

# CORNERSTONE

A PUBLICATION BY SABELL ECUMENICAL LIBERATION THEOLOGY CENTER



## #ME TOO

*The selfless widow showed great love by offering all she had to live on (Luke 21:4).*

### IN THIS ISSUE

Bible Study-Jesus Heals the Gerasene Demoniac <i>by Rev. Carrie Smith, Sabeel Staff and friends</i>	p. 1
Sexual Harassment Violence <i>by: MIFTAH</i>	p. 6
Sexual Violence and Abuse in Palestine <i>by: Sawa</i>	p. 8
Women Talk about Their Experiences and Solutions <i>by: Sawa</i>	p. 12
Israeli Jewish Activists Experience Sexual Harassment, Too <i>by: Coalition of Women for Peace</i>	p. 16
2018 Fall Witness Visit - Come & See – Go & Tell	p. 18

## Jesus Heals the Gerasene Demoniac

Mark 5:1-20

Bible Study

**“On sexual harassment,  
and how Jesus deals with the demons  
we don’t want to face”**

*by Rev. Carrie Smith, Sabeel Staff and friends*

*They came to the other side of the lake, to the country of the Gerasenes. And when he had stepped out of the boat, immediately a man out of the tombs with an unclean spirit met him. He lived among the tombs; and no one could*



restrain him any more, even with a chain; for he had often been restrained with shackles and chains, but the chains he wrenched apart, and the shackles he broke in pieces; and no one had the strength to subdue him. Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always howling and bruising himself with stones. When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and bowed down before him; and he shouted at the top of his voice, 'What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me.' For he had said to him, 'Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!' Then Jesus asked him, 'What is your name?' He replied, 'My name is Legion; for we are many.' He begged him earnestly not to send them out of the country. Now there on the hillside a great herd of swine was feeding; and the unclean spirits begged him, 'Send us into the swine; let us enter them.' So he gave them permission. And the unclean spirits came out and entered the swine; and the herd, numbering about two thousand, rushed down the steep bank into the lake, and were drowned in the lake.

The swineherds ran off and told it in the city and in the country. Then people came to see what it was that had happened. They came to Jesus and saw the demoniac sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, the very man who had had the legion; and they were afraid. Those who had seen what had happened to the demoniac and to the swine reported it. Then they began to beg Jesus to leave their neighborhood. As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed by demons begged him that he might be with him. But Jesus refused, and said to him, 'Go home to your friends, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and what mercy he has shown you.' And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him; and everyone was amazed.

#### Why this topic? Why now?

Why is Sabeel, a Palestinian Liberation Theology Center, publishing on the crisis of sexual harassment in Palestinian society?

Some readers may be uncomfortable with this topic being tackled while we are still suffering under the weight of the Occupation. Why do we want to "air our dirty laundry?" Will sharing these stories feed into prejudices against Palestinians, and against Arab men in general? Many times we have heard it said, "Let us

achieve our human rights first, then we can deal with women's rights." In fact, this excuse is not unique to the Palestinian Liberation movement – this has often been a refrain among peoples fighting for liberation around the world. Sometimes it can feel that one struggle is simply enough at one time.

Others may wonder if Sabeel is simply riding the wave of the #MeToo movement, choosing to address this trending topic along with many other institutions grappling with stories of abuse, rape, and harassment perpetrated against women. Is it really necessary to have our #UsToo moment?

But we at Sabeel have chosen to address this critically important topic because we are a Palestinian **Liberation Theology Center**. This means that wherever there is injustice, we stand on the side of justice. Wherever people are oppressed, we stand for liberation. Whether we are talking about the occupation of Palestine, or the colonization of indigenous peoples, or the destructive forces of toxic masculinity in our homes, workplaces, and places of worship, we believe that Christ our Liberator requires us to stand with him, for freedom. We've never tackled this topic before. But now: Time's up.

As we are a Palestinian Liberation **Theology Center**, we have looked to Scripture to guide us in the exploration of this topic. Reverend Naim Ateek has suggested we study Mark 5:1-20, the story of "Jesus Healing the Gerasene Demoniac." While this passage does not deal with the issue of sexual harassment directly, we feel it has much to say about the way our society deals with demons—especially demons we'd rather not acknowledge.

The following reflections are the product of a recent group Bible study that took place in Jerusalem in February 2018. At the table were Rev. Ateek and several staff members and friends of Sabeel, including a local Lutheran pastor, three Palestinian women, and an international intern. We ranged in age from our mid-20s to mid-80s. We were five women and two men. We prayed, studied, and shared our own (sometimes painful) stories. We hope that these reflections from Palestine will be both a guide and an encouragement to you, wherever you are. Be not afraid to face the demons in your culture—even the ones your community prefers



The Samaritan woman at the well became one of the first evangelists for Jesus Christ (John 4:29).

to keep hidden. Jesus has shown us: We all deserve better.

#### "We are many"

At the beginning of this story from Mark 5, Jesus steps out of a boat and immediately meets a man with an unclean spirit. This man lived among the tombs, in chains, which he often broke. In fact, he had wrenched them apart so often that no one had the strength to subdue him.

The possessed man saw Jesus from a distance and ran to bow before him. Surprisingly, a demoniac, not a disciple, is one of the first in the Gospels to recognize Jesus' true identity. The man called him "Son of the Most High God." He begged Jesus to stop tormenting him, for Jesus had demanded the unclean spirits leave the man's body.

Then Jesus asked him, 'What is your name?' He replied, 'My name is Legion; for we are many.'

Just as Jesus brought the name of the demoniac's hidden tormentors into the open, at Sabeel we began our study by naming and confronting the demons possessing our society. What are we talking about, when we say "sexual harassment"?

- Unwanted touching, on buses or in the street
- Cat-calling, and being followed
- Abuse of foreigners, divorced women, and often anyone who is not "covered"
- At the same time, abuse of women in Muslim burqas, as they are most likely not to report it (out of fear)
- Inequality and harassment of women in the workplace
- Absence of women's voices in leadership – especially



*Phoebe, the ambassador of the apostle Paul, delivered his letter to the Roman church long before he was able to visit Rome himself (Rom 16:1-2).*

in the church, where many might turn for help

- Rape and incest
- Shame inflicted on victims of all the above—and in certain cases, even death.

“My name is Legion, for we are many” said the demon. One of the obstacles to dealing with sexual harassment in our society is that the problems are so many and so widespread. Everyone has heard the stories. We know which streets to avoid, and what clothes to wear. Nearly every woman has suffered harassment, abuse or worse. “This is just the way things are,” it is said. “We are a traditional society. What can we expect?” “Maybe she was inviting trouble.”

“I’m afraid to tell anyone. I’ll just be victimized again.” It is time to bring these demons into the open, and to name them. When we say nothing, we are complicit in “normalizing” these behaviors.

Sexual harassment in Palestine is a problem of power. It is a problem of religion. It is a problem of a traditional, patriarchal culture.

And it is also a problem intensified by Occupation. Scripture says of the demoniac, “No one had the strength to subdue him.” We recognize and confess the ways in which Occupation has held us back in addressing these other demons in our midst. Just as the Gerasenes knew the demoniac well, and sent him to live on the edge of town, we also have been very aware of sexual harassment in our society. And yet until now, our response has been simply to bind up the problem and keep it hidden from view.

For fifty years, we have worked and hoped and prayed for liberation from Occupation—but we have often accepted that chains and secrets could subdue the toxic masculinity in our communities, at least until the Occupation is ended.

#### “What have you to do with me, Jesus?”

What does Jesus have to do with this demon in our midst? First and foremost, we notice how in this text, Jesus refused to allow the man to continue living in chains. He liberated him, both from the chains and from the unclean spirits that kept him bound. As we see it, the man possessed by the legion of demons does not represent one abuser in particular, or even men in general. We understand the demoniac to be our Palestinian society and community. We are all in chains until women are liberated. We are all living among the tombs until society is exorcised of sexual harassment, and our complacency towards it.

Ultimately, Jesus set the man free by casting the unclean spirits into a herd of pigs, which ran off a cliff and drowned. This may seem a strange detail, and indeed someone in our Bible study asked the question: “What about the pigs? And what about the swineherds, who lost their source of income? Why would Jesus do that?” This seemingly odd detail actually reveals much about how Jesus transforms our priorities as well as our lives. In the eyes of the swineherds (and perhaps of the entire village) those two thousand pigs were of much more value than a demon-possessed man living among the tombs. But as he does so often in the Gospels, Jesus subverts our assumptions, and redirects our priorities. Jesus demonstrates the immeasurable value of one

person, even one demon-possessed person, when he refuses to let the cost of livestock stand in the way of healing, wholeness, and liberation.

In the same way, we hear Jesus, Son of the Most High God, saying to us:

A healthy society is of more value than the preservation of patriarchy or traditional culture! Liberating women from fear and trauma is a greater priority than hiding this truth about our communities!

When we seek to follow Jesus and make his priorities our own, human beings will always come over profit or self-interest. This is how we are obedient to the greatest commandment: ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’

#### “Then they began to beg Jesus to leave their neighborhood.”

After the demoniac was healed, it’s interesting to note that the Gerasene community did not welcome Jesus with open arms, but in fact asked him to leave. “They came to Jesus and saw the demoniac sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, the very man who had



*Pontius Pilate’s wife, named as Procla in early Christian tradition, warns Pilate of the innocence of Jesus (Matthew 27:19).*

had the legion; and they were afraid.” The people also saw what had happened to the swine, which they valued. Jesus had changed everything—and they were not happy about it.

As Palestinian women—and women the world over—begin to more openly share their experiences of sexual harassment and abuse, there will be resistance. There will be those who wish this problem remained hidden, chained on the edge of town, silenced through shame. But as we have learned through fifty years of praying, hoping, and struggling for liberation from Occupation, our existence is resistance. Women, and their stories, will not be silenced. Already, we see that things are changing in our communities.

#### Go, and tell

At the end of the story of the Gerasene demoniac, the liberated man begs Jesus to let him go away with him. But Jesus says:

“Go home to your friends, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and what mercy he has shown you.”

We honor all women (and men) who are so boldly sharing their stories with the world. This is the first, most important step in the exorcism and healing of our communities. Confession (both individual and as a community) is another. We need to look carefully at our institutions, places of worship, and especially our homes and schools, and seek ways to empower the next generation with the understanding that everybody deserves honor and respect.

It is also imperative that, as Christians, we continue to share how much the Lord has done for us. We must be bold witnesses to the truth that Jesus our Liberator wants no one to live in chains. Just as we continue to maintain the steadfast hope that the wall will fall, and the Occupation will end, we also believe that Palestinian society—and indeed, the world—will be exorcised of the unclean spirits of sexual harassment, abuse, rape, and violence against women. Inshallah. Let it be so.



# Sexual Violence and Abuse in Palestine

by: Sawa

Vulnerable Palestinian groups, such as women, girls, and boys, face double or even triple oppression, depending on other factors such as class, education level, and ability. They face the constraints on movement, economic pressures, psycho-social effects, and potential dangers stemming from the occupation. They are also subject to additional constraints and dangers due to their vulnerable or “second class” position. These include all types of violence, abuse, and intimidation (in particular sexual, domestic, and gender-based violence), as well as limited opportunities to express themselves, access support and services, and act positively to change their circumstances. Harmful social norms, silence, shame, widespread victim blaming which causes violence victims to feel ashamed and unsafe, weak legal protection and implementation, and denial and de-prioritizing of violence against women and children as a public issue all contribute to the prevalence of gender-based, domestic, and sexual violence in Palestine.

Palestinian society has traditionally been characterized by silence on the subjects of sex, sexual violence, domestic violence, and child abuse. Gender roles and gender separation are still more or less strictly enforced. Palestinian women are largely not afforded their full right to sovereignty over their own bodies, with regard to reproduction, sexual behaviour, and choice of a life partner. Most worrying is the acceptance of violence within the family as a way of keeping order, and the preference for settling problems of family violence privately, rather than reporting a perpetrator to the police or seeking counselling to build a healthier family dynamic. Authorities often prioritize a family’s privacy and reputation over the needs of domestic violence victims. Women bear the brunt of responsibility for preserving family honour, a concept centered largely on the sexual purity of the family’s female members. Women fear blame and disbelief from the surrounding society, and further violence from perpetrators and/or family members.



*At Bethany, Mary reveals her unmatched hospitality by anointing Jesus with expensive oil (John 12:3).*



Mary, the mother of Jesus, never abandoned or denied Christ, even when he was crucified on the cross (John 19:25).

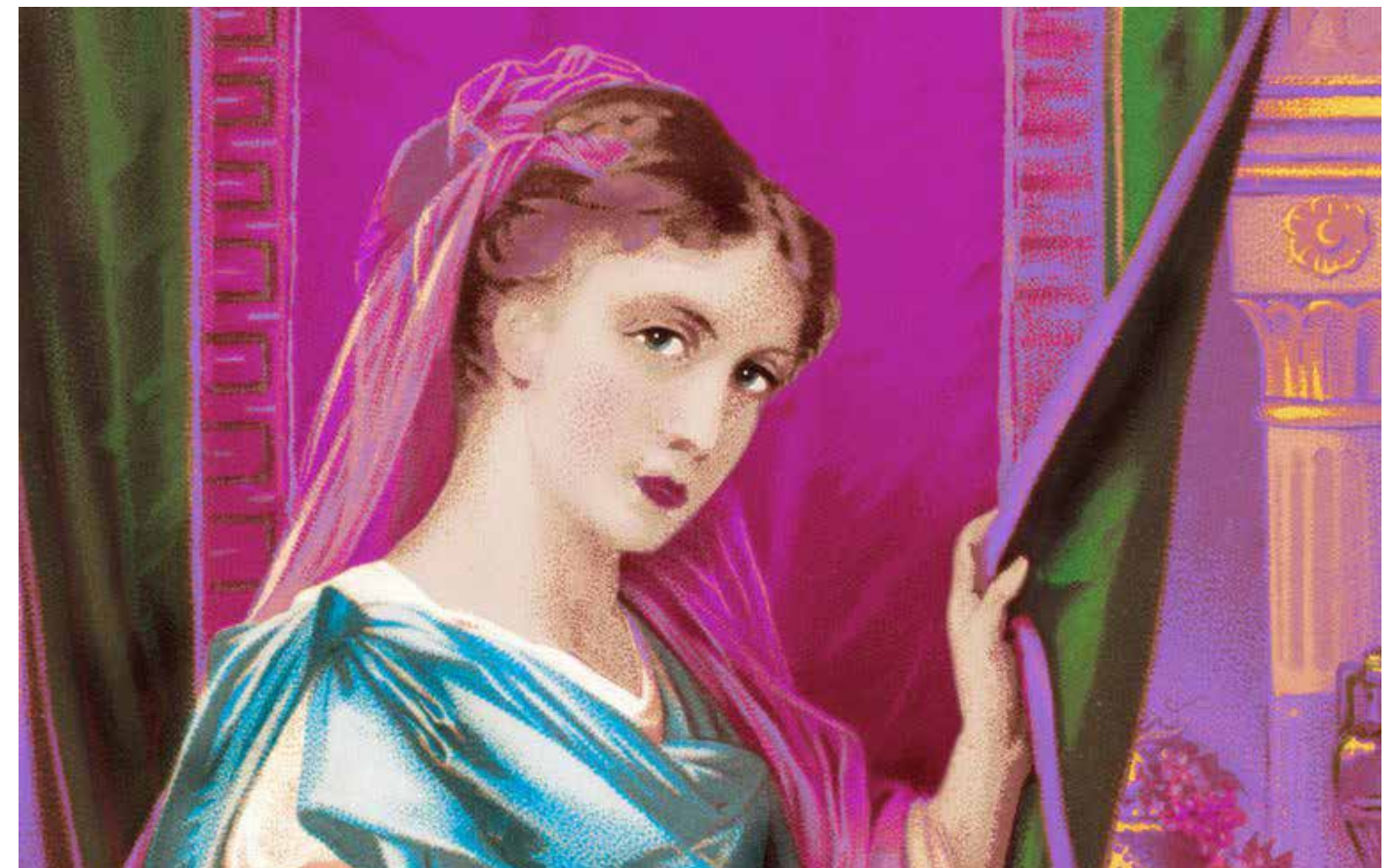
Discussion of all matters connected to sex, including sexual violence, is typically taboo in Palestinian society. Children and youth are provided only very limited sex education in schools, and often reach well into adulthood with incomplete or inaccurate understanding of basic facts on sexuality, reproductive health, and sexual development. Parents are often ashamed to discuss these topics with their children, or lack a firm grasp of the scientific facts.

As a result of all this, generations have grown up lacking awareness on sex education topics, and

so hundreds of children, both females and males, are facing sexual violence, sometimes without acknowledging that it is sexual violence (especially in cases where the abuser tells the victim that this behavior is a way of loving him/her, and to keep it as a secret between them). Furthermore, the victim often feels ashamed and afraid to talk about what is happening. Children are sometimes afraid to be punished. It is not uncommon for parents to mistakenly blame the victim, sometimes accusing the child of not properly defending him or herself from the abuser. They may even accuse the child of

telling lies, especially if the abuser is a family member.

It is important to emphasize that women and girls, in particular, bear the brunt of responsibility for preserving family honour. This concept is centered largely on the sexual "purity" of the family's female members. Adult women who have experienced sexual violence are, like young victims, reluctant to report and often blame themselves. They fear blame and disbelief from the surrounding society, and further violence from perpetrators and/or family members. They keep the violence they have suffered a secret because of fear for their lives. This



Lydia of Thyatira became the first Christian convert in Europe (Acts 16:14).

only adds to the psychological damage already suffered by survivors of this type of violence.

**Sawa's Experience:** Sawa has a lot of experience helping victims of violence through confidential psychological support and working to change our culture by educating community members and professionals on gender-based, sexual, and domestic violence. Since 1998, Sawa has provided telephone counseling and support to people who have been victims of violence or who suffer other psycho-social problems, in addition to some face-to-face counseling. In 2004, Sawa began offering support to children, youth and families as well, and has

integrated email counseling into its services. In addition to workshops and workshop series for women, children, and families, and training for professionals on working with survivors of violence, Sawa conducts trainings for professionals from various sectors (public prosecutors, police Family Protection Units, attorneys, judges, doctors, teachers, and social workers) in order to equip them to deal professionally with survivors of violence in general and of sexual violence in particular. Many callers to Sawa's Call Center prefer to use assumed names, and take comfort in the anonymity of telephone counseling. Assessment, support, and referrals can often be done effectively over the phone.

From 2009 until the end of 2016, Sawa's Helpline documented 193,738 cases. Of those, 107,948 were females and 83,301 were males. 21,837 cases were specifically related to abuse and violence. 3,373 people called for counseling regarding sexual violence. 1,334 reported rape, 1,063 reported some form of sexual abuse within the family, and 555 reported rape within the family.

*Sawa: is a Palestinian, non-profit civil society organization established in 1998 by a group of female volunteers active in women's issues. This organization works to eliminate all types of violence against women and children, and to promote gender equality in Palestinian society.*



*“The same incident happened twice, by the same mysterious man. I was a ninth grader when I was riding a taxi after school. I realized that I was awkwardly crammed between the door and a man wearing a cap that hid most of his face. I remember how he was pushing against my arm and moving slightly at the same time. I thought that he might have been pushed by the person next to him or that the taxi was too small for the three of us in the back. It was one of the longest 10 minutes in my life. I was silent, because I was too surprised to react and very shy to raise my voice in public.*

*Sexual harassment occurs because it was never forbidden. We were taught how to avoid boys at young ages. We were taught to cover up. We were taught never to speak up in public. We were turned into easy silent preys. We have never been taught how to react and defend ourselves when we are sexually harassed, nor how the law protects us. I haven't heard of a boy taught not to harass, nor taught that verbal flirtation is a harassment. I have never heard of a boy being told that it's a man's fault if he looks sexually at a girl's body or rapes her. However, I know of thousands of boys who were told that it's a girl's fault if she is raped or harassed, because she hasn't been totally covered or her girly laugh has been heard.*

*Sexual harassment is not adequately addressed because of the very traditional mindset attached to it. In Palestine, if a girl is harassed, the case is covered up because the girl would be labeled and blamed. Most of the families raise girls just to be married, even if they are educated. I recall when one of my friends told me about her neighbor locking her up in a garage to physically harass her forcefully. She was just 10 years old at that time. Her parents could hear her and opened the garage. Later on, both her family and the man's family agreed not to mention a word to others in order not to bring bad luck to the girl. Her parents wanted her to be married more than anything else. She was married when she was 18 years old and divorced a few years later. Now, she's 24 and living with her second husband.*

*What is needed is law and punishment. We need to raise awareness about how to react when a man verbally harasses or physically assaults. Also, families should support women when they decide to defend themselves by shouting at men in public. We also need boys to be taught how to respect girls no matter what they are wearing, rather than to label girls as bad if they are not totally covered up. We need boys and girls talking, playing, and studying together without banning this interaction at a very innocent age. We need both genders to feel ease and normality when dealing with each other.”*

-- R. A.

*“When I was with a friend in Bethlehem, a car drove up past us, and the driver and two passengers harassed my friend. They called her really ugly words. I think that the main reason that sexual harassment exists is because we have been introduced to movies with so much sexuality in them. We are a very closed patriarchal society when it comes to sex or sexual harassment, so usually families cover up the cases of women being sexually harassed or violated. Rather than the man, it is the woman who will be the one blamed. What we really need is “rights education.” It is more important to learn my rights before learning about sex. The law always protects the man, not the woman. Even in rape cases, the case would just end by the rapist proposing to the raped woman or girl, the idea being that marriage solves the problem. It is the worst law ever.”*

-- Noor

*“I've had multiple experiences with sexual harassment, although they have not been as significant as others have been. I have been followed home multiple times; I have been heckled and cat-called by groups of young men; I have been made uncomfortable in taxis. The worst incident was during the 10k for the Palestine Marathon (in Bethlehem). I had my asthma puffer with me, tucked into the side of my sports bra and was approaching the finish line. A man reached out and grabbed my breast because he noticed a “strange lump.” I felt completely violated at a moment when I was supposed to feel proud.*

*Many people equate issues of sexual harassment with ignorance or a lack of education, but I completely disagree. I believe people can be extremely educated (as is the case for most Palestinians) and yet still hold views and opinions that (inadvertently or not) encourage violence against women. Ideas and norms around where, how, and what women should do are perpetuated, and any incident of sexual assault is seen as trivial and not the perpetrator's fault. Sexual assault is seen as a minimal issue in light of the wider occupation, and definitely seen as a secondary issue to wider socioeconomic problems. These issues are not mutually exclusive.*

*Too often, messages around gender-based violence are co-opted by Palestinian NGOs, society's elites, and most notably, international NGOs/donors. This does not work. Gender norms cannot take root in a prescriptive environment. New norms about gender can be encouraged through media campaigns, advocacy campaigns, and society-wide messaging, but above all else they need to come from a grassroots approach. Sexual violence needs to be given a spotlight in media, in reporting, and in civil society discussions around other issues.*

*Palestinian society is incredible, and truly beautiful. I have lived in Jordan, Egypt, Palestine, and Morocco. Palestine has done more introspection on this topic than the others. However, we cannot afford to let the failures of other countries hold us back from continuing to pursue what is right.”*

-- A. G.

*“I think there are a number of reasons why sexual harassment is so common. It exists because of the occupation – it's a circle of violence and harassment. Fear prevents many women from sharing their experiences, and so do the patriarchal society and traditional norms that make women feel less important than men. In our society, women's dignity is honor, so their actions and behavior are monitored. Sexual harassment exists because of the community's economic situation, lack of education and knowledge, perceptions that women are weak and will probably stay silent, and the fact that there is no punishment for such conduct. There are sanctions, but either they are weak or they are not implemented. There is also the problem of the judges. They don't really make just judgments, usually not for the benefit of women. That's an additional reason why women are scared. Unfortunately, many of these judges are women!*

*So, I'd say the most important way to tackle this issue is: spreading awareness and encouraging women to trust the police to ask for help and never stay silent.”*

-- R. B.





#METOO

## Israeli Jewish Activists Experience Sexual Harassment, Too

by: Coalition of Women for Peace

In 2016, the Coalition of Women for Peace (CWP) published a report entitled “This is What Happened,” containing testimonials of women human rights defenders. Initially, this report arose from CWP staff and activists, as well as other women around us, experiencing grave

violence at protests against the 2014 strike on Gaza. After starting work on this project, we decided not to restrict women to talk only about the events of the summer of 2014, but to include additional stories of women who were active in different periods and various geographical

areas. The price paid by the women activists and human rights defenders varies, and we must not ignore the differences in the realities and contexts of women from different backgrounds, identities, and belief systems.

Within the context of Palestine/

Israel, it is clear that Palestinian and Jewish women face different challenges. The following are excerpts from the testimonials of two Jewish Israeli activists, who face violence from both Israeli civilians and law enforcement officials, legitimized by a public discourse that labels them as traitors for their support of the Palestinian struggle for freedom from occupation.

In one of the testimonials, Sahar Vardi, a long-time activist from Jerusalem, quotes a soldier asking her: “How long is the Arab bar (penis) you get?”

Maayan Dak, activist and former General Co-Coordinator of CWP, tells the story of a demonstration against the strike on Gaza in 2014: “A group of men quickly assembled just next to us and started shouting and cursing. Each remark/curse a man directed at one of our female demonstrators included rape threats. Every slogan called for slaughtering the traitors. Very few policemen were present at the scene. They were not really moved, even when the other group got so close to ours that they could stretch their arms and slap us, or worse.”

Human rights defenders are those who are active in changing the current reality and who fight against discrimination, incitement, racism, inequality, occupation, and different kinds of oppressions and who work for the recognition of human rights in their broadest sense. The term “human rights defender” was coined

by the international community and the United Nations in 1998. Nevertheless, it is not necessarily a well-known expression, and many women human rights defenders do not recognize themselves in it; they might say that they are fighting for their homes, or might call themselves “activists.” But “human rights defenders?” Very rarely, and especially less, in comparison to male activists, who will define themselves as human rights defenders and may even receive official recognition for it or claim the protection that they are entitled to as a human rights defender. In many places in the world, human rights defenders suffer political persecution, silencing, arrests, and violence. Harming them can be an act legitimized by anti-democratic laws, and can include incitement or physical attack, investigation summons, and attempts to prevent their activity through intimidation, harassment, surveillance, and threatening calls. Clearly, when we speak about women who are human rights defenders and political activists, the assault has specific characteristics. It can be reflected in investigation summons that include sexual harassment or degrading

comments based on gender or sex during an arrest. It can also be reflected in attacks on the basis of gender during a political activity online or in the public sphere.

In general, women in patriarchal societies are silenced, have limited access to power, resources and influence and have limited representation in decision making positions. Whereas there are forces within civil society and activism that try to work in order to empower and amplify the voices of women, there are other forces that act to further silence and marginalize women. Many women who have been politically active burn out or are traumatized by sexual violence experienced within these contexts, and become less active, vocal and present in the public sphere. We feel it is crucial to bring out these stories and become aware and learn from them how we can work to promote safer spaces for women to voice their beliefs and act on their right to be politically active.

Also see CWP publication “Sexual Harassment in Civil Society Organizations and Groups of Political Activism,” 2013.

*The Coalition of Women for Peace is a feminist organization against the occupation of Palestine and for a just peace. Founded in November 2000, after the outbreak of the Second Intifada, CWP today is a leading voice in the Israeli peace movement, bringing together women from a wide variety of identities and groups.*

This trip is led by Rev. Naim Ateek- co-founder of Sabeel

# 2018 Fall Witness Visit

## October 30<sup>th</sup> – November 7<sup>th</sup>

### Come and See – Go and Tell

*Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center  
invites you to join us for 9 nights to experience the reality of life in today's Holy Land:*

- **Worship with Palestinian Christians**
- **Meet and reflect with Palestinian Christians and Muslims as well as with Jewish Israelis and internationals who partner with Sabeel in non-violent resistance against the violation of international and humanitarian law**
- **Experience the realities of the Palestinian community living under Israeli Occupation: the Wall, settlements, checkpoints, confiscated land and demolished homes, refugee camps, and environmental degradation**
- **Learn about the loss of civil and property rights of Arab Israeli citizens**

#### WHEN

October 30th – November 7th 2018 inclusive (9 nights)

#### WHERE

Nights in Bethlehem, Jerusalem and Nazareth with side visits to other sites including the West Bank and to the Galilee holy sites

#### COST

\$1600 per person in a double room

\$1900 per person in a single room

An additional 100\$ for registration after the 20th of September 2018

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS IS A RIGOROUS TRIP THAT INCLUDES CLIMBING OF STAIRS AND MUCH WALKING, SOMETIMES OVER ROUGH TERRAIN.

For more information please email [World@sabeel.org](mailto:World@sabeel.org) : +972 2 5327136

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## PURPOSE STATEMENT *of* SABEEL

Sabeel is an ecumenical grassroots liberation theology movement among Palestinian Christians. Inspired by the life and teaching of Jesus Christ, this liberation theology seeks to deepen the faith of Palestinian Christians, promote unity among them, and lead them to act for justice and love. Sabeel strives to develop a spirituality based on justice, peace, non-violence, liberation, and reconciliation for the different national and faith communities. The word 'Sabeel' is Arabic for 'the way' and also a 'channel' or 'spring' of life-giving water.

Sabeel also works to promote a more accurate international awareness regarding the identity, presence, and witness of Palestinian Christians as well as their contemporary concerns.

It encourages individuals and groups from around the world to work for a just, comprehensive, and enduring peace informed by truth and empowered by prayer and action.

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