to which student learners “retained” or “received” the information.

The SDPC understands that each congregation and study group will use this curriculum differently. Some will run the entire 10-session curriculum consecutively. Others will run only a few, or perhaps even run a single session as part of a leadership-training workshop, for instance. The curriculum is crafted with this in mind; sessions can be taught / facilitated in sequence, out of sequence, or stand-alone. Regarding the facilitator feedback questionnaire, we ask that if you’ve facilitated all ten (10) sessions (or any other number of multiple sessions), complete feedback survey once, encompassing all of the sessions you facilitated. If you’ve facilitated only one session, please also complete feedback survey.

To complete the brief questionnaire, please login using your facilitator credentials to the *Voices4PeaceNow* website. For your convenience, we have also included the questions below. In lieu of the electronic submission, you may also answer questions and submit them to twebb@sdpconference.info.

Qualifying Questions

1. Did you facilitate the entire curriculum or only select sessions?
2. If you’ve facilitated select sessions, please identify them.

Feedback Questions

1. To what extent is/was this curriculum useful to your ministry?
2. If there is/was one element of this study curriculum/learning process that was more relevant than the others, what was it?
3. If there is/was one element of this study curriculum/learning process that was easier to facilitate than others, what was it?
4. Do you have any other feedback regarding your perception of deploying the congregational study?

Learning Outcomes

Session 1

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

Session 2

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

1. Communicate the difference between the Biblical Israel and the political 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.

Session 3

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 US national media

Session 4

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

Session 5

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

1. Identify 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

Session 6

At the conclusion of Session 6, 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 race- and religion-based oppression

Session 7

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

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

Session 8

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

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

Session 9

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

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

Session 10

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

How to Contribute to Project’s Existing Information Archive

“Plug In/Plug Out” Procedure for Voices4PeaceNow Website

The Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference advances that educational belief that education itself is a mutually constitutive and collaborative process between persons. We, therefore, encourage interested patrons to contribute to the ongoing and existing archive of electronic study materials. Interested persons will be able to both submit items (brief readings, photos/ images, media clips) to be published into the Voices4PeaceNow website resource database and download the full curriculum from the website resource database.

“Plug In” (Contribute)

As a part of the cooperative and community learning environment that the *Journeys Toward Justice* project attempts to establish, interested persons are able to submit additional educational resource items to the website’s existing archive of readings, photos, images and media clips. Follow the highlighted procedure:

1. Enter the “Black Church Toolkit” tab and select the “Submit Materials folder
2. Upload your submitted item
3. In the first drop down box, select the nature of your submitted item (reading, image, media clip, other)
4. In the second drop down box, select the thematic category that you consider your item best fitting into (“Call to Action,” “Black Theology and Kairos Theology” etc.)
5. Click “Submit”

After submission, proposed materials will undergo review by project staff that makes final decisions about whether material is appropriate to be published online and what content category the submitted material will fall into. Once project staff accepts the submission, it will be placed into the appropriate folder and (the item’s citation) will also be added to the “Bibliographies” list(s).

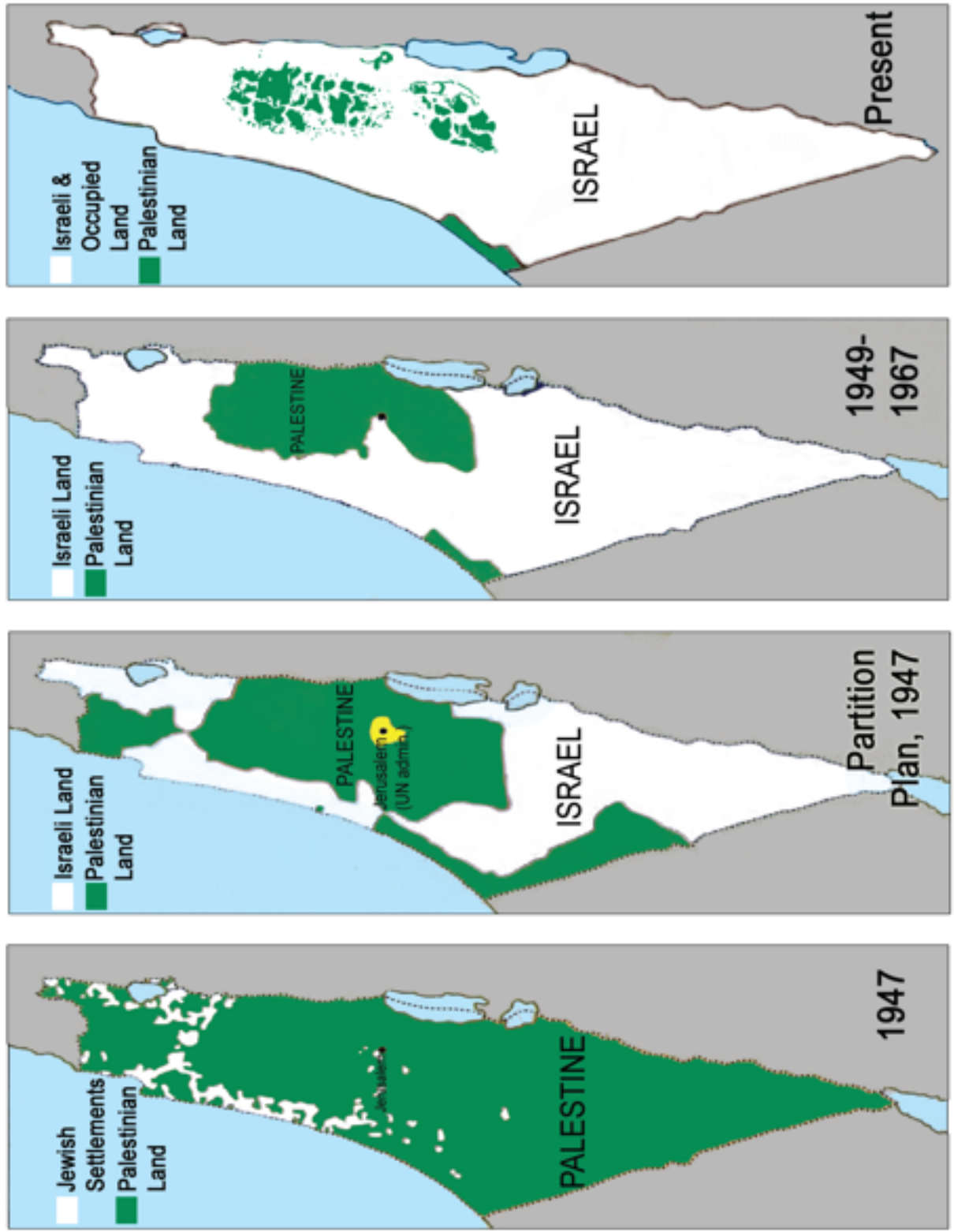
New materials and statistics are reviewed, updated and posted (online and in “Bibliographies” lists) every three weeks.

“Plug Out” (Download)

All material online is and will continue to be available for view and download. The freestanding supplementary material (brief readings, photos/ images, media clips, Scriptural Reference pages, and bibliographies) can be accessed via content folders under the “Black Church Toolkit.

JOURNEYS TOWARD JUSTICE:
CURRICULUM TOPICAL OUTLINE
AND OBJECTIVES

PALESTINIAN LOSS OF LAND: 1947 TO PRESENT



Topical Study Outline and Objectives

Session I

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

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
4. Kairos Palestine, Kairos USA and the Kairos “Legacy”
 - Identify major tenets of Kairos Palestine document
 - Discuss the ways in which black theology might support tenets in the Kairos Palestine document

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

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 to/with God
 - Discuss the ways in which African Americans have resisted oppression and have long been serious students of the Bible
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
 - Explore the historical and biblical lineage of the biblical 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”

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

1. Discuss the “signs of the times” regarding Israel/ occupied Palestine
 - Discuss the ways in which US Americans relate to this conflict
 - Discuss the ways in which issues of US political and economic investment in this conflict are relevant
 - Think through US investments in this conflict

2. Discuss the fact that taxpayer monies used to support Israeli military efforts
3. Discuss Israel as a US political ally
 - Reflect upon the ways in which popular media skews our understanding of the conflict
 - Explore the ways in which media obscures our understanding of the fact that when we say “Palestinians,” we can be referencing either Palestinian Jews, Christians or Muslims
 - Explore the ways in which media proliferates the idea of the “evil Arab Middle East”
4. 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)

Session IV – Signs of the Times, Pt. 2: Journeys Toward Justice—Ferguson & Gaza (Genesis 4:9)

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

Session V – Signs of the Times, Pt. 3: Africans in the Middle East (Micah 2: 1-2)

1. Recap “global race consciousness and explore the experiences of blacks in the “Middle East”
 - Discuss the segregation and discrimination against blacks living in Israel (not in occupied Palestine), and the similarities between their relationship to Israel and the relationship of black Americans to the US in the twentieth century
 - Reflect upon how the Israeli sterilization of Ethiopian women mirrors the sterilization of poor black women in the US, to restrict their fertility, accusing that they were inflating the welfare roles.

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

1. Discuss why it is important for Christians to support Palestinian justice
2. Discuss the Christian theologies that try to 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
4. Theology and the Holy Land

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

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. Discuss the dialogue happening between Palestinian Christians and American Christians
3. Discuss the recent race-motivated crimes and assaults on sacred places and houses of worship

Session VIII –

Intercultural, Interfaith and Racial Dialogue, Pt. 1: In Black & White (1 Corinthians 12:12-24)

1. Research and identify the process of becoming white (and becoming white specifically in relation to black Americans) that 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
 - Discuss the ways in which Jews stood alongside black Americans during the Civil Rights era
 - 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.
3. Reflect upon the function and utility of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC)

Session IX –

Intercultural, Interfaith and Racial Dialogue, Pt. 2: It Ain’t All Black & White Romans 14:10)

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

Session X – Call to Action (Micah 6:8; James 2: 26)

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

NOTE: To facilitators, we strongly advise that you familiarize yourself with the materials contained in the “Black Church Toolkit” folder (found at www.voices4peacenow.org) in advance of beginning the course.

Quick Reference Materials Sheet (Chart)

R – Reading

V – Video clip

P – Photograph, image or diagram

**A Student Handout Page should accompany each learning session*

Session 1	R: Black Theology and Black Liberation – Black Theology and the Black Woman – Black Theology and Third World Theologies – Palestinian Liberation Theology
Session 2	R: Beyond Identification – Race, Racism and the Biblical Narratives V: Chosen People Roundtable P: Visualizing Palestine
Session 3	R: <i>Sacrificing the Vulnerable – The Palestinian Struggle is a Black Struggle</i> V: Non-Indictment for Police Killing 1 – Non-Indictment for Police Killing 2 – Israel & Palestine, An Animated Introduction P: Islamophobia Cartoon
Session 4	R: The Ferguson/Palestine Connection – From Gaza to Ferguson – Palestinian Statement of Solidarity – V: Hagler ‘Connecting the Dots’ – P: #Ferguson_#Gaza – Free Gaza_No Justice No Peace – Palestinian Solidarity
Session 5	R: Israel Forcibly Injected African Immigrants – Israeli Minister Vows to Keep Detention Center Open – V: Ethiopian Jews Protest Against Racist Police Brutality – Israel’s New Racism – Israel Admits the Forced Sterilization of Ethiopians
Session 6	R: Jewish and Christian Responses to the Holocaust – Black and Activist Ministers Say CBC Should Be Ashamed – V: Beyond Zionism, Pt. 1 – Black Ministers Welcome Netanyahu – With God on Our Side
Session 7	R: Let Our Ears Tingle With Truth – Ferguson Fiasco – Christianity in Palestine – Vatican to Recognize Palestinian State in New Treaty
Session 8	R: Tutu Letter to UC Berkeley Student Leaders – The Israel Lobby Finds a New Face – V: Whitewashed—Unmasking the World of Whiteness
Session 9	P: Labeling – The Brown International – South African Apartheid, Palestinian Apartheid – Apartheid—South Africa and Palestine – South African Child at Pro-Palestinian Cape Town Rally
Session 10	R: Kairos 30th Anniversary Statement

Facilitator's Summary

Session One

At A Glance



How Do We Go Through Each Lesson?

Opening
(10 mins.)

Introduction
(20 mins.)

Lesson
(15 mins.)

Discussion
(25 mins.)

Presentation
(15 mins.)

Closing Prayer
(5 mins.)

More details on page 7

What Is The Topic of The Lesson and Its Scripture Reference?

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

Scripture base: Luke 4: 18-19; Mark 1:14-15

For more information on topic and scriptures, go to page 17

What Should The Facilitator Share From This Lesson?

Define Black Theology

Define Kairos Theology

Explore the Kairos legacy, Kairos Palestine, Kairos USA and the Kairos “Legacy”

For more information on lesson content and your responses, go to page 31

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

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

For more information on learning outcomes and objectives, go to page 12

What Materials Do We Have For This Lesson?

Session 1 materials are downloadable: Black Theology and Black Liberation reading – Black Theology and the Black Woman reading – Black Theology and Third World Theologies – Palestinian Liberation Theology reading – Student Handout Page

For more information on learning materials, go to the Quick Reference Materials Sheet on page 20

Facilitator's Summary

Session Two

At A Glance



How Do We Go Through Each Lesson?

Opening
(10 mins.)

Introduction
(20 mins.)

Lesson
(15 mins.)

Discussion
(25 mins.)

Presentation
(15 mins.)

Closing Prayer
(5 mins.)

More details on page 7

What Is The Topic of The Lesson and Its Scripture Reference?

Session 2: Old Testament, Cultural Context and Social Location
Scripture base: Exodus 12:31-42

For more information on topic and scriptures, go to page 17

What Should The Facilitator Share From This Lesson?

Discuss the social and cultural context of the Old Testament

Explore the importance of knowing social location of the reader

Discuss the Exodus Narrative

Discuss difference between Biblical Israel and political Israel (State of Israel)

For more information on lesson content and your responses, go to page 33

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

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

For more information on learning outcomes and objectives, go to page 12

What Materials Do We Have For This Lesson?

Session 2 materials are downloadable: Beyond Identification reading – Chosen People Roundtable video – Visualizing Palestine image – Student Handout Page

For more information on learning materials, go to the Quick Reference Materials Sheet on page 20

Facilitator's Summary

Session Three

At A Glance



How Do We Go Through Each Lesson?

Opening
(10 mins.)

Introduction
(20 mins.)

Lesson
(15 mins.)

Discussion
(25 mins.)

Presentation
(15 mins.)

Closing Prayer
(5 mins.)

More details on page 7

What Is The Topic of The Lesson and Its Scripture Reference?

Session 3: Signs of the Times, Pt. 1: Palestine and Israel
Scripture base: Amos 5: 10-14; Micah 2: 1-2

For more information on topic and scriptures, go to page 17

What Should The Facilitator Share From This Lesson?

Discuss on-the-ground realities happening in Palestine and Israel
Discuss similar on-the-ground realities of oppression happening in Black America

For more information on lesson content and your responses, go to page 35

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

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

For more information on learning outcomes and objectives, go to page 12

What Materials Do We Have For This Lesson?

Session 3 materials are downloadable: Sacrificing the Vulnerable reading – Non-Indictment for Police Killing 1 video – Non-indictment for Police Killing 2 video – Israel and Palestine, An Animated Introduction video – Islamophobia Cartoon image – Student Handout Page

For more information on learning materials, go to the Quick Reference Materials Sheet on page 20

Facilitator's Summary

Session Four

At A Glance



How Do We Go Through Each Lesson?

Opening
(10 mins.)

Introduction
(20 mins.)

Lesson
(15 mins.)

Discussion
(25 mins.)

Presentation
(15 mins.)

Closing Prayer
(5 mins.)

More details on page 7

What Is The Topic of The Lesson and Its Scripture Reference?

Session 4: Signs of the Times, Pt. 2: Ferguson and Gaza
Scripture base: Genesis 4:9

For more information on topic and scriptures, go to page 18

What Should The Facilitator Share From This Lesson?

Discuss what a “global race consciousness” might mean

Discuss the relationship between specific instances of police violence in the US and specific instances of police violence in Palestine and Israel

For more information on lesson content and your responses, go to page 37

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

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

For more information on learning outcomes and objectives, go to page 12

What Materials Do We Have For This Lesson?

Session 4 materials are downloadable: 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_No Justice No Peace image – Palestinian Solidarity image – Student Handout Page

For more information on learning materials, go to the Quick Reference Materials Sheet on page 20

Facilitator's Summary

Session Five

At A Glance



How Do We Go Through Each Lesson?

Opening
(10 mins.)

Introduction
(20 mins.)

Lesson
(15 mins.)

Discussion
(25 mins.)

Presentation
(15 mins.)

Closing Prayer
(5 mins.)

More details on page 7

What Is The Topic of The Lesson and Its Scripture Reference?

Session 5: Signs of the Times, Pt. 3: Africans in the Middle East
Scripture base: Micah 2:1-2; Galatians 3: 28-29

For more information on topic and scriptures, go to page 18

What Should The Facilitator Share From This Lesson?

Explore the experiences of Africa-descended persons in the Middle East

Discuss specific examples of the interconnectedness of these global justice struggles

For more information on lesson content and your responses, go to page 39

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

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

For more information on learning outcomes and objectives, go to page 12

What Materials Do We Have For This Lesson?

Session 5 materials are downloadable: 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 to the Forced Sterilization of Ethiopians video – Student Handout Page

For more information on learning materials, go to the Quick Reference Materials Sheet on page 20

Facilitator's Summary

Session Six

At A Glance



How Do We Go Through Each Lesson?

Opening
(10 mins.)

Introduction
(20 mins.)

Lesson
(15 mins.)

Discussion
(25 mins.)

Presentation
(15 mins.)

Closing Prayer
(5 mins.)

More details on page 7

What Is The Topic of The Lesson and Its Scripture Reference?

Session 6: Theology Matters

Scripture base: Leviticus 25:8-18

For more information on topic and scriptures, go to page 18

What Should The Facilitator Share From This Lesson?

Discuss why it is important for Christians to support Palestinian justice

Discuss the ways in which theology shapes the current moment in which we live

For more information on lesson content and your responses, go to page 41

At the conclusion of Session 6, participants should be able to:

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

For more information on learning outcomes and objectives, go to page 12

What Materials Do We Have For This Lesson?

Session 6 materials are downloadable: Jewish and Christian Responses to the Holocaust reading – Black and Activist Ministers Say CBC Should Be Ashamed reading – Beyond Zionism video – Black Ministers Welcome Netanyahu video – With God on Our Side video – Student Handout Page

For more information on learning materials, go to the Quick Reference Materials Sheet on page 20

Facilitator's Summary

Session Seven

at A Glance



How Do We Go Through Each Lesson?

Opening
(10 mins.)

Introduction
(20 mins.)

Lesson
(15 mins.)

Discussion
(25 mins.)

Presentation
(15 mins.)

Closing Prayer
(5 mins.)

More details on page 7

What Is The Topic of The Lesson and Its Scripture Reference?

Session 7: The Church, Structural Sin and Assaults on Sacred Space
Scripture base: 2 Chronicles 7:14; Matthew 6: 9-13

For more information on topic and scriptures, go to page 18

What Should The Facilitator Share From This Lesson?

Discuss the concepts of structural violence and structural sin

Explore the dialogue between Palestinian Christians and US American Christians

Discuss the recent race-motivated crimes and assaults on sacred places and houses of worship

For more information on lesson content and your responses, go to page 43

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

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

For more information on learning outcomes and objectives, go to page 12

What Materials Do We Have For This Lesson?

Session 7 materials are downloadable: 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

For more information on learning materials, go to the Quick Reference Materials Sheet on page 20

Facilitator's Summary

Session Eight

at A Glance



How Do We Go Through Each Lesson?

Opening
(10 mins.)

Introduction
(20 mins.)

Lesson
(15 mins.)

Discussion
(25 mins.)

Presentation
(15 mins.)

Closing Prayer
(5 mins.)

More details on page 7

What Is The Topic of The Lesson and Its Scripture Reference?

Session 8: Intercultural, Interfaith and Racial Dialogue
Scripture base: 1 Corinthians 12:12-14

For more information on topic and scriptures, go to page 19

What Should The Facilitator Share From This Lesson?

Identify the process of becoming white that American Jews underwent after WWII

Discuss the ways in which the sometimes ambivalent Black and Jewish relationship in the US might influence our understandings of the Palestine oppression

Reflect upon the function and utility of AIPAC

For more information on lesson content and your responses, go to page 45

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

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

For more information on learning outcomes and objectives, go to page 13

What Materials Do We Have For This Lesson?

Session 8 materials are downloadable: Tutu Letter to UC Berkeley Student Leaders reading – The Israel Lobby Finds a New Face reading – Whitewashed video – Student Handout Page

For more information on learning materials, go to the Quick Reference Materials Sheet on page 20

Facilitator's Summary

Session Nine

At A Glance



How Do We Go Through Each Lesson?

Opening
(10 mins.)

Introduction
(20 mins.)

Lesson
(15 mins.)

Discussion
(25 mins.)

Presentation
(15 mins.)

Closing Prayer
(5 mins.)

More details on page 7

What Is The Topic of The Lesson and Its Scripture Reference?

Session 9: Intercultural, Interfaith and Racial Dialogue
Scripture base: Romans 14:10

For more information on topic and scriptures, go to page 19

What Should The Facilitator Share From This Lesson?

Discuss the concepts of ecumenism, interfaith and why they are important

Discuss Islamophobia

Reflect upon the ways in which other nations have advocated and continue to advocate Palestinian justice

For more information on lesson content and your responses, go to page 48

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

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

For more information on learning outcomes and objectives, go to page 13

What Materials Do We Have For This Lesson?

Session 9 materials are downloadable: 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

For more information on learning materials, go to the Quick Reference Materials Sheet on page 20

Facilitator's Summary

Session Ten

At A Glance



How Do We Go Through Each Lesson?

Opening
(10 mins.)

Introduction
(20 mins.)

Lesson
(15 mins.)

Discussion
(25 mins.)

Presentation
(15 mins.)

Closing Prayer
(5 mins.)

More details on page 7

What Is The Topic of The Lesson and Its Scripture Reference?

Session 10: Call to Action

Scripture base: Micah 6:8; James 2:26; Luke 18: 1-8

For more information on topic and scriptures, go to page 19

What Should The Facilitator Share From This Lesson?

Summarize the importance of both a political solidarity with other oppressed people (Palestinians and Africa-descended communities in Middle East) and a moral solidarity with fellow believers.

Brainstorm next steps.

For more information on lesson content and your responses, go to page 50

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

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

For more information on learning outcomes and objectives, go to page 13

What Materials Do We Have For This Lesson?

Session 10 materials are downloadable: Kairos 30th Anniversary Statement reading – Student Handout Page

For more information on learning materials, go to the Quick Reference Materials Sheet on page 20

(Reminder: Facilitator feedback requested; please see p. 11, entitled “**Feedback from Facilitators**”)

SESSION 1: BLACK THEOLOGY AND KAIROS THEOLOGY AS THEOLOGIES OF LIBERATION

Scripture Reference: Luke 4:18-19; Mark 1:14-15; Matthew 25:31-34; Amos 5:24

Assignment:

Readings

- “Black Theology and Black Liberation,” James H. Cone
- “Black Theology and the Black Woman,” Jacquelyn Grant
- “Black Theology and Third World Theologies,” James H. Cone
- “Palestinian Liberation Theology,” Naim Ateek

Session Core Questions:

- Why should a course on Palestinian and Black American experiences begin with the biblical concept of liberation?
- How does liberation relate to Jesus’ view of kairos time?
- How could we use the idea of kairos time to understand the connectedness of different groups of people?
- What is Palestinian liberation theology? And how is it similar and different than Black liberation theology?

Response:

We begin with the biblical concept of liberation because, in the Christian faith tradition, Jesus is the standalone Savior and Master Teacher. In articulating why he came to the world (“...to proclaim good news to the poor...freedom for the prisoners...and to set the oppressed free...” Luke 4:18, NIV), Jesus offered a blueprint for those who sought to follow him. To proclaim liberation for the disadvantaged, marginalized and oppressed is an essential part of the Christian confessional. Furthermore, in the present moment, both Black Americans and Palestinians deal with the frustrating and devastating effects of living within organized societal systems of racial oppression and racial hierarchy. Since Jesus came to, among other things, liberate from oppression and injustice, the concept of liberation should certainly shape how we discuss these two beloved groups of God’s children.

In the New Testament, kairos means “the time when God acts.” Different from “chronos” (chronological) time, kairos time is indeterminate. It is the time in which everything happens. It cannot be understood sequentially. In part, it is what we mean when we say, “God’s time is not our time...” In Mark 13:33, Jesus says, “The kairos is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near...” (Translation). Very recently, it has seemed that cries for liberation have arisen with great fervor all across the world. Quite a lot has happened in a very short time window (protests around killings of black adolescents; protests for freedom in Palestine, specifically Gaza). In some ways, it seems that the current moment is a kairos moment—a moment full of activity; a moment in which everything is happening. And the fact that so many struggles for freedom and justice are currently occurring all around the world should be a testament to the interconnectedness of human experience. God’s time conjoins us all.

Why this Matters to Me/Personal Reflection:

The Hebrew prophets of the Old Testament, such as Amos (Amos 5:10-25), traveled from town to town, proclaiming that one could identify how much a particular society loved God by how it treated the most marginalized. Note how Amos confronted those who exploit the poor (5:11), exact outrageous taxes (v. 11b), and take bribes and turn away the needy (v. 12). Yet they put on a show of “false righteousness” with their religious feast days, hymns, songs and sacrifices. Jesus proclaimed the very same (note the Parable of the Pharisee and Tax Collector in Luke 18:9-14). Is it a Christian mandate to fight conditions of injustice or is it just the polite thing to do? Is it important for our theologies to help us relate, connect, and love across boundaries of difference?

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 and religious injustice?
5. Have you heard the concept of “kairos time” before? Does it have any present-day applications or helpfulness?

Suggested Homework:

To facilitators and student learners, please review the next session’s materials—accessible via the “Black Church Toolkit” folder of the Voices4PeaceNow website (www.voices4peacenow.org)—in advance of the next session. Come prepared to discuss.

SESSION 2: OLD TESTAMENT, CULTURAL CONTEXT AND SOCIAL LOCATION

Scripture Reference: Exodus 12: 31-42

Assignment:

- “Beyond Identification: The Use of Africans in Old Testament Poetry and Narratives,” reading, Randall Bailey
- Race, Racism, and the Biblical Narratives,” reading, Cain Hope Felder
- “Visualizing Palestine” image
- “Chosen People Roundtable” video

Session Core Questions:

- The Exodus from Egypt presents a paradigm of liberation from slavery to freedom for the Jewish people. Consider how the “Exodus narrative” has been a source of strength for African Americans throughout history (cite 3-4 examples from Black history, worship, the Civil Rights movement etc.).
- Is it important to understand Scripture alongside its appropriate cultural and historical context?
- Should we strive to understand our own individual social context and the assumptions that we ourselves bring to the Bible? Discuss how some of your personal “assumptions” or hermeneutical (interpretive) principles impact how you understand the meaning of biblical passages concerning Israel, the promised land, and Israel’s struggle against the Philistines.
- Why has the Biblical “exodus narrative” been such a source of strength for African Americans throughout history?
- How should we make sense of the Biblical “Children of Israel” in relation to the 21st century State of Israel? Are they the same?
- Are there any consequences of assuming that the Biblical “Children of Israel” are the same as the 21st century State of Israel?

Response:

Interpreting Scripture within its proper cultural context helps us avoid the pitfalls that often come as we impose our contemporary understandings on historical times that were very different. But just as a critical eye towards social, cultural and historical context of the Bible is important, an awareness of ourselves is also crucial. Understanding how our own experiences, biases and assumptions inform our reading of the Bible allows more room for God to speak and room for us to more deeply love persons different than ourselves.

The “Exodus narrative” where God, through Moses, leads God’s people out of captivity has been an important Biblical moment for African Americans because it has reminded us of how God walked with our ancestors through chattel slavery. It also reminds African Americans of God’s current investment in “liberation” and “setting free” the oppressed and bound. However, Palestinians rarely use the Exodus story unless they include the fact that present-day Israel has used it to justify its conquest of the “Promised land” (in effect, stolen Palestinian land). Therefore, the “Exodus narrative” is relevant to discussions of Israel and Palestine, but not without caution that it can be abused to justify land theft, home demolition, and ethnic cleansing (genocide). The biblical Israel is not the same as the contemporary Israel; nor did the Biblical Israel necessarily make up the biological ancestry of current inhabitants of the sovereign state of Israel. But by resonating so strongly with the “Exodus narrative” and simultaneously assuming that the Biblical Israel and the State of Israel are synonymous, many African American Christians foreclose possibilities for relationship-building and mutual understanding with Palestinians and Palestinian-Americans.

Why this Matters to Me/Personal Reflection

Assumptions and opinions discussed in this session form an important foundational component for the ways in which many people understand and engage/disengage with Israel and/ or Palestine overall.

Personal Reflection: What about the idea of “Israel” makes it difficult to separate the Biblical Israel from 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? Why or why not?
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 facilitators and student learners, please review the next session’s materials—accessible via the “Black Church Toolkit” folder of the Voices4PeaceNow website (www.voices4peacenow.org)—in advance of the next session. Come prepared to discuss.

(Reminder: Facilitator feedback requested; please see p. 11, entitled “Feedback from Facilitators”)

SESSION 3: SIGNS OF THE TIMES, PT. 1: PALESTINE AND ISRAEL

Scripture Reference: Amos 5: 10-14; Micah 2: 1-2

Assignment:

- “Israel & Palestine, An Animated Introduction” video clip (from Jewish Voice for Peace)
- “Personal Narratives of Non-Indictments”
 - Non-indictment for the Police Killing of Tamir Rice” video clip
 - Non-indictment for the Police Killing of Nadeem Nawara and Mohammad Mahmoud Odeh Abu Daher” video clip
- “Sacrificing the Vulnerable, From Gaza to America,” reading, Chris Hedges
- “The Palestinian Struggle is a Black Struggle,” reading, Susan Abulhawa
- “Islamophobia Cartoon” image

Optional

- “Make this the Year You Discover a New Destination” video clip
- “Video Response to Israeli Occupation” video clip

Session Core Questions:

- On a basic level, how should we understand what is happening in Israel and Palestine?
- How are the conflicts in Israel and Palestine generally talked about in the United States?
- Are there any connections to be drawn between these experiences and the experiences of African Americans in the US?
- What do current conflicts in Israel and Palestine have to do with the God of justice?

Response:

Situations in Israel and Palestine are very complex. There are many different lived experiences – most of them never get communicated in the US. There are also many different narratives. Many Americans, therefore, remain confused or largely unaware. Many believe that religious conflicts are at the heart of turmoil in Palestine and Israel. The conflict, however, is not primarily about religion. It is primarily a political conflict that, at times, employs religion and usually misuses religion in its service.

Israel currently occupies Palestine. Military occupation generally means that a certain ruling power (in this case, Israel) maintains control over a territory (Palestine), which is not under the formal sovereignty of that power (Israel). It is governance by force, without the actual permission of the territory. Often times – as many claim is the case with Israel and Palestine—forced control leads to the development of an apartheid state. Under international law, it is illegal for the occupying power to transfer its citizens into the occupied land. It is also illegal to seize the occupied land and expel the original owners (see Fourth Geneva Convention, 1949). Conflict arises because native Palestinians are having their lands occupied, their homes destroyed, an extremely high number of political prisoners incarcerated for years on end and are resisting in numerous ways. Within the US, however, it is common for national media to portray the Israel/ Palestine conflict as “tiny” Israel constantly under the threat of violence from Arab-Muslim enemies. This US-based portrayal is largely informed by the rampant domestic culture of Islamophobia and strong US political allegiances with Israel.

Israel possesses a disproportionately stronger military, air-force, navy and weapon technology than any Arab nation. Furthermore, it is the fourth leading nuclear power in the world. There is no equality in terms of politics, military capability or economic power.

Both Palestinians and African Americans live under similar conditions of race-based discrimination, hyper-militarized policing of communities, police brutality, unjustly disproportionate rates of incarceration, race-based relegation to urban ghettos, the unlawful confiscation of land and many other injustices. These conversations are relevant to African American communities of faith because we believe that God reigns over all. And injustice anywhere requires response. We are to “let justice roll down like water, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream” (Amos 5:24).

Why this Matters to Me/Personal Reflection:

The prophet Micah tells us that God requires us to “act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God” (Micah 6:8).

Personal Reflection: What is your personal example of “acting justly”? What is your personal example of “loving mercy” without having someone point it out? 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, why should our communities be involved in Palestinian justice pursuits?

Suggested Homework:

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

(Reminder: Facilitator feedback requested; please see p. 11, entitled “Feedback from Facilitators”)

SESSION 4: SIGNS OF THE TIMES, PT. 2: “JOURNEYS TOWARD JUSTICE – FERGUSON AND GAZA”

Scripture Reference: Genesis 4: 9

Assignment:

- “The Ferguson/ Palestine Connection,” reading, Kristian Davis Bailey
- “From Gaza to Ferguson: Exposing the Toolbox of Racist Repression,” reading, Corinna Mullin and Azadeh Shahshahani
- “Palestinian Statement of Solidarity with Ferguson” reading
- “Rev. Graylan Hagler: ‘Connecting the Dots: From Ferguson to Palestine’” (Youtube clip)
- “#Ferguson_#Gaza” image
- “Free Gaza_No Justice No Peace” image
- “Palestinian Solidarity” image

Session Core Questions:

- What makes Ferguson and Gaza unique—unlike other places? How are they similar?
- Other than broad similarities, what are other specific (and/or tangible) similarities between hyper-policed communities in Palestine and hyper-policed communities in the US?
- With ample devastation and hardship in many communities of color within the US, why is it necessary to think, pray and mobilize seriously around what’s happening abroad?

Response:

Ferguson, Missouri and Gaza, Palestine, are unique insofar as they have both captured international attention and captivated our national imagination. With the shooting death of 19-year old Michael Brown, Jr., the non-indictment of the officer responsible and the wave of protests in their wake, Ferguson has been on everyone’s lips. And with the 2014 Gaza Massacre, the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the host of protests that have attended them, Gaza has done the same. But these two sites are also, in a sense, not unique. Unfortunately, there are countless communities of color all over the world that could potentially represent the very same injustice and resistance that we commemorate in Ferguson and Gaza. In the US, for instance, there have existed – throughout history – countless Black communities that have been unjustly surveilled and have experienced innumerable loss of their children to police violence. These are the myriad “Fergusons” that we will never hear about in the national media.

If the corollaries between the two sites are not always evident, consider this: both communities—Ferguson and Gaza (and by extension, the experiences for which these sites have become symbols, the racial identities of Blackness and “Palestinian-ness”)—live under white supremacist control. But there are also more specific examples. For instance, the weapons manufacturer Combined Tactical Systems, Inc., is a private Pennsylvania-based company that manufactures tear gas and other “non-lethal” crowd control products. These products are used by the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) to quiet protest; their products were also used to quiet protest in Ferguson. Also, G4S is a UK-based security firm that oversees prisons and detention facilities inside occupied Palestinian territories, Israel and security outsourcers in the US.

Drawing specific local and global connections is important. Looking globally is not at all intended to disregard or ignore injustices domestically. The key is to begin locally – affirming one’s local context as a critical starting point – but truly and subsequently realizing the mandate to turn to the global.

Why this Matters to Me/Personal Reflection:

Part of the Christian commission is to both celebrate with those who celebrate and suffer along with those who suffer. At the very least, this session should invite us to sincerely raise the question, “am I my brother’s [or sister’s] keeper?”

Personal Reflection: Often times, our own experiences and our own stories help us to understand and feel the times of celebration and the times of hardship faced by others. What 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 is Jesus communicating about ‘turning social roles upside down’ and about racially segregated societies such as the United States?

Suggested Homework:

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

(Reminder: Facilitator feedback requested; please see p. 11, entitled “Feedback from Facilitators”)

SESSION 5: SIGNS OF THE TIMES, PT. 3: AFRICANS IN ISRAEL

Scripture Reference: Micah 2: 1-2; Galatians 3:28-29

Assignment:

- “Ethiopian Jews Protest Against Racist Police Brutality in Israel” video clip
- “Israel’s New Racism: The Persecution of African Migrants in the Holy Land” video clip
- “Israel Admits the Forced Sterilization of Ethiopians” video clip
- “Israel Forcibly Injected African Immigrants with Birth Control, Report Claims.” reading, Elise Knutsen
- “Israeli Minister Vows to Keep Detention Center Open” reading

Session Core Questions:

- What do discrimination and poor treatment of Africans in Israel (African citizens of Israel or African refugees and asylum-seekers) tell us?
- Are there similarities in experience between Africans and Africa-descended peoples in Israel/Palestine on the one hand, and Africans and Africa-descended peoples in the US on the other hand?
- Within US classrooms, churches, politics or national media sources, why have we not heard much about Africans and Africa-descended people living in Israel/ Palestine?

Response:

The Old Testament prophet Amos reminds us that one can decipher the heart of any society – indeed, even determine how much its people love God—by how it treats the “least” among its ranks. The prophet Amos states, “I will not revoke the punishment, because they sell the righteous (the just) for silver and the needy for a pair of sandals – those who trample the heads of the poor into the dust of the earth and turn aside the way of the afflicted” (Amos 2: 6-7). Jesus consistently proclaimed this very same message, which is encapsulated in numerous parables (Luke 16:19-30; Matt. 5:1-11). If only the political and religious leadership in today’s Israel would heed the prophetic critiques issued by Amos (against the biblical Israel) and Jesus, there might be peace and justice in the Holy Land.

However, in Israel, there is a racial caste system. In other words, there is a race-based social hierarchy. In that hierarchy, African citizens of Israel (Ethiopian Jews) as well as African refugees seeking asylum (largely from the Sudan and Eritrea) rank at the bottom. In South Tel Aviv – the Israeli neighborhood where many of the African refugees and asylum seekers are relegated – inhabitants experience deplorable living conditions, the crime that often attends such conditions and virtually no interest or representation from city officials. In this way, some conditions and experiences of African and Africa-descended peoples living in Israel mirror conditions and experiences of Blacks in the US. In a more specific example, this session’s assignments point towards the devastating and controversial Israeli health department’s recent forced sterilization of thousands of Ethiopian women in order to control population growth. This painful reality bears eerie resemblance to the 1992 forced sterilization of poor Black women in the US; again, the aim was to control population growth.

Many of us have never heard about the experiences of Africans or Africa-descend peoples in Israel/Palestine. This lack of information is largely due to the ways that conversations about Israel/Palestine are carefully crafted and controlled in the US. Politically, Israel and the United States are very strong allies. Furthermore, the European Jewish Holocaust is incredibly revered and romanticized in the narratives

of twentieth century global history. These two facts combined produce a general apprehension for any critique of Israel; this apprehension typically occurs on virtually all levels of US culture (media outlets, history books, university classrooms, churches etc.). Conversations tend to keep Israel as the “good guy”; everyone else is bypassed. But they are bypassed in different ways: Palestinians and persons of Arab descent represent the aggressor against which Israel must protect itself; and we never hear about the marginalized Africans in Israel or the native Beduoin population (darker complexioned) in Israel, essentially living under Jim Crow segregation.

Why this Matters to Me/Personal Reflection:

Conversations in this session are important because as Black Americans in the US, connecting to other Africa-descended people globally could be a powerful tool for mobilization and self-pride.

Personal Reflection: There is a phrase that says, “We are only as strong as our weakest link.” Do you see any merit in this 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 facilitators and student learners, please review the next session’s materials – accessible via the “Black Church Toolkit” folder of the Voices4PeaceNow website (www.voices4peacenow.org – in advance of the next session. Come prepared to discuss.

(Reminder: Facilitator feedback requested; please see p. 11, entitled “Feedback from Facilitators”)

SESSION 6: THEOLOGY MATTERS

Scripture Reference: Leviticus 25: 8-18

Assignment:

- “Beyond Zionism, Pt. 1 with Miko Peled” video clip
- “Black Ministers Welcome Netanyahu to Congress” video clip
- “Jewish and Christian Responses to the Holocaust: The Link to Zionism,” reading, Ruether, Rosemary and Herman Ruether
- “Black Activist and Ministers Say CBC Should be Ashamed of Boycott,” reading, Shiryn Chermezian
- “With God on our Side” (Youtube segment with Pastor John Hagee; approx. min 5-7)

Session Core Questions:

- How does the European Jewish Holocaust help inform Christian ideas of how Christians and Jews should relate?
- What is the significance of the Black clergy responses reflected in this session’s “Assignments”?
- Why does theology and theological reflection matter in these contexts, regarding these issues?
- Reflecting upon previous discussions, what is the significance of utilizing the lens of Black liberation theology alongside other responses considered in this session?
- What would a (Black) theology from the “ground-up” [theo-praxis] look like in the 21st Century?
- How can one define Zionism?

Response:

The European Jewish Holocaust looms very large in the teachings and discussions of global history, especially within the US. Although history is filled with race-, religious-, sexuality- and other difference-based atrocities, the European Jewish Holocaust was the premier event that offered global attention to hate-based crimes against humanity. For better or worse, it became the standard against which other mass-scale crimes against groups of people were judged. In much of the current Christian public and mainstream theology, harshly judging the European Jewish Holocaust makes it easier for Christians to believe that the Biblical “chosen people Israel” is identical to the political state Israel, and therefore avoid any serious critique of the political state. More detail about this can be found in the Session 6 Scripture Reference Page.

The Black clergy responses found in this session are a good example of how critique of Israel is avoided. These responses, not uncommon, are significant insofar as church leaders are equating the Biblical Israel and Israelites with the 21st century political State of Israel. Because of this inaccurate theological and hermeneutical linkage, Black Christians are able to communicate a shallow solidarity with Israel that often leads to their (Black Christian’s) complicity with Israel’s discriminatory policies and oppression of its Arab citizens, its illegal military occupation and its illegal forced seizure of others’ lands.

Black liberation theology seems to converge with Palestinian (and other forms of liberation theology) to lift up the prophetic critique of the Hebrew prophets and Jesus that still has relevance in our modern world. These theologies become critical to challenge evil and injustice everywhere. It is important because these theological narratives offer us a framework that could help make clearer how God works in human history and in the present. They also offer us a roadmap and a blueprint against which we

can judge our own pursuits towards justice. Black theology of liberation depicts a God who is especially concerned with the conditions of the oppressed, marginalized, ostracized and cast away.

But conceiving what a lived-out Black theology of liberation would look like today is not always easy. The present moment in which we find ourselves is not the same as the historical moment (1950s and 60s) that gave rise to Black liberation theology. In an age where Black theology must meet the complexities of the conditions faced, what does it mean to walk with God in a culture of profound police violence against Black youth? What does it mean to conceive of a God that stands alongside youth of all colors as they protest and fight against evil and injustice? What does it mean, today, to be where God is? A Black theology from the “ground-up” must make room for being able to see the divine in places where we, in the past, have not endeavored to look.

Why this Matters to Me/Personal Reflection:

These conversations matter because theology profoundly shapes the US American context and worldview. Even when considering the lives and experiences of non-Christians and non-believers (of any sort), we are located within a US culture that is significantly impacted by Judeo-Christian values, systems of ethics and traditions. It therefore becomes critical that, in order to be better informed and equipped, we know how theology is advanced and communicated regarding these issues, and be enabled to discern what is consistent with the message of Jesus and the prophets.

The conversations also matter because the theologies that we hear must always engage with our own internal theologies and faith practices. The external theologies that we engage oftentimes affect us emotionally and can cause us struggle to reconcile them with our inner most convictions. Engaging this session’s conversations on an intellectual, as well as a spiritual and emotional, level can provide for a more robust spirituality.

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

(Reminder: Facilitator feedback requested; please see p. 11, entitled “Feedback from Facilitators”)

SESSION 7: THE CHURCH, STRUCTURAL SIN AND ASSAULTS ON SACRED SPACE

Scripture Reference: 2 Chronicles 7: 14; Matthew 6:9-13

Assignment:

- “Let Our Ears Tingle with Truth,” reading, Keri Day
- “Ferguson Fiasco – Doing Theology After Ferguson,” reading, Andre Johnson
- “Christianity in Palestine,” reading, Timothy Seidel
- “Vatican to Recognize Palestinian State in New Treaty” reading, Jodi Rudoren and Diaa Hadid

Session Core Questions:

- What should we make of the Christian Church’s historical role of advancing violence?
- Why is structural sin a critical concept for the 21st century Christian church to discuss?
- Why, in the current US media climate, does one tend to hear more about “terrorism,” “religious extremism,” and “jihad” than one hears about Palestinian Christians who cling to their faith amidst conflict in the Middle East?
- How could one think through the utility of the church seriously engaging issues of Israel and Palestine?

Response:

Throughout the history of the Christian Church, violence and persecution have been present. To be clear, though there has been violence committed against Christians simply because of their core religious beliefs, there has been a profound persecution by the Christian Church against others merely because of their difference. For instance, from the beginning of legal Christianity, persons labeled “witches,” “heretics,” and “pagans” were killed; the 15th-17th centuries were full of “religious wars” in which tens of thousands of people were slain; African indigenous religions and holy sites were demonized and destroyed by Christian missionaries traveling to Africa to “bring Christ”; Jews and native populations were slaughtered en masse from the 4th-17th centuries and countless other atrocities that barely make our history books. Violence has been committed in the name of God and that is part of the history that today’s Christians inherit. This very reality helps place the concept of “structural sin” into new perspective.

Evil should not merely be understood as offenses between individual actors, but also structurally. For instance, the histories of violence that are part of the Christian story (even when they are omitted) highlight a structural evil. The realities of current injustice and oppression (that are sometimes aided by the church) highlight a structural evil. Discussing the concept of structural sin is critical because it both allows the Christian Church and religious communities to engage honest dialogue about their own complicity in advancing conditions of suffering and allows the church to call evil what it is – evil.

In doing this work, however, one must be mindful to “rightly divide” the truth. Everything that is called evil or threatening is not always evil or threatening. A topic that this curriculum engages directly is Islamophobia (the association made between Muslim, “Middle Eastern” and Arab-descended people and “danger,” “terrorism,” religious extremism, anti-American sentiment, and the resulting fear or apprehension caused by this association). In the post-September 11th United States, much attention has been given to creating the image of the “evil Arab.” Media has been critical in shaping public perception in this regard, drawing correlations between terrorism and the Middle East. This shaping of public perception influences how US Americans tend to view Israel/ Palestine. For instance, to many, Palestine incorrectly becomes synonymous with “Muslim,” “extremist Muslim,” “violence,” and “terrorism.” We

rarely even discuss facts like Palestinian Christians do exist. Or that during the 2014 War on Gaza, when the Israeli military bombed Palestinian schools and mosques (Muslim houses of faith), Palestinian Christians welcomed Palestinian Muslims into their churches to pray and worship.

When one reflects upon the utility and responsibility of the church to engage Israel and Palestine, one might do well to consider the global Christian Church, not just the US-based Christian Church. Specifically reflecting on the utility of the Black Church, it can offer these conversations a moral voice, speaking of God's love for all people and God's displeasure for all injustice and arbitrary oppression. The Black Church has the potential to stand as a moral authority, historically proven by rights-based struggles in the 20th Century.

Why this Matters to Me/Personal Reflection:

Amidst growing critiques that the Black Church is no longer relevant or socially-conscious about injustice, this session reflects upon how the church might be better equipped to redefine its own identity in the 21st Century. And its conversations are important on a number of levels. Emotionally, many of us have already begun to process the harsh realities of the unmitigated violence against sacred spaces and places of worship in this country. The June 2015 massacre at the historic Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina, reminded many of the wave of violence visited upon predominantly Black churches in the 1980s and 90s. These are difficult realities that could potentially resonate with our deepest fears, concerns, sorrows and lived experiences. This session's dialogue will encourage participants to further unpack these very complex emotions. Spiritually, this session hopes to challenge participants to wrestle with how their faith practices and personal convictions should stand amidst very real and present dangers coming from outside (and sometimes within) their own communities of faith.

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 facilitators and student learners, please review the next session's materials – accessible via the "Black Church Toolkit" folder of the Voices4PeaceNow website (www.voices4peacenow.org) – in advance of the next session. Come prepared to discuss.

(Reminder: Facilitator feedback requested; please see p. 11, entitled “Feedback from Facilitators”)

SESSION 8: INTERCULTURAL, INTERFAITH AND RACIAL DIALOGUE, PT. 1: IN BLACK AND WHITE

Scripture Reference: 1 Corinthians 12:12-14

Assignment:

- “Whitewashed: Unmasking the World of Whiteness” video clip
- “Tutu Letter to UC Berkeley Student Leaders,” reading, Archbishop Desmond Tutu
- “The Israel Lobby Finds a New Face,” reading, Seth Freed Wessler

Session Core Questions:

- What has been the significance of immigrant “whitewashing,” as they came into the US during the twentieth century – particularly Jewish immigrants?
- What does it mean for cultural narratives to “compete” against one another? Why does this occur? Have you experienced this personally?
- What do you make of the solidarity and coalition building between African Americans and American Jews during the Civil Rights Movement? Has it been taught, communicated or portrayed a particular way in the media?
- How has the AIPAC capitalized on African American/Jewish relations, the groups’ cultural narratives and the historical ambivalence of their coalition building?

Response:

“Whitewashing” can be understood as a process by which a group of persons, not previously considered racially white, become identified as white persons. As a part of this process, socially, culturally, economically and politically, they are granted access to the privileges, rights and responsibilities that come along with racial whiteness. For instance, parents and/or guardians of white male youth often have the privilege of not needing to teach their male youth how to navigate the dangers that could befall him simply by virtue of his skin color, attire and location. This is one unspoken privilege, of many, that come along with the social and cultural granting of whiteness. This process is significant because it essentially changes the societal position of an entire group of people. Jewish immigrants to the US underwent this process in the twentieth century (around the WWII/European Jewish Holocaust moment).

The idea that cultural narratives compete against each other is not new. The logic is one that tries to “determine” which group’s historical story is “most traumatic” – the African American history of chattel slavery and racial discrimination or the European Jewish history of the Holocaust. This competition over who has the “most traumatic” cultural narrative happens for multiple reasons; a common reason is to claim that the other group doesn’t have “as legitimate” claims about current trauma and suffering. For instance, in contemporary African American reparations debates, some anti-reparations arguments have claimed that more Jews died during the Holocaust than African Americans during Middle Passage (journey from the slave castles of West Africa to the Americas, with African slaves); and currently, American Jews, as a group, have achieved high levels of political and economic success. The logic assumes that since more Jews perished in the Holocaust (i.e. their story has been “worse”) and American Jews have been able to overcome these historical obstacles and achieve success, African Americans should be denied reparations in any form, “overcome historical obstacles” and achieve success.

African American and American Jewish coalition-building during the twentieth century Civil Rights era in the US is historically significant. For a time, Jews fought alongside Black Americans during the Black rights struggle – they marched, participated in sit-ins and argued in support of Black social and

political rights. For a moment, there was a historical time window in which this social and political alliance, for American Jews made sense. Black American and American Jewish living conditions were not dissimilar; this fact, aided by the strong Jewish moral vision, created historical conditions ripe for solidarity. This was the case in the 1950s, on into the 1960s. But by the 1970s, however, realities started to change and coalition began to break down. Although they had already started to assimilate, prior to this historical moment, American Jewish communities had not completely undergone the process of white suburbanization. By the 70s, this process was complete. And with the suburbanization of American Jews alongside white America, Jewish community assimilation into the “full” privilege of whiteness had reached its peak, effectively disallowing the existence of a relationship (between Black Americans and American Jews, as a cultural group) that existed prior. This moment represented the culmination of the process of “whitewashing.”

The American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) is a lobbying group that advocates pro-Israel policy towards the legislative and executive branches of the US government; significantly, it is one of the most powerful political lobbying groups in Washington, DC. One of the most notable indicators that AIPAC is seeking to capitalize on both the historical Black/Jewish coalition and the historical experiences of Blacks in America is the lobby’s targeted campaign against hallmark Black institutions, specifically Black churches and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). Note, these campaigns are not designed to necessarily harm Black institutions, but instead to use them as vehicles to further advance pro-Israel domestic and foreign policy. For instance, AIPAC has offered financial resources to Black clergy to “sponsor” congregational trips to the Holy Land and also to have them offer pro-Israel theological reflections in their local contexts.

The logic behind this effort is very similar to that which undergirds AIPAC’s targeted HBCU campaign. The lobby seeks talented young Black college students—ideally from under-resourced backgrounds—brings them to DC (many selected students have never been outside of their own local contexts prior to this moment), exposes them to Capitol Hill, introduces them to high-ranking government officials, teaches them “US foreign policy” basics that are pro-Israel leaning, and sends them back to their respective home institution. Upon return to their campuses, these students are often passionate Israel student advocates. The hope is these students will continue to advocate, perhaps even develop into fervent politicians. The logic behind this effort is simple: Black Americans can serve as buffer between Israel and claims about Israel being an apartheid state. Black Americans can invoke their historical lineage of chattel slavery, racial discrimination, and apartheid, saying, “I know what discrimination, racism and apartheid look like. Israel is not doing those things.”

Why this Matters to Me/Personal Reflection:

Discussions in this session are important because culturally-advanced, media-governed and historically-informed (with either correct or incorrect facts) beliefs about the Black-Jewish relationship influence the ways in which one can even conceive of Palestine as a place for liberation and justice struggle. These discussions are also important because they encourage us to dive more deeply into the experiences and lived realities of our neighbors—the people with whom we share these United States. Emotionally and spiritually, the connectedness to these journeys might help us further unlock the ways that God is present in the stories of others.

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

(Reminder: Facilitator feedback requested; please see p. 11, entitled “Feedback from Facilitators”)

SESSION 9: INTERCULTURAL, INTERFAITH AND RACIAL DIALOGUE, PT. 2: IT AIN'T ALL BLACK AND WHITE

Scripture Reference: Romans 14:10

Assignments:

- “Labeling” image
- “Brown International” image’
- “South African Apartheid, Palestinian Apartheid” image
- “Apartheid – South Africa and Palestine” image
- “South African Child at Pro-Palestinian Cape Town Rally” image

Session Core Questions:

- What is the concept of “ecumenism” and why is it important?
- Should we understand Islamophobia best as a racial anxiety or a religious anxiety?
- In what ways should US culture, saturated with sentiments of Islamophobia, think about the significance of it’s global implications?
- What are the common Christian responses and postures to claims of Islamophobia?
- How are other apartheid or former apartheid states (globally) engaging the issues of Palestine/ Israel?

Response:

Simply stated, ecumenism can be understood as “general,” “universal” or “incorporating a wide range of diversity.” In religious contexts, ecumenism means “across denominational boundaries” (compared to “interfaith,” which means “across boundaries of religion.”). In other words, a primary goal of ecumenism would be to relate, cultivate dialogue and foster understanding among persons with differing viewpoints. This concept is important because it takes interreligious dialogue – between Christians, Jews and Muslims, for instance – and instead of focusing on “tolerance” as an end goal, focuses on true understanding.

But, like any other tool, it can be and has been coopted for very different uses. Unfortunately, for instance, there has been a pattern of coopted ecumenism manifesting in Christian-Jewish dialogue (an more recently, Christian-Jewish-Muslim dialogue) that has come to dominate interfaith relations in the US. The Jewish theologian Marc Ellis calls it “the ecumenical deal.” The “deal” is as follows: *Let’s gather together for nice dinners, but please leave any discussions of justice for Palestinians at the door. It is a complicated topic and we really cannot solve it among us. We need to leave this to our leaders in Israel who are on the front lines against daily threats against the only Jewish state. They have wisdom and solutions. Let’s build friendly relations among us, but please leave the Palestinian agenda out of it.* This has been the dominant “dialogue” since World War II, and although the tide is beginning to change, it remains the dominant narrative of ecumenism regarding Palestine and Israel. Today’s believers and faith leaders must forge a new path that allows ecumenism to speak directly to the potential of strong, loving relationships that confront systems of oppression.

Islamophobia in the US can be understood as a culture of fear and anxiety directed towards persons of Muslim or Arab tradition or descent, stemming from the automatic association(s) made between their outward appearance (phenotype, attire, etc.) and select troublesome characteristics (“terrorist,” extremist, dangerous, security threat etc.). Though present prior, a stronger wave of Islamophobia

emerged in the US after the September 11 New York City attacks in 2001. Political and popular media decision-makers combined to communicate (to the American public) a way of engaging persons of Arabic descent that always presumes them as potential-terrorists or persons of suspicion. This socialization is both racial and religious. It is racialized insofar as pejorative qualities, behaviors, attitudes and characteristics are mapped onto physical appearance. The socialization is also significantly religious in nature; Christianity still remains the predominant religion in the US. Islamophobic anxieties are often sparked by invocations of extremist religious expression, “holy wars,” and the spoken or unspoken fear that other religions seek to destroy American Christianity, by any means necessary.

Why this Matters to Me/Personal Reflection:

Discussions in this session are important because the current US culture is saturated with Islamophobic assumptions, attitudes and behaviors. They are present in nearly every aspect of society: news/media, education, politics, religious discourse and everyday person-to-person interactions, to name a few. Learning to identify and address these assumptions, attitudes and behaviors would be important tools with which to engage difference, more broadly.

Also, these conversations matter because they encourage us to dive more deeply into the experiences and lived realities of our neighbors – the people with whom we share these United States. Emotionally and spiritually, the connectedness to these journeys might help us further unlock the ways that God is present in the stories of others.

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 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 facilitators and student learners, please review the next session’s materials—accessible via the “Black Church Toolkit” folder of the Voices4PeaceNow website (www.voices4peacenow.org)—in advance of the next session. Come prepared to discuss.

(Reminder: Facilitator feedback requested; please see p. 11, entitled “Feedback from Facilitators”)

SESSION 10: CALL TO ACTION

Scripture Reference: Micah 6:8; James 2:26; Luke 18:1-8

Assignment:

- “Kairos 30th Anniversary Statement: Dangerous Memory and Hope for the Future,” reading
- www.bdsmovement.org (Please read up on the BDS movement as an alternative interfaith model of activism for justice in Palestine and Israel)

Questions:

- What should be the end goal(s) or ultimate expectation of mobilization efforts?
- Is the end goal reasonable and feasible?
- How are individuals and/or organizations already getting involved with efforts to mobilize for Palestinian justice?

Response:

The goal and expectation for efforts to pursue Palestinian justice and liberation is to end the illegal Israeli occupation. There is nothing, in the world, quite like military occupation. Although racial supremacy, gender and sexual violence against women, and gross violations against children’s human rights are present across many different contexts, these conditions under military occupation take on a new character – it is a different type of state sanctioned evil. Colonialism and imperialism via military occupation reach deeply into every domain of the lives of those it subjugates. The only just end to this type of injustice is its dissolution. Eventually, we must hope for a true reconciliation between Palestinians and Israeli Jews, but we recall that there can be no reconciliation without justice and truth.

Fortunately, given the present social and political moment, popular resistance and direct political action are effecting much needed change. Though (often) millennial-led movements for justice, in the US and abroad, are in their nascent stages, the moment is ripe for change. Military occupation and colonialism, however, are not overcome overnight. Long term, sustained commitment and action are necessary. In fact, it is likely that the only mechanism by which Israel’s illegal military occupation and oppression will cease is the hemorrhaging of its international reputation. In other words, representatives from the global community must come together to apply political, economic and moral pressure on the State of Israel. This is the mechanism by which the era of legalized racial segregation in the US came to end. The US desegregation era was sparked by a waning United States image in international politics. US allies and enemies alike were looking to the US as it proclaimed to be the moral leader of the free world, as it simultaneously treated Black Americans like second-class citizens. The US was morally forced to attempt to reconcile its own contradictions. And this is the type of moral legitimacy that Black faith communities can offer against the illegal Israeli occupation.

In addition to moral pressure, political and economic pressure is also critical. There are US-based organizations that focus the majority of their attention on issue-specific campaigns to help end the occupation. For instance, the Chicago-based No Way to Treat a Child Campaign, focuses specifically on faith leaders targeting the Israeli justice system insofar as it violates the human rights of Palestinian juveniles.

See this curriculum’s appendix for more specifics about how you or your church/ organization can get involved.

Why this Matters to Me/Personal Reflection:

Scripture reminds us of the important question, “What good is it, brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds?” Then it follows up, “Can such faith save them?” (James 2:14) In other words, the practicing and the living out of one’s faith is a critical spiritual discipline. Session 10 challenges and encourages student participants to make their faith operational; these conversations are important because they begin dialogue about steps that can be taken to further stand against racial, political and religious injustice.

Furthermore, calling communities of faith into action is important because communities of faith, particularly Black communities of faith, are uniquely positioned to offer a moral ethic to a profoundly unethical system of oppression and supremacy. And the time for justice is always urgently “now.”

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?

APPENDIX

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 2/3s 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.’

