

# Naim Stifan Ateek's Palestinian Liberation Theology In The Context Of Israel-Palestine Conflict

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DOI: 10.24071/tic.viii.8466

## Abstract

*Palestine is a country where the population is around 4-5 million. The current Christian population in Palestine is around 6 percent of the total population. These are religiously oppressed people who are affected by the political turmoil of Israel and Palestine. This community is in dire need of a correct and adequate understanding of the theological meaning of the Palestinian experience of suffering in relation to Israel. The Bible has been misused to legitimize political interests. Naim Ateek believes that they are suffering and hopes that the Church will be able to build and explain a theology of liberation for Palestinian Christians. With the method of literature study and comprehensive reading, it is found that Naim Ateek makes a new hermeneutic so that God is not understood as a Primitive and Exclusive God as described by Israel who takes sides and discriminates, but a Universal and Inclusive God to realize justice in the spirit of compassion and peace so that it can show the harmony of God for the peace of the Palestinians and Israelis.*

## Keywords:

*Liberation Theology, justice, peace, mercy, Bible, new hermeneutic, Palestine, Israel, conflict, violence*

## INTRODUCTION

The conflict between Israel and Palestine is a complicated and very complex with its problems. Some are motivated by religious appeals, some by political, and some by the desire to live in peace in a land that can be their home. The Jews who had been subjected to many attacks and profound expulsions, received help from the superpowers that governed the colonies at the time. Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories caused suffering to the Palestinian people. This triggered a Palestinian uprising and later resulted in more violent retaliation from Israel.

Mutual attacks occur continuously to this day, most recently Israel bombarded Gaza in response to the Palestinian attack (Hamas) last October. The situation that does not subside but escalates is very concerning. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been a tough conflict until now and shows no signs of abating. As a result of the war, Palestine has suffered a lot from economic, political, social and religious issues.<sup>1</sup>

The Zionists used the Holy Bible to legitimize their rights to the land that the Palestinians inhabited at that time. He believes that many of them are suffering, and hopes that the Church will be able to develop and articulate a theology of liberation for the Palestinian people that can address the painful issues of being in the midst of political chaos and religious violence. This community is in dire need of a true and adequate understanding of the theological meaning of the Palestinian experience in relation to the State of Israel.<sup>2</sup> It is against this background that Naim Ateek speaks of Palestinian Liberation Theology.

Finally, various forms of defense or assistance emerged so that many Palestinians did not feel the situation of condemnation from the war carried out by both parties. One of the defense systems for the Palestinian people is by not mixing political life with religion. This is done by Naim Ateek.

God, as described in the Bible, should have more elements than what is understood by the Zionists. With the thinking given by the Zionists, God seems to approve the war and the massive expulsion carried out against the Palestinians. This is what makes Zionist violence against the Palestinians must be stopped, especially religious violence, in the name of religion to carry out the expulsion.

The world community is divided on the opinion whether to defend one or the other or to be neutral and indifferent to this issue. We would like to present a theological view from Naim Ateek to see the Israeli-Palestinian conflict comprehensively which is expected to be a common view in seeking justice movements for both Palestinians and Israeli.

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<sup>1</sup> Ilan Troen and Shay Rabineau, "Competing Concepts of Land in Eretz Israel," *Israel Studies* 19, no. 2 (2014): 162–86.

<sup>2</sup> Naim S. Ateek, *Justice and Only Justice: A Palestinian theology of liberation* (New York: Orbis Books, 2014) 16.

## METHOD

The author compiled this article by following the development of news about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict which became the development of material for this paper. Therefore, the author makes research using the literature study method with several books from Naim Ateek as the main source complemented by several supporting sources to formulate it scientifically. So that finally the author responds and reflects on the negative experience of the Palestinian people from the perspective of a Christian theologian, namely Naim Ateek.<sup>3</sup>

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Biography

Naim Stifan Ateek, often referred to as Naim Ateek, is an ethnic Arab, who lives in Palestine, is also an Anglican Christian priest and has Israeli citizenship.<sup>4</sup> In the early 1920s, his father moved from Nablus, West Bank, Palestine to Beisan, which is now Israel. He was born in 1937 in the Palestinian village of Beisan. In 1948, the Israeli army occupied Beisan, requiring Naim Ateek and his extended family to flee to Nazareth. At that time he was 11 years old.<sup>5</sup> Naim Ateek was among the victims of the Israeli atrocities that forcibly occupied Palestine, expelled all the people living there and the Jews from Europe occupied the existing houses by expelling the citizens to other places such as in Nazareth for Christians, and Transjordan (now Jordan) for Muslims.<sup>6</sup>

Palestinian refugees in refugee camps are heavily monitored, restricted, and left without any assistance, not even housing in Nazareth. This is likely to happen in other places where they are evacuated. In other words, Israel is abandoning Palestinians in refugee camps imposed by the Israeli military. Based on the experience of Naim Ateek's family, this Israeli occupation really creates not only physical injuries due to

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<sup>3</sup> Naim Stifan Ateek, *Theologies of Liberation in Palestine-Israel Indigenous, Contextual, and Postcolonial Perspectives*, ed. Nur Masalha and Lisa Isherwood (United Kingdom: The Lutterworth Press, 2014).

<sup>4</sup> Naim S. Ateek, *Justice and Only Justice: A Palestinian theology of liberation* (New York: Orbis Books, 2014), 24.

<sup>5</sup> Naim Stifan Ateek, *Justice and Only Justice A Palestinian Theology of Liberation*, ed. Rosemary Radford Ruether (New York: Orbis Books, 1989).

<sup>6</sup> Naim S. Ateek, *Justice and Only Justice: A Palestinian theology of liberation* (New York: Orbis Books, 2014), 20.

force but also psychological injuries. The expulsion happened quite suddenly without prior notice nor was it done kindly but by force and violence.

Palestinians while living with Israel did not get proper treatment, they became an oppressed society and treated as a second-class society.<sup>7</sup> Over time the Palestinians could not stand it and they clearly felt that all that existed was humiliation and oppression from Israel. This triggered a Palestinian uprising and later resulted in more violent retaliation from Israel. Until December 6, 1987, an Israeli Jewish merchant was stabbed to death in Gaza, this triggered another situation of insecurity for Israeli citizens as well as fanning the flames of conflict, because Israeli control and pressure were no longer able to stem the rebellion of the Palestinian people. This continues to this day.

Naim Ateek became a vocal advocate for the Palestinian struggle against the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land. He spoke about the struggle for Palestinian freedom and justice for Palestinians and peace between the two. He offers a theological approach for the liberation of Palestinian Christians first, but also hopefully reaches out to all those affected by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. His best-known works were published under the titles *Justice and Only Justice: A Palestinian Theology of Liberation*, and *A Palestinian Christian Cry for Reconciliation*.

He became an important figure in the development of Palestinian liberation theology and has contributed to the peace discourse for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Naim Ateek feels that Liberation theology is addressed to all people, Christian or non-Christian, who recognize themselves as global citizens, who are concerned about the well-being of human beings everywhere and who realize that the Arab-Israeli conflict has the potential to become an extraordinary confrontation that could lead to a global catastrophe. It is therefore very important for all people of goodwill to exert every effort to amplify the pressure needed to achieve justice, peace and reconciliation for all those affected by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

As a Christian theologian, Naim Ateek criticizes Western Christian support for Israel's claims to the land.<sup>8</sup> He offers an alternative interpretation of the Bible that

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<sup>7</sup> Naim S. Ateek, *Justice and Only Justice: A Palestinian theology of liberation* (New York: Orbis Books, 2014), 22

<sup>8</sup> Kathleen Christison, "Dilemmas of Arab Christianity," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 22, no. 1 (1992): 117–19.

highlights prophetic themes and principles of inclusiveness and justice needed to achieve security, peace and justice for both Palestinians and Israelis.

### **Leading Thoughts**

Naim Ateek sees two main issues when discussing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The first is about justice. The Palestinian people with include Christian Palestinian, experienced injustice because what they had was taken away by the Israeli occupation, leaving deep wounds both physically and psychologically. For Palestinian Christians, the second main issue that needs to be addressed with a liberation theology is the issue of the Bible.<sup>9</sup>

When some parts of the Bible are taken literally in our present context, the Bible seems to offer slavery rather than freedom, injustice rather than justice to Palestinian society, and death to its national and political life. The Bible is misused to legitimize political interests. Because of the Israeli occupation, Palestinian Christians question the image of God, especially the image of God in the Old Testament as a God who favors and discriminates. It is painful for Palestinian Christians who read the entire Old Testament as a Zionist text. They question the integrity of God. So Naim Ateek tried to compile a Liberation Theology for Palestine that could bridge the biblical message and the concept of God in it with the concrete situation of Palestinian Christians.<sup>10</sup>

Naim Ateek brings back the Christian hermeneutics to read the Bible and understand the true God through Jesus Christ.<sup>11</sup> Only through Christ do we receive open knowledge into the true nature and character of God. We must base our knowledge of God on Christ because he is the best source of knowledge of God. It is also through Christ that the concept of God was matured in the biblical historical period.<sup>12</sup> God who is a God of love, justice, and salvation by reading beginning with

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<sup>9</sup> Naim S. Ateek, *Justice and Only Justice: A Palestinian theology of liberation* (New York: Orbis Books, 2014) 80.

<sup>10</sup> Naim S. Ateek, *Justice and Only Justice: A Palestinian theology of liberation* (New York: Orbis Books, 2014) 103.

<sup>11</sup> Naim S. Ateek, *Justice and Only Justice: A Palestinian theology of liberation* (New York: Orbis Books, 2014) 81.

<sup>12</sup> Naim S. Ateek, *Justice and Only Justice: A Palestinian theology of liberation* (New York: Orbis Books, 2014) 83.

Christ and going backwards to the Old Testament and forward to the New Testament, and beyond them all to understand God.

Thus we as Christians do not deny that the whole Bible is valuable, but not all parts of it have the same value and authority.<sup>13</sup> Any part of the Bible that brings people to an understanding of God's self-revelation in Christ certainly has authority and validity for Christians. While other parts need to be read with a contextual historical method.<sup>14</sup> It would be tragic, then, to bring certain Old Testament passages into the twentieth century and attempt to implement their demands in the present day in a literal way.

This is exemplified by Naim Ateek when a contemporary Jewish rabbi states that Palestinians are like the Amalekites in 1 Samuel 15. Since he calls the Palestinians "Amalekites", they do not fall under the category of "the whole creation", so "mercy" does not apply to them. We can see the evil logic behind these words, as he accuses the Palestinians of stealing "our land" and shedding "our blood."<sup>15</sup> Of course, this is easily accepted by right-wing militants and makes them worthy of claiming the land without regard for the human beings living on it. Liberals, on the other hand, oppose it and consider it a genocidal act that destroys many human beings.

Indeed, the theme of inclusive and exclusive God is quite strongly discussed in the Bible. How God is understood there is enough to determine the attitude taken. The theology of nationalism with an exclusive tribal (primitive) God is precisely what they follow to increase profits, even though at first the Zionist movement was merely a political movement that felt quite religious because of it. The struggle of the Zealots 1,800 years ago lives on in Zionism.

Naim Ateek is more inclined to believe that a universalist theology with an inclusive understanding of God is the correct one brought by Jesus and is very strong in the new covenant but also appears in various parts of the old covenant. The inclusive understanding of God can be seen clearly in the New Testament, the stories of Jesus healing the centurion's sick servant (Lk 7:1-10; Mt 8:5-11), healing the Syro-

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<sup>13</sup> John Rawlinson, "Reviewed Work(s): A Palestinian Theology of Liberation, The Bible, Justice, and the Palestinian-Israel Conflict by Stifan Ateek," *Anglican and Episcopal History* 88, no. 1 (2019): 108-10.

<sup>14</sup> Naim S. Ateek, *Justice and Only Justice: A Palestinian theology of liberation* (New York: Orbis Books, 2014) 83.

<sup>15</sup> Naim S. Ateek, *Justice and Only Justice: A Palestinian theology of liberation* (New York: Orbis Books, 2014) 84.

Phoenician girl (Mk 7:24), Paul declaring all the children of God through faith in Jesus (Galatians 3: 26), and the Old Testament is referenced by the New Testament in Matthew's genealogy of three foreign women (Matthew 1), and the prophet Elijah who was sent by God to the widow in Zarephath and not to the Israelites (Kings 17:7-24).

The land division proposal also raised by Naim Ateek itself is good in theory but cannot happen in practice. Claims to land from both the Palestinian side and the Israeli side are criticized by Naim Ateek in liberation theology. So he proposes in liberation theology based on the Bible itself that all land in this world belongs to God. This is revealed in Jeremiah 2:7-8: "But as soon as you enter, you defile My land; My land you have made an abomination." Even in Psalm 24:1 it is clearly indicated that "The LORD is the owner of the earth and everything in it, and the world and those who dwell in it." Israel itself is also recognized as a stranger and foreigner in Leviticus 25:23: "The land shall not be sold absolutely, for I am the owner of the land, but you are strangers and foreigners to Me."<sup>16</sup>

This supports that God is not only the God of Israel but the God of all nations because all the land of the earth belongs to him. At the beginning of their history, the Israelites thought that God was limited by the boundaries of the land, that God did not act outside those lines. The post-exilic experience opened up an understanding of a God who works not limited to one region. It took hundreds of years for them to realize that God is the God of the whole world-not just the God of gods, and not just their exclusive God, but the one true God, the inclusive God of the whole world.<sup>17</sup>

We can thus identify God's inclusive paradigm of care for every person and every land in the world. Just as God commanded the Israelites to obey his laws in their life in the land, so God demands the same of all people in the lands they inhabit.<sup>18</sup> God's most prominent demand was that the Israelites should not defile or pollute the land with injustice, lest the land cast them out. Yet this is exactly what Israel was doing to Palestine then and is doing to Palestine today. For Israel, this is justice, but is it the true meaning of justice or perhaps it is a misuse of the meaning of justice?

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<sup>16</sup> Naim S. Ateek, *Justice and Only Justice: A Palestinian theology of liberation* (New York: Orbis Books, 2014) 100.

<sup>17</sup> Naim S. Ateek, *Justice and Only Justice: A Palestinian theology of liberation* (New York: Orbis Books, 2014) 103.

<sup>18</sup> Atalia Omer, "THE CRY OF THE FORGOTTEN STONES The Promise and Limits of a Palestinian Liberation Theology as a Method for Peace," *The Journal of Religious Ethics* 43, no. 2 (2015): 369-407.

Naim Ateek defines justice by referencing the meaning of justice according to Aristotle. Aristotle explains justice as refraining from pleonexia, which is collecting benefits for one person by depriving another of what belongs to him such as wealth, wages, position; or by denying someone a right, for example, the fulfillment of a promise, the payment of a debt, or the manifestation of proper respect. He also referenced Webster's New World Dictionary which explains justice as the quality of being virtuous, impartial, an attitude of honesty/fairness, and the quality of being right or proper. Thus, justice is always related to the relationships that we must maintain that result in the outward aspect of a just life with others rather than reaping benefits by depriving others.<sup>19</sup>

From this point on, Israel's actions towards the Palestinians are not justice<sup>20</sup>. For Naim Ateek it is a great human tragedy that Israel too easily forgets what it is like to be helpless and oppressed and does it to others. The Inclusive Vision of God as a God of love does not change yesterday or today. God's attributes and characters such as goodness, love, compassion, righteousness and justice are all very consistent and provide a biblical and theological basis for approaching various justice issues in the world. Of course we agree that God desires and demands all nations to live with justice.<sup>21</sup>

Naim Ateek realizes that the rulers of each side, especially those with power, need to be the drivers of justice without any violence. For the people, especially those who suffer, it is necessary to forgive, especially as a Christian, loving others, especially loving enemies, is a commandment from Jesus himself. Peace will only be achieved through compassionate justice, this is the hope that is still possible. For Naim Ateek, this hope requires courage on the part of Israeli Jews, as well as persistent encouragement from American Jews and the United States government.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Naim S. Ateek, *Justice and Only Justice: A Palestinian theology of liberation* (New York: Orbis Books, 2014) 108.

<sup>20</sup> George Emile Irani, "Reviewed Work : Justice and Only Justice: A Palestinian Theology of Liberation by Naim Stifan Ateek," *Newsletter (Association for Israel Studies)* 5, no. 2 (1990): 29–30.

<sup>21</sup> Naim S. Ateek, *Justice and Only Justice: A Palestinian theology of liberation* (New York: Orbis Books, 2014) 130.

<sup>22</sup> Naim S. Ateek, *Justice and Only Justice: A Palestinian theology of liberation* (New York: Orbis Books, 2014) 140.



Perhaps the creation of the State of Israel, in the aftermath of the Holocaust, has contributed to some kind of justice for the Jewish people by giving them a home where they can live safely. For Naim Ateek it is time to move on and implement the second "justice", which is justice for the Palestinians. If justice is not done, Israel will live unjustly. This injustice will become a kind of worm that eats away at the body of Israel itself. Thus Israel will lose its own justice. What he means by justice for the Palestinians is the establishment of a Palestinian state.<sup>23</sup> Of course this requires cooperation and openness from various parties in power.

### **The Challenges and The Supports to Palestinian theology of liberation**

The challenges faced by Ateek's Palestinian liberation theology come from the Christian Zionists. This group argues neglect, imbalance, insensitivity, and partiality of many Western Christians towards the Palestinian conflict makes it more difficult for the problem to be resolved.<sup>24</sup> Like a fire that burns a house, if left unchecked, the fire will not be extinguished until everything is charred. Naim Ateek shows some examples of Christian Zionists, the first is Howard A. Johnson, a staff clergy from St. John the Divine Cathedral in New York. He made short visits to Anglican churches around the world and then wrote the book: *Global Odyssey*.<sup>25</sup>

It reads as if he was able to understand the complexities of life and the problems facing the church in the Middle East with only a short visit. Johnson analysis of the Church was crude and erroneous and did not reflect his concern as a fellow brother in Christ in the Anglican Communion, rather his criticism of the indigenous Episcopal Church there revealed a greater sympathy for Israel.<sup>26</sup> In addition to Johnson, Paul van Buren in his book: *Discerning the Way*,<sup>27</sup> where does not distinguish between Biblical Israel and modern Israel. He points out that God was on

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<sup>23</sup> Naim S. Ateek, *Justice and Only Justice: A Palestinian theology of liberation* (New York: Orbis Books, 2014) 142.

<sup>24</sup> Naim S. Ateek, *Justice and Only Justice: A Palestinian theology of liberation* (New York: Orbis Books, 2014) 67.

<sup>25</sup> Ateek, *Justice and Only Justice A Palestinian Theology of Liberation*.

<sup>26</sup> Naim S. Ateek, *Justice and Only Justice: A Palestinian theology of liberation* (New York: Orbis Books, 2014) 69.

<sup>27</sup> Naim S. Ateek, *Justice and Only Justice: A Palestinian theology of liberation* (New York: Orbis Books, 2014) 69.

the side of the Jews when fighting the Arabs in 1948 as in the days of Joshua and that modern Israel is a direct continuation of biblical Israel.<sup>28</sup>

In addition to Christian Zionists there are Christian fundamentalists led by Jerry Falwell, who believe in the inerrancy of the Bible and thus take it very literally. They state clearly that the strength of Christian Zionism is based on a profession of faith in God and His Word. Christian Zionism just have one aspect of following Jesus that Christianity by its biblical nature is Zionist. This type of Christian Zionism began to emerge as early as the 1980s in the *International Christian Embassy* in Jerusalem, which had dedicated to supporting the state of Israel.<sup>29</sup>

After the publication of the book "*Justice and only Justice*" was published and accepted, it influenced the vibes of excitement and hope in the Palestinian Liberation theology movement and what it could contribute to achieving justice and peace. Naim Ateek's Palestine Liberation theology movement has also received support from various parties who share the same concerns. Palestinian Liberation Theology is not only aimed at Palestinian Christians and Israelis but also at the world community to make people realize how serious this problem is in the hope of making a joint movement according to the ideals of Palestinian Liberation Theology.

In 1990, a small conference was held at the Tantur Ecumenical Institute in Bethlehem to make Palestinian Liberation Theology international and known not only to Palestinian and Israeli Christians but to people all over the world, so international theologians were invited including Dr. Rosemary Radford Reuther and Dr. Marc Ellis representing America, and other participants from India, South Africa, the Philippines, Zimbabwe, and Sri Lanka to join forty Palestinian men and women. They agreed to establish a Palestinian Liberation Theology movement called the *Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center*.<sup>30</sup> It was they who gave support to the efforts of the Palestinian liberation theology movement that Naim Ateek was working on. Naim Ateek with this movement developed and disseminated Palestinian liberation theology throughout the world.

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<sup>28</sup> Naim S. Ateek, *Justice and Only Justice: A Palestinian theology of liberation* (New York: Orbis Books, 2014) 69.

<sup>29</sup> Naim S. Ateek, *Justice and Only Justice: A Palestinian theology of liberation* (New York: Orbis Books, 2014) 70.

<sup>30</sup> Naim S. Ateek (Ed.). *A Palestinian theology of liberation: The bible, justice, and the Palestine-Israel conflict* (New York: Orbis Books, 2017), 129.

Apart from them, there are quite a number of church media and associations that provide space and platforms for Naim Ateek to convey his ideas about Palestinian liberation theology. The formation of a Sabeel support organization called *International Friends of Sabeel* (IFOS) which organizes FOS in various countries such as in the UK, North America, Canada, Scandinavia, Norway, Australia, Ireland, the Netherlands, Germany, and France. They are organizations that support Sabeel's work through education, advocacy, conferences, solidarity visits, and project partnerships and even financial assistance to support Sabeel's movement for peace in Palestine and Israel.<sup>31</sup>

### Relevance

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has caused changes in the territory of Israel and Palestine, some news sources convey the shrinkage of Palestinian territory over time.<sup>32</sup> The suffering and injustice experienced by Palestinians is not over, it needs to be a universal concern. In the era of media evolution, it can greatly support this movement to achieve the goal of peace for Palestine and Israel with easy means of communication and distribution of ideas of Palestinian liberation theology. On Interview Ateeks states that his idea on liberation theology is now becoming a global concern on the Youtube platform, several channels aired interviews with Naim Ateek and on that occasion Naim Ateek conveyed his ideas for the liberation and especially the peace of Palestine and Israel.

The peace discourse proposed by Naim Ateek in Palestinian liberation theology, although not directly, has a lot of support from netizens. Indonesia itself is largely a society that defends the liberation of Palestine but strongly condemns Israel. Although the defense is done with motives that are 'only' limited to the basis of religion. There are many people in Indonesia who are willing to carry out actions in the capital as an effort to provide support to Palestine.<sup>33</sup> Not only that, efforts to

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<sup>31</sup> Naim S. Ateek (Ed.). *A Palestinian theology of liberation: The bible, justice, and the Palestine-Israel conflict* (New York: Orbis Books, 2017), 131.

<sup>32</sup> Aristya Rahadian, "Melihat Peta Palestina, Makin Susut dari Tahun ke Tahun", *cncindonesia.com* pada 25 October 2023, 14:05 WIB di <https://www.cncindonesia.com/news/20231025131128-16-483562/melihat-peta-palestina-makin-susut-dari-tahun-ke-tahun>.

<sup>33</sup> Redaksi CNBC Indonesia. "Aksi RI Bela Palestina Disorot Media Asing, Komen Begini", *cncindonesia.com* pada 25 November 2023, 06:20 WIB diakses dari:

boycott products affiliated with Israel are also willing to be carried out by the Indonesian people even though it is likely to harm themselves but have no impact on peace there.<sup>34</sup> The reason for Indonesia's position that rejects Israel which has created world Cup problems so that it is not implemented in Indonesia.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has reached the attention of the world community, especially in Indonesia. The society has criticized the injustice that happened to the Palestinians, but the injustice was also done several times by some Indonesians to their neighbors. For example, the rejection of the establishment of synagogues and worship activities is not only done by unscrupulous Muslims, but in Papua, where the majority are Christians, there are also those who reject the existence of Muslims.<sup>35</sup>

In addition, there are also many injustices that occur, especially when there are cases of corruption that clearly reap the benefits of seizing common property. Some of the officials who have recently been caught in corruption cases are Christians. The value of justice needs to be fought for more vigorously, especially promoting justice not only with words but actions in the public sphere is very important for everyone, especially Christians. Indonesian society needs to reflect on the experience of injustice that occurred in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Just as the struggles and attitudes of the Indonesian people who fought for Palestinian justice, must also be sought for the Indonesian people themselves in the context of living together despite having diverse backgrounds.

It is worth appreciating the government's efforts to carry out equitable development for the sake of general welfare (economy) in the new National Capital City (IKN) project in Sepaku, North Penajam Paser Regency, East Kalimantan Province. In addition to these positive potentials and opportunities, as reported by

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<https://www.cnbcindonesia.com/news/20231125000453-4-491918/aksi-ri-bela-palestina-disorot-media-asing-komen-begini>.

<sup>34</sup> Dimas Waraditya Nugraha. "Boikot Produk Israel: Antara Solidaritas Kemanusiaan dan Dampak Ekonomi Lokal", *kompas.id* pada 15 November 2023 18:43 WIB, diakses dari : <https://www.kompas.id/baca/ekonomi/2023/11/15/boikot-produk-israel-antara-solidaritas-kemanusiaan-dan-dampak-ekonomi-lokal>.

<sup>35</sup> Sholikhatul Imamah, "Konflik Berbalut Agama: Papua Menolak Pembangunan Menara Masjid" *Kompasiana.com* pada 15 Desember 2021, 20:29 WIB diakses dari: <https://www.kompasiana.com/sholikhatulimamahsaaa22575/61b9ed4862a7047b062e3b32/konflik-berbalut-agama-papua-menolak-pembangunan-menara-masjid>

Kompas.com, potential negative impacts may also occur such as threatening the scope of local communities and animals, displacing indigenous peoples' land, for the millennial generation it is difficult to own a house which is likely to be expensive.<sup>36</sup> According to Geography and Forestry experts at Gadjah Mada University, the project to relocate the national capital will create urbanization and the problems that come with it. The consequences will be felt directly by the local population.<sup>37</sup>

Many news articles state that the IKN development project is based on the principle of preserving nature. The project holders are trying to minimize the negative impact of the development and they are ready to reforest. As discussed by UGM geographers, a wave of urbanization will occur, the threat of displacement of local people is very likely and they also have to provide their land for people who will move to occupy the new IKN later. Slowly but surely there will be many interests there and various problems will arise and most likely the local community certainly needs to be considered justice for them.

## CONCLUSION

The war between Israel and Palestine continues to this day. Moreover, more and more people are harmed. Not only the military, but it has also spread to civil society. This war affects not only physically but also psychologically and mentally. These people have experienced a lot of violence and suffering. So, it is not right to use religion, which is a comfort for those who suffer, as a material to attack those who are neglected. Naim Ateek emphasized this by explaining that the Bible must be read anew. Ultimately, the values of Scripture show their newness and support those who suffer. God also does not favor tribalism but God is the Almighty who is just to all.

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<sup>36</sup> Tari Oktaviani dan Nibras Nada Nailufar, "Pro Kontra Pemindahan Ibu Kota Negara", *Kompas.com* pada 21 Mei 2023, 06:00 WIB, diakses dari: <https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2023/05/21/06000071/pro-kontra-pemindahan-ibu-kota-negara>.

<sup>37</sup> Satria Ardhi, "Ahli Geografi UGM: Pembangunan IKN Tuai Banyak Konsekuensi Urbanisasi bagi Masyarakat Lokal", *ugm.ac.id* pada 7 Agustus 2023, 13.45 WIB, diakses dari: <https://ugm.ac.id/id/berita/ahli-geografi-ugm-pembangunan-ikn-tuai-banyak-konsekuensi-urbanisasi-bagi-masyarakat-lokal/>.

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