



A Palestinian Jesus Delegitimizes the Jewish State

FICTION vs. FACT Israel & its Arab Neighbors

FICTION: Jesus was Palestinian because He was born in the *land* of Palestine, inhabited by Palestinian *people*. Because Jews are not the indigenous people of the land, the modern Jewish State is illegitimate.

FACT: Jesus could not have been Palestinian because a *land* known as Palestine did not exist at the time of his birth.

- The Roman Empire occupied the land when Jesus was born and recognized the geopolitical identification of the land as Israel, Judea and Samaria.¹
- Jews are called Jews because they are from Judea, the ancient – and biblical – designation for the Jewish homeland.²
- Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea and ministered in Judea and Samaria, the heartland of the nation of Israel.³
- One hundred years *after* Jesus, the Romans changed the geo-political designation of the land to “Palestine” to erase the connection between the land and the Jewish people.⁴



The Roman Empire in the Middle East during Jesus' lifetime: Judea. 30 CE

FACT: Just as no land of Palestine existed when Jesus was born, no *people* known as Palestinians existed. The Jews are the indigenous people of the land.



The Israel Stele

- Ever since the return of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt almost 3,500 years ago, there has been a continuous Jewish presence in the land.⁵
- The Jewish people are the biological descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the Jewish patriarchs.⁶
- Historic texts and inscriptions of ancient Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians, and Persians document the people, kings, and cities of Israel.⁷
- The people of Israel are included in the Merneptah Stele, also known as the Israel Stele, written by the Egyptian Pharaoh Merneptah (1213-1203 B.C.E.) to recount his military conquests.⁸
- At the time of Jesus' birth, the occupying Romans recognized the indigenous people as Jews.⁹

FACT: Jesus was Jewish by birth and was an observant Jew throughout His life..

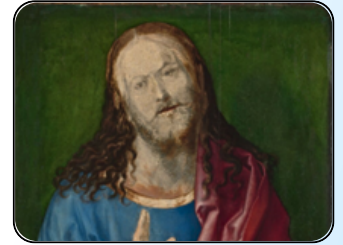
- The Gospel of Matthew, Chapter One, provides a detailed account of Jesus' Jewish genealogy all the way back to Abraham.
- Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the birthplace of Israel's King David, from whom Jesus is descended.
- According to the Gospels, Jesus studied Torah, observed biblical holidays, preached in synagogues in the Galilee, and went to the Temple in Jerusalem.¹⁰
- Ancient historical sources such as Flavius Josephus, the Babylonian Talmud, Tacitus, and Ignatius of Antioch all testify to Jesus' Jewish identity.¹¹



FACT: Jesus' Jewish identity and the inherent relationship between the new Christian faith and Judaism were acknowledged by early church leaders for the sake of legitimacy with the Roman Empire.¹²

However, within the first two centuries after Jesus, the church began to separate itself from the Jewish roots of the faith.

- In its effort to establish an identity distinct from Judaism, early church leaders taught that Christianity was superior to, and had replaced, Jews and their faith.¹³
- The separation of Christianity from its Jewish roots was formalized by the Roman Emperor Constantine (305-327) through the state-run church.¹⁴
- By the Middle Ages, church doctrine ignored Jesus' Jewish identity and vilified Jews, leading to state-sanctioned pogroms such as the Crusades.¹⁵
- The anti-Jewish teachings of Martin Luther fueled Jew-hatred that was used in Nazi propaganda four centuries later.¹⁶
- Nazi German theologians identified Jesus as an Aryan and removed all Hebrew terms and references to the Jewish roots of Christianity from the Bible.¹⁷



A blonde-haired, blue-eyed Jesus.
German Renaissance, Circa 1550

FACT: The historic church's denial of Jesus' Jewish identity laid the foundation for the identification of Jesus as Palestinian.

- Christ at the Checkpoint conferences, held biannually in Bethlehem, replace the Jewish Jesus with a Palestinian Jesus. According to NGO Monitor: "CATC seeks to advance the Palestinian nationalist agenda within Evangelical Christian churches while simultaneously reviving theological antisemitic themes such as replacement theology."¹⁸
- Speaking at the CATC conference in 2010, Rev. Mitri Raheb of Bethlehem Bible College and CATC said: "Israel represents Rome of the Bible, not the people of the land."¹⁹



December 2023:
"Jesus in the Rubble," Bethlehem

- Just two months after Hamas' attack on Israel in 2023, Rev. Munther Isaac of CATC unveiled "Jesus in the Rubble," portraying Jesus as a Palestinian baby wrapped in a keffiyeh amid the rubble in Gaza.²⁰
- The Vatican Nativity display for Christmas 2024 featured a baby Jesus on a keffiyeh, the symbol of Palestinian resistance to the existence of Israel.²¹

December 2024:
Pope Francis at the Vatican with
Jesus on a keffiyeh



The claim that Jesus was Palestinian contradicts all biblical and extra-biblical evidence that identifies Him as a practicing Jew, born in the Jewish homeland.

A Palestinian Jesus forms the foundation of propaganda that delegitimizes the Jewish State.

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