

WHOSE LORD?

by John Hartung (Palestine Times, January 1998)

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Two annual rituals were performed last month in America. On December 12th the United States joined Israel to vote against Palestinian self-determination in a United Nations resolution that passed 160-2. And on December 25th, Americans celebrated Christmas.

Understanding the connection between these ominous events requires us to put aside common propaganda about Jesus. We must turn instead to the First Century Jew described in the Christian Gospels. Consider Jesus' attitude toward Canaanites -- the equivalent of today's Palestinians (Matthew 15:21-29):

Jesus withdrew to the district of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a Canaanite woman from that region came out and cried, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David; my daughter is severely possessed by a demon." But he did not answer her a word. And his disciples came and begged him, saying, "Send her away, for she is crying after us."

He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me." And he answered, "It is not fair to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs."

She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table."

Then Jesus answered her, "O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire." And her daughter was healed instantly.

Yes, Jesus healed the woman's daughter in this story, but only after taking advantage of a mother's desperation by forcing her to agree that Canaanites should be treated like dogs by their Jewish masters. And why not? Profoundly servile Canaanites could be very useful. The "children's" (i.e., the children of god -- the Jews) latrines needed cleaning and Canaanite servants could live on crumbs that fell from their masters' table. Perfect.

Jesus spent his life in pursuit of a single mission -- a mission that can only be understood by studying the Jewish Bible, or what Christians call the "Old" Testament. Jesus did not consider that book to be an "Old" Testament. For Jesus it was the Only Testament, and he worshipped the god described in that book -- a god who repeatedly commanded his followers to commit genocide against the people who inhabited the land that the Israelites wanted to steal: "In the cities of these peoples that the LORD your God gives you for an inheritance, you shall save alive nothing that breathes, but you shall utterly destroy them, the Hittites and the Amorites, the Canaanites and the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, as the LORD your God has commanded" (Deuteronomy 20:16-17).

The second part of the original Zionist plan was to subjugate people outside of Israel: "Thus you shall do to all the cities which are very far from you . . . When you draw near to a city to fight against it, offer terms of peace to it. And if its answer to you is peace and it opens to you, then all the people who are found in it shall do forced labor for you and shall serve you"

(Deuteronomy 20:15 . . . 10-11). The ultimate purpose of this “peace” plan was to extort money, and this prototype of Israeli foreign policy reached its Zenith during the reigns of King David and his son, Solomon: “Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was 666 talents of gold, besides that which came from the traders and from the traffic of the merchants, and from all the kings of Arabia and from the governors of the land” (1st Kings 10:14-15). Six hundred and sixty-six talents is about 60,000 pounds of gold -- more than twice the amount that Atilla the Hun was able to extort from Rome every year before he sacked it for late payment.

After the excesses of David and Solomon the Kingdom of Israel was so weakened by civil war that nations which had been sending tribute began to send troops. This is what ultimately led to Jesus’ mission. Like many would-be Jewish Messiahs before him, and many since, Jesus wanted to restore the Kingdom of David. That is why his followers, and the Canaanite women who agreed to be a dog, called him “Son of David.”

The point here is that Christianity is a form of Judaism. Christians worship the god of the Jews and an individual Jew who they believe to be that god’s son. Jesus was a Zionist Jew right down to his sandals, so although most Jews are Zionists, most Zionists are Christians. Deep in the pit of their baby-Jesus-loving souls, Christians believe in a god who gave Jews special rights in Canaan, and so special rights in Palestine -- including, ultimately, a right to lie, a right to steal, and a right to kill.

The issue here is a story that appeared in the December 14th Jerusalem Post:

Arafat referred to the opening of an exit to the Western Wall Tunnel in 1996 and the subsequent “anger of the Arab and Islamic nations and the whole world.” He said this was in addition to “plans to settle” Ras al-Amud and Har Homa. These projects, Arafat went on, are “aimed at isolating Jerusalem from its Palestinian hinterland and building a replacement city for Bethlehem, which is preparing its 2,000th anniversary of the birth of Our Lord Jesus.”

Arafat is a great man -- on the order of George Washington, Mahatma Gandhi, Fidel Castro, Ho Chi Min, and Nelson Mandela. But there is a line in an old Eagles song about “what a woman can do to your soul.”* I worry about the words “Our Lord” in the above quote. You should be worried too. It is good to receive the help of good Christians and good Jews -- people whose sense of fairness overrides the scriptures of their religion -- but Palestinians should not have a leader who shares the underlying delusions of Judaism and Christianity about Chosen People and god-given rights to land.

*Arafat’s wife is Christian

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