

The PROJECTOR

Dr. Dayton Hobbs, FOUNGING EDITOR

"Projecting the Light of the Word of God on the Issues of the Day"

Palestinian Liberation Theology

by Chris Katulka Israel My Glory Magazine
July/August 2012 Edition

Naim Ateek believes you cannot take the Bible literally. He has a particular problem with the Torah (Pentateuch), which he considers a "Zionist text," and the books of Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, and 1 and 2 Kings—all of which confirm God gave the land of Israel to the Jewish people. He speaks of peace and nonviolence but makes no apology for Palestinian terrorism. In fact, much of his rhetoric regarding Israel is indistinguishable from that of a Palestinian Muslim.

But Naim Ateek is not a Muslim. In fact, he is a highly respected, American-educated, Palestinian Christian and ordained Episcopal priest. At 75, he is the president and director of the Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center in Jerusalem, also called the Sabeel Center (Arabic for "the way"), which he helped found in the 1990s. He has written books and won awards; and as an Israeli citi-

zen and pastor to Palestinian Christians, he speaks on behalf of his people, whom he says feel disenfranchised under "the colonialist Zionist Israelis" who stole their land during the War of Independence in 1948.

Believing his people cannot accept the "dangerous theology" of Zionist Christians,¹ Dr. Ateek helped develop Palestinian Liberation Theology (PLT), which he and the Sabeel Center say provides a relevant way to interpret Scripture for Arab believers who need a healthy dose of encouragement living in Israel. Today PLT is the primary doctrine of Palestinian Christians, rooting and grounding them in a highly politicized form of Replacement Theology.

Political Activism

Liberation Theology itself is nothing new. In the 1960s it surfaced in Latin America, advanced by the Roman Catholic Church to encourage the poverty-stricken to react against President John F. Kennedy's economic development plan for Latin America, which the church believed would cause further injustice.²

Proponents of Liberation Theology encouraged political activism against those who sought to preserve a class system. The move-

ment's leaders in Latin America manipulated the gospel message to mean deliverance from political, social, and economic injustice. As a result, the theology spread throughout mainline Christian denominations and has typically been labeled a Christian form of Marxism.³

Liberation Theology faded not long after it began. However, within the past 20 years it has reemerged as the principal theology of Palestinian Christians in Israel because it focuses on freeing the outcasts and downtrodden.⁴

The most important issue Palestinian Christians struggle with is the literal interpretation of the Bible. Before the creation of the State of Israel in 1948, most considered the Old Testament crucial to the Scriptures. It stood as a witness and guide to the coming of Jesus Christ. However, after 1948, Arab Christians abandoned reading and preaching it because it is too "Zionist" for their liking. Instead of recognizing God's faithfulness in seeing the promises of the Abrahamic Covenant fulfilled before their eyes, many found the Old Testament repugnant and offensive.

(Continued on page 3)

Inside this issue:

Palestinian Liberation Theology	Front Cover
Editor's Desk	2
Proverb Practicals	4
Teaching Tips	6
Children's Bible Club Corner	7



A Merry Heart Editor's Desk by Pastor Tod Brainard

Thanksgiving is a time to reflect on the goodness of God and to praise Him for His wonderful acts. I have been spending time reflecting on Proverbs 15 in recent days and there is a phrase that appears twice in Proverbs 15 in verses 13 and 15 that has struck a chord in my own life. It is the phrase “**a merry heart.**”

I love what appears in verse 15, “*the merry heart hath a continual feast.*” People with a “merry heart” have Thanksgiving all year round. The contrast here is about how one perceives their circumstances. This is likely not meant as a comparison between success and suffering, but rather between pessimism and godly trust. Perspective has an immediate impact on one's personal happiness (Proverbs 15:13).

The word translated “evil” in verse 15 is not always a reference to immorality; it can also mean something unpleasant or catastrophic. Those who are perpetually “afflicted” are constantly miserable under the weight of their own negativity. They make the worst of every situation. Pessimistic people constantly complain and never see a bright side in any circumstances. They are gloomy, negative, and seem bent on making life miserable for others.

Their counterparts though are cheerful people. They may encounter difficult circumstances, but they find a sense of joy, even in adversity (1

Thessalonians 5:18). These merry individuals help others by encouraging them. They lift the spirits of their friends and companions. Someone has said it this way: between the optimist and the pessimist, the difference is presentation; the optimist sees the doughnut, the pessimist sees the hole. It has also been said that the optimist is the person who invented the airplane and the pessimist the person who invented the parachute. You need them both do we not, but you also need to come to a place of biblical realism.

Two quick qualities in this passage that produce a merry heart that enjoys a continual feast: 1) (Vs. 16) **Fill your heart with the fear of the Lord;** 2) (vs. 17) **Fill your home with love,** even when there may be little to feast on. These two qualities lead to a merry heart and a continual feast because life is viewed through the lens of God's provision and grace.

Both verses 16 and 17 begin with the word, better. There is a better way to live in this wicked world. Don't view this life through the lens of hatred and bitterness, but rather view it through the lens of grace. God knows the end from the beginning, and He has a positive outcome for the believer. Enjoy His “continual feast” with “a merry heart” in a world that knows very little of either. Ω



The PROJECTOR

Dr. Dayton Hobbs, (1924–2006) Founding Editor
Pastor Tod Brainard—Publisher and Editor
Mr. Ludwig Opager,
Mrs. Doris Peppard, Dr. Adam Watt—
Contributing Editors
Layout—Mrs. Brenda Whitney

Published by Grace Bible Church
6331 Chestnut Street, Milton, FL 32570
E-mail us at Issues@theprojector.org
Visit us on the Web at www.theprojector.org

Phone: (850) 623-4671

The Projector is a fundamentalist publication that seeks to “project the light of the Word of God on the issues of the day.” It desires to honor Christ by articulating a clear testimony for Biblical separation from error in these last days as God's answer to the deepening apostasy of the visible Church.



(Continued from page 1 - *Palestinian Liberation Theology*)

Dr. Ateek and the Sabeel Center have used the Palestinian dismissal of the Old Testament as an opportunity to propagate PLT, which desires to de-Zionize the Bible in order to promote an anti-Israel agenda.⁵ In fact, Sabeel's definition of PLT refers to Jesus as having lived "under occupation" and tries to rally people to "stand in solidarity with the Palestinian people":

Palestinian Liberation Theology is an ecumenical grassroots movement, rooted in Christian Biblical interpretation and nourished by the hopes, dreams and struggles of the Palestinian people....In a situation where justice has been long neglected, Palestinian Liberation Theology opens new horizons of understanding for the pursuit of a just peace and for the reconciliation proclaimed in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. By learning from Jesus—his life under occupation and his response to injustice—this theology hopes to connect the true meaning of Christian faith with the daily lives of all those who suffer under occupation, violence, discrimination, and human rights violations. Additionally, this blossoming theological effort promotes a more accurate international awareness of the current political situation and encourages Christians from around the world to work for justice and to stand in solidarity with the Palestinian people.⁶

Ahab and Naboth

The biblical foundation used for PLT is the account of King Ahab and Naboth in 1 Kings 21. Usually, Liberation Theology uses the Israelites' Exodus from Egypt to establish its message of freedom from political oppression. But for

Palestinians, the Exodus is too pro-Israel.

So Dr. Ateek teaches how Israel's King Ahab and his evil wife, Jezebel, murdered Naboth for his land and how the Lord sent Elijah the prophet to them to pronounce judgment on them. Their eventual death provided the divine justice Naboth deserved.

Dr. Ateek's interpretation of 1 Kings 21 portrays King Ahab as the modern State of Israel, murdering Naboth and stealing the land of the Palestinians, who are cast as the stalwart Naboth. He preaches that a day is coming when God will judge Israel for what Ateek says is its abuse of the Arabs, and divine justice will prevail for those who suffered at the hands of the Zionist Israelis.

For Dr. Ateek, Naboth is the story of every Palestinian Christian. He has been quoted as saying, "The death and dispossession of Naboth and his family has [sic] been reenacted thousands of times since the creation of the State of Israel."⁷ Ateek was 11 when his family lost its home in Beth Shean in the 1948 War of Independence.

Today he says Christians no longer need to acknowledge the Old Testament prophecies concerning the Jewish people's return to the land because, as he sees it, they reveal an understanding of God that contradicts Jesus' message in the New Testament.⁸ He claims by using a new and relevant interpretation of Scripture, "the Bible can be reclaimed for Palestinian Christians."⁹

A Wall of Separation

As PLT advanced to become the primary theology for Palestinian Christians, it has built a wall of separation between believers—something Jesus died to tear down

(Eph. 2). With it has come increased tension between Israeli and Palestinian churches.

Meno Kalisher, pastor of the Jerusalem Assembly, said in a recent interview, "Whenever our young adults go to activities to fellowship with other churches that include Palestinian Christians, they immediately hear how Israel is the problem and the oppressor of the Palestinian people. As a result, our young adults have lost the desire to fellowship with Palestinian Christians, which is tremendously upsetting."

Sadly, although Dr. Ateek and the Sabeel Center claim to stand on Christian principles, their rhetoric sounds no different from that of Palestinian Muslims who incite violence against Israel. In fact, in his quest for peace, Ateek makes no apology for Palestinian terrorism nor holds Palestinian Muslims accountable for their ill treatment of Palestinian Christians.¹⁰ Ironically, Arab Muslims consider Arab Christians weak and spineless.

While Dr. Ateek and the Sabeel Center claim PLT offers Palestinian Christians a fresh way to read the Scriptures, the truth is there is nothing novel about it; PLT is Replacement Theology. Wrote Shelley Neese, vice president of The Jerusalem Connection Report, Replacement Theology teaches that the Church superseded Jews as the benefactor of God's covenants. PLT goes one step further saying that the Jews never had a place of favor in the first place. In some cases, they erase Israel from the Bible altogether. Many Palestinian Churches that teach PLT have changed the Psalms by removing every reference to "Israel" and "Zion."¹¹

(Continued on page 5)

Proverb Practicals

by Ludwig Opager

Proverbs 10:13, In the lips of him that hath understanding wisdom is found: but a rod (*shebet-staff for smiting*) is for the back of him that is void of understanding.

Our proverb is a step-by-step recipe that one would follow toward the getting of wisdom for we are presented here one who is void of understanding and one that has understanding. The goal is for both is to have wisdom and understanding. The rod, (*shebet-staff for smiting*) here is used by a schoolmaster to chastise one without understanding. Now we know from Galatians 3:24,25 that: **the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ...but after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.**

Now in our proverb for today we are given two methods of learning. One method is with *words* and the other is using *the rod*. In ages past, the rod (*shebet*) was used for punishment of adults who did not obey the commands of one in authority or the law. The rod was used to bring about consciousness of the violation and future obedience to the word of authority regardless of the age of the one upon whom the rod was applied. The action of the rod was used to bring a person *void of understanding* to obedience of the law. The phrase "*void of understanding*" captures the specific call for the rod. Random use of the rod

by authority without proper context is abuse. The rod is a tool of God upon one who has shown *destitution of the heart*. *Understanding* is the KJV translation of the Hebrew word *leb*, which could be better understood as meaning the *heart or the inner man*. This void of "*heart*" means that he does not possess the internal motivation of the inner man to obey.

Now our proverb gives precedence to the word of wisdom over the rod. Jesus gave us a similar precedence when he told the disciples in John 14:11, **Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.** Notice the pre-eminence he gives his word. Notice that he infers that if you have trouble believing his word that he is in the Father, believe him for his very works' sake. Jesus Christ wants his word believed for His word is pre-eminent! This is the principle of the pre-eminence of the word over works and it is a principle that applies also to the word of man. Word should always be given pre-eminence over works.

However, as Jesus said to his disciples if you don't believe my words believe my works. In

other words, He means for them to start on the journey toward believing His words by the first step of believing His works. This is a principle that is also taught in the scriptures regarding child rearing and is alluded to in our proverb. The rod is the primer teacher on the road from void of understanding to obedience to properly constituted authority. The use of the rod is not random, but a teaching work that is to lead to voice obedience.

So, taking this pattern of what leads from the law to Christ it appears the rod is that which leads one who is void of understanding to realize the necessity of obedience to the law. What brings a child to obey the law of his mother and father? It is that which corrects him before he even understands fully the meaning of speech. It is that which shows consequences to the child for actions that are in rebellion to the father's law. But after obedience to the father's word becomes the normal pattern of the child, the child is no longer under the schoolmaster of the rod, but now under the schoolmaster of the words of the father. Once this foundation is laid then

(Continued on page 5)



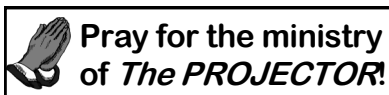
(Continued from page 4 - Proverbs Praticals)

there is that natural movement to God's law, and then on to Christ. That seems to be the Biblical pattern. However, we live in an age where the patterns of God, the tools of God are being cast aside.

We said in one of our previous articles that the first language of a baby is body language. A baby does not fully understand the meaning of the mother's voice, but the baby can understand the mother's body language (caresses, affection, embrace, handling with care, discipline, etc.). Mothers and fathers have been given a voice and a body to communicate with their children. In addition, God has given parents the tool of the rod (different Hebrew word for rod used for the instruction of children, *choter*, meaning a *tender shoot from a bush or new growth from a young sapling- Proverbs 13:24; 22:15*) to bring a child to know that parents' words are to be carefully followed when the child does not obey. The *choter*, properly used, enforces and verifies the pre-eminence of the word of the parent. If you use the rod for any other purpose, you misuse the rod. Children are in the early stages of learning, and they need the help of the rod (*choter*, not *shebet*) from time to time when disobedience and unruly behavior justifies its use. The one described in our proverb needs the help of the rod because he is void of understanding; he is not word-oriented but works-oriented.

The child comes into this world as simple and the simple need experiences that will bring them from simplicity to wisdom. God loves the simple and He desires the simple to come unto Him. He expects the simple to become wise and those who are given to teach the simple are to bring into their life, experiences. With time **"a word to the wise is sufficient."**

Ω



(Continued from page 3- Palestinian Liberation Theology)

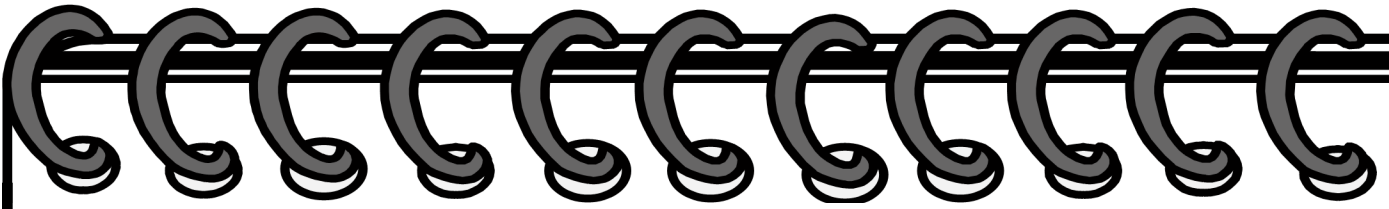
PLT blatantly disregards God's eternal promises to the Jewish people by manipulating Scripture to suit its needs. Wrote Neese, "It is a dangerous propaganda tool cleverly wielded by Sabeel to undermine Israel's right to the land. All the while, this anti-Semitic politically-driven theology void of the Gospel hides behind a façade of peace, justice, and love."¹²

In the end, said Kalisher, the Palestinian Christians themselves will lose out: "Due to their theology they consider Israel an enemy and lack the blessings God could provide." Ω

ENDNOTES

1. Naim Stifan Ateek, *Justice and Only Justice: A Palestinian Theology of Liberation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1989), 64–65.
2. Ian Linden, *Liberation Theology: Coming of Age?* (London: Catholic Institute for International Relations, 1997), 3.
3. Phillip Berryman, *Liberation Theology* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1987), 138–39.
4. Shelley Neese, "Palestinian Liberation Theology," *The Jerusalem Connection* .
5. *Ibid.*
6. "Palestinian Liberation Theology," Sabeel Center .
7. Ateek, 87.
8. *Ibid.*, 82.
9. *Ibid.*, 86.
10. Neese.
11. *Ibid.*
12. *Ibid.*

This article first appeared in the July/Aug 2012 issue of *Israel My Glory magazine*, published by *The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry*. Copyright 2012. All rights reserved. Used by permission.



Teaching Tips

by Doris Peppard

A Thought for the Week

When your students finish their work early, they can become bored, restless, and often a discipline issue. Chaucer was quoted as saying, "Idle hands are the devil's workshop." This saying is true! We have the obligation to keep our students' hands and minds busy. Simply telling them to read a book, or draw a picture, is not effective all the time. Those students who diligently get their schoolwork done – and it is usually correct – need something to keep their minds and hands productive.

If you write a "quote" on your board weekly, you can have a "classroom" journal for students to write a short couple of sentences about what the quote means, how it can be implemented, or what lessons we can learn from it. They should "sign" their name beneath their thoughts so that you can praise their thought process or correct those who have the wrong ideas. This gives you an opportunity to direct their thoughts toward things that are: "true, honest, just, pure, of good report, worthy of praise" (Phil 4:8).

Here are a few "quotes" that you can use:

Our greatest weakness lies in giving up.

The most certain way to succeed is to try just one more time.

Someday is not a day of the week.

Do right, not what's easy.

Believe you can and you're halfway there.

Even if you're on the right track, you get run over if you just sit there.

A dead-end street is a good place to turn around.

One drop of kindness is all it takes to fill a heart with love.

Kindness costs nothing - but means everything.

The only way to have a friend is to be one.

Don't cry because its over – smile because it happened.

Life is a gift.

You've got to do your own growing, no matter how tall your grandpa was.

A bad attitude is like a flat tire. You can't go anywhere until you change it.

Never say, "I can't," always say, "I'll try."

A smooth sea never made a skilled sailor.

Big journeys begin with small steps.

Smile more, worry less.



Children's Bible Club Corner

Words That Matter

by Stephanie Widmaier

(continued from last issue)

The boys continued talking and then stood up and left the park with the invitations in their hands. Joey sat down all the way under the bushes and felt as though he had just been slugged in the head with a baseball bat. He felt so ashamed. He was probably an embarrassment to Mrs. Gray. He knew how much she had been praying and planning for this Bible club, and now he had probably ruined the whole thing! Even worse, he had disappointed the LORD. Joey continued sitting and thinking under those bushes. Finally, he knew what he had to do. So, before going home, he stopped at the Gray's house and was met with a smile and an invitation to come in. Mr. Gray had just arrived home from work, so they both sat down with Joey in the living room. They could tell that something was bothering him and waited for him to tell them what was on his mind. Joey sat on the sofa opposite Mr. and Mrs. Gray and could feel his face turning red as he clenched and unclenched his fists, trying to think of how to tell them what had happened at the park with-

out shedding any tears. Finally, he looked up at them and told them what had happened and that he realized now how important it was to control his language. Then he asked, "Are your plans for the Bible club ruined now?" Mr. Gray had a serious, but kind look on his face, and Mrs. Gray had tears in her eyes. Joey had unconsciously refrained from any bad language when he was around them, so they were surprised to hear of this. Each of them came over to Joey, one on each side of him, took his hands and said, "Let's pray about this and ask the LORD for His help. But first, do you know what I John 1:9 says?" When Joey shook his head "no," Mr. Gray quoted, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." "That's what I need to do—ask the LORD to forgive me," said Joey simply. When they finished praying, Joey said, "I guess it's just so hard, because it's what I hear at home; it's just become a habit." Mr. Gray smiled and said, "Let's see if we can break that habit with the

LORD'S help. Joey, will you commit with us to praying about this every day and even whenever you think of it? Mrs. Gray and I will be praying fervently for you, too. You will have to make a conscious effort to stop any bad language from coming out of your mouth. The LORD will be there to help you, too. He tells us in I Peter 5:7, 'Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.'" Joey took a deep breath and replied, "Yes, I will commit to that." "Good," said Mr. Gray with a smile, "You never know how the LORD will use this. Let's just trust Him and see!" Joey kept his word to commit to praying about his language and making a conscious effort to keep any bad language from escaping his tongue. There were still some times at first, but gradually those times became fewer and then none. He was no longer known at school as the boy who used some bad words and Jesus' name in all sorts of different ways. Even at home, his parents couldn't help but notice the difference in his language. Finally, the first day of

(Continued on page 8)

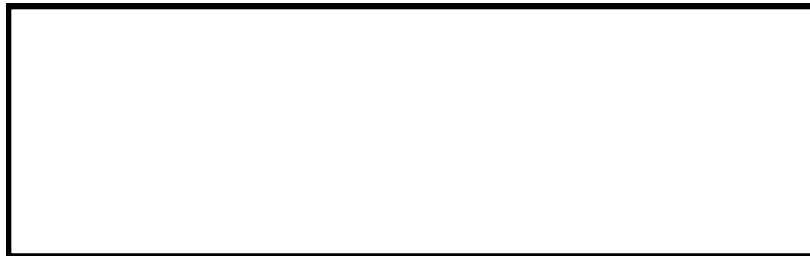


Postmaster send change of address to:

The PROJECTOR
6331 Chestnut Street
Milton, Florida 32570

Non-Profit Organization
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 38
Milton, Florida

Address Service Requested



(Continued from page 7 - Words That Matter)

the Bible club came, and Joey was excited to see who would come! He was there early to help Mrs. Gray and her friend with anything they needed. Soon, children began coming. And just a minute before it was time to start, Joey saw the three boys that he had seen in the park come sauntering in. He jumped up and showed them where there were still some seats and then took his place as well. It was a wonderful first club meeting, and the time seemed to pass so quickly. Before the children realized, it was time to leave. When Joey arrived home, he was all smiles as he eagerly told his family all about the club meeting. After he had finished, his dad said,

“Joey, you will have to tell Mr. and Mrs. Gray that they won’t need to pick you up for church anymore.” Joey’s face immediately fell as he looked at his dad with a question. His dad continued and said, “From now on, we are all going to church as a family!” With that, Joey ran and threw his arms around his dad as his mom stood by with a big smile on her face, and his little sister jumped and clapped her hands with glee. Joey couldn’t wait to tell Mr. and Mrs. Gray the good news and share with them how the LORD had indeed answered their prayers! Did you know that the words you say and what you talk about are important to God? The Bible says so much about our words and our speech! Like the writer

of Psalm 19:14, we should pray, “Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.” If we have trusted Christ as Saviour, we should desire to have our speech acceptable to the LORD. And, if you have not trusted Christ as your personal Saviour, then God’s first desire for you is that you would repent and believe the gospel as the Bible says in Mark 1:15. You can do that today! Ω

*Please pray
for the ministry of
The Projector.*