




**THE  
LAW  
AND  
THE  
PROPHETS**

**A DOCUMENTARY FILM BY:**

**JOSHUA VIS**

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**“Israel is always looking to drive  
Palestinians into smaller and  
smaller spaces. To make them  
invisible, to deny them resources,  
deny them chances and ultimately  
to try and force them out.”**

**Jonathan Cook**  
Freelance Journalist



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# SHORT SYNOPSIS

In Israel, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank, the law is whatever Israel deems to be in the best interest of Jewish Israelis and to the detriment of Palestinians. Israel violates the civil and human rights of Palestinians as a matter of standard, accepted policy. However, there are brave, determined individuals who are trying to expose the destructive, unjust, and sometimes invisible ways in which Israel exploits and oppresses Palestinians. The Law and the Prophets explains the mechanisms of control that Israel deploys to subjugate Palestinians. These mechanisms, some violent and some nonviolent, have been perfected through decades of civil and military rule of Palestinians both within Israel, and in East Jerusalem and the West Bank.



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# SYNOPSIS

Since June 1967, Israel has controlled, in one way or another, the lives of the Palestinians living in the West Bank and East Jerusalem.\* Over the course of fifty years, this control has become more sophisticated, more systematic, and harder to recognize. Palestinians in the West Bank live under Israeli military occupation, and thus under Israeli military law. They have very limited civil rights. In contrast, Israel has sponsored the creation of Israeli settlements throughout the West Bank in which Israeli citizens enjoy the protection of the civilian laws of the state of Israel. If this were happening elsewhere, we would call it apartheid. These Israeli settlements, which are modern towns and cities with grocery stores, restaurants, and universities, are illegal under international law, but are protected by the Israeli military. The Palestinians who happen to live near Israeli settlements are terrorized by the Israeli military so as assure their pacification.

All Palestinians living in the West Bank are deprived of control of their own fate by the Israeli military. They cannot move freely throughout the West Bank, to say nothing of entering Israel, for which they need a permit from the Israeli military. Palestinians can be stopped by the Israeli military and detained for no reason. Palestinians do not control their water resources below them, nor do they control the air waves above them. To one degree or another, Israel decides the fate of every Palestinian in the West Bank. It is normalized terror.

Palestinians living in East Jerusalem have residency in Israel, and pay the same taxes as Jewish Israelis living in West Jerusalem. However, the Palestinian neighborhoods are treated nothing like the neighborhoods of West Jerusalem. They are deprived of the homes, apartments, schools, roads, sidewalks, and the parks that their Jewish Israeli “neighbors” enjoy. These Palestinians have been cut off from their fellow Palestinians who live in the West Bank by the Israeli separation barrier. This separation barrier has starved East Jerusalem of any viable economic activity. The majority of Palestinians in the

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# SYNOPSIS

West Bank have no access to East Jerusalem. Thus, not only does Israel not invest in East Jerusalem, but Palestinians have no way to invest in it either.

Finally, Nazareth is a city in Israel that is overwhelmingly Palestinian. In this case, these are Palestinians who are Israeli citizens. Israel drove out the vast majority of Palestinians who were living in what became modern Israel. The small minority of Palestinians who managed to stay in Israel were eventually granted citizenship. Nazareth is the largest Palestinian city in Israel. But Israeli Arab citizens of Nazareth are systematically denied the opportunity to thrive as citizens of Israel. Israel simply refuses to invest in Nazareth like it invests in Tiberius, a Jewish city located about an hour from Nazareth. Nazareth is deprived by Israel of the infrastructure it needs to become a proper tourist destination, and thus deprived of all of the money that would come with it. Ultimately, Israel does not want all of its citizens to thrive, and it has found “legal” ways to make it so. Nazareth is a microcosm of the racist treatment that Palestinians with Israeli citizenship face throughout Israeli society.

The Law and the Prophets amplifies the voices of the brave, determined individuals who are trying to expose the destructive, unjust, and sometimes invisible ways in which Israel exploits and oppresses Palestinians. They deserve your attention.

\*Gaza was also occupied by Israel in 1967. Unfortunately, for reasons of access and scope, The Law and the Prophets was not able to include Gaza. Palestinians in Gaza have suffered and continue to suffer greatly due to Israel's blockade of Gaza. Gaza is a cage and Israel holds the keys.

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# DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

In the summer of 2001 (in the middle of the Second Intifada/Palestinian uprising), I came to Jerusalem to study modern Hebrew at Hebrew University. I was twenty-five years old, and I knew almost nothing about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. But like most Americans, I was sympathetic to the Israeli narrative. I was embarking on an educational journey that would end with a Ph.D. in Hebrew Bible/Old Testament. My support for modern Israel was nominally linked to my admiration for Judaism and to my understanding of Christianity's strong link to Judaism. God had chosen Israel, and it seemed logical to assume that God continued to do so in some way. Moreover, modern Israel had worked hard to garner sympathy and support in the U.S., and until recently, this campaign enjoyed near universal support in the U.S. But it only works if you remain naïve about the facts of the Israeli occupation, which is now 53 years old.

In 2006, my parents moved to East Jerusalem to discover how our little Protestant denomination (Reformed Church in America) could be of use in the fight for peace and justice. Over time, they came to understand that the Israeli occupation was a great injustice. My father blogged religiously for a few years. His work was poignant, haunting. With time, they concluded that they needed to show Americans what was happening to Palestinians. But they knew that they had to be clever about it. Knowing that American Christians loved to come to Israel to see the biblical sites, they crafted a tour that consisted mostly of visiting the biblical and archaeological sites in Israel and Palestine, but added some powerful speakers, Israeli and Palestinian. This model was effective for a number of years. It was unthreatening to most Americans, without ignoring the conflict.

In the summer of 2016, I took over this work. On the first tour that I led, I added a day-long experience on the detention of Palestinian children in the Israeli military courts. I added it almost on a whim. Salwa Duaibis and Gerard Horton of Military Court Watch blew me

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# DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

away. Israel was arresting Palestinian children, often in the middle of the night, and through physical, emotional, and psychological pressure, forcing them to admit to crimes, mainly throwing stones. This was my introduction to one of the mechanisms of control devised by the Israeli military. It was totally unknown to me, an American fairly well educated on the occupation. My education continued in this way for about three years as I added more and more speakers and experiences that uncovered the hidden machinations of the Israeli government. I slowly found more and more Israelis and Palestinians who could tell (and/or show) my groups about the systemic oppression that Israel had devised to keep Palestinians marginalized and pacified.

The Law and the Prophets amplifies the voices of these smart and courageous women and men, many of whom toil in tragic obscurity. In doing so, I hope that more people will come to see the grave injustice of the Israeli occupation and demand an end to the oppression of Palestinians.

-Joshua Vis



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# CAST



## DAOUD NASSAR

[www.tentofnations.org](http://www.tentofnations.org)

Daoud is a Palestinian Christian who founded Tent of Nations farm on his family's land in the West Bank. The farm, which is about 100 acres and is surrounded by some of the settlements of the Gush Etzion bloc (including Beitar Illit [pop. 51,636], Neve Daniel [pop. 2300], and Rosh Tzurim [pop. 950]), was purchased in 1916 during the Ottoman Empire. The Nassars have the official papers of that purchase. They have been struggling to stay on their land as Israeli officials try to force them off the farm by every "legal" means possible, beginning in 1991 when it was declared state land. The slogan of the Tent of Nations is a testament to their commitment to peace and justice: "We refuse to be enemies."



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# CAST



## GERARD HORTON

[www.militarycourtwatch.org](http://www.militarycourtwatch.org)

Gerard Horton is a lawyer and co-founder of Military Court Watch. Gerard has focused on the issue of children detained by the Israeli military and prosecuted in military courts for the past thirteen years. Prior to work with Military Court Watch, he practiced as a barrister at the Sydney bar specializing in commercial and criminal cases.

Military Court Watch scrutinizes the treatment of Palestinian children in the Israeli military courts. It monitors and documents the treatment of Palestinian children from the moment of their arrest until their final release. This process involves the collection of testimonies from affected children and their families, as well as assessing developments within the military legal system.

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# CAST



## SALWA DUAIBIS

[www.militarycourtwatch.org](http://www.militarycourtwatch.org)

Salwa Duaibis is a Palestinian citizen of Israel based in Jerusalem. In 2013, she co-founded Military Court Watch, an organization that monitors the treatment of children in Israeli military detention. Prior to that, she worked with a number of human rights organizations focusing on Palestinian economic rights and women's rights.

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# CAST



## JONATHAN COOK

[www.jonathan-cook.net](http://www.jonathan-cook.net)

Jonathan Cook is British journalist who has been based in Nazareth, Israel, since 2001. Jonathan has written three books on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict: *Blood and Religion: The Unmasking of the Jewish State* (2006), *Israel and the Clash of Civilisations: Iraq, Iran and the Plan to Remake the Middle East* (2008), *Disappearing Palestine: Israel's Experiments in Human Despair* (2008). He has also contributed chapters and essays to several edited volumes on Israel-Palestine. Jonathan's reports and commentaries have appeared in the *Guardian*, the *Observer*, the *Times* and the *New Statesman* (London); *The International Herald Tribune* and *Le Monde diplomatique* (Paris); *Al-Ahram Weekly* (Cairo); *The National* (Abu Dhabi); *The Daily Star* (Beirut); *The Middle East Report* and *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs* (Washington); and *The Irish Times* (Dublin). He has contributed to many online sites, such as *CounterPunch*, *Israeli Occupation Archive*, *Al-Jazeera.com* and *Electronic Intifada*.

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# CAST



## SAM BAHOUR

Sam Bahour is a Palestinian-American, born and raised in Youngstown, Ohio and is managing partner of Applied Information Management, a consulting firm specializing in business development with a niche focus on start-ups and providing executive counsel. Sam returned to Palestine when the Oslo process began and he was instrumental in the establishment of two publicly traded firms: the Palestine Telecommunications Company and the Arab Palestinian Shopping Center. As a Palestinian businessperson, Sam has learned firsthand the totalizing nature of the Israeli occupation. He is currently an independent director at the Arab Islamic Bank and an advisory board member of the Open Society Foundations' MENA Office. Bahour serves in various capacities in several community organizations, including co-founder and board chair of Americans for a Vibrant Palestinian Economy (AVPE), board member of Just Vision in New York, board member and policy adviser at Al-Shabaka, the Palestinian Policy Network, and a secretariat member of the Palestine Strategy Group (PSG), among others. He writes frequently on Palestinian affairs and has been widely published in leading outlets. He is co-editor of *HOMELAND: Oral History of Palestine and Palestinians* (1993), tweets at @SamBahour and blogs at [www.epalestine.ps](http://www.epalestine.ps).

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# CAST



## YAHAV ZOHAR

Green Olive Tours

Yahav works as a partner and senior guide for Green Olive Tours, which offer alternative tours throughout Israel and Palestine. He is an expert in the history of Israel and Palestine and in the intricacies of the modern conflict. Yahav was born in Jerusalem and has lived in the city all his life. He has been a journalist, translator, political activist and a spokesperson for human rights and a sustainable political solution in Israel and Palestine. He has been involved with Combatants for Peace, the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions and other peace and human rights initiatives. Currently, Yahav is working on short film series entitled “Homeland Insecurity.”

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# CAST



## ITAMAR SHAPIRA

Former Israeli Soldier and Co-founder of Combatants for Peace

Itamar served in the Israeli military during the second Intifada, spending much of his service time in the West Bank. He is a co-founder of Combatants for Peace, which was founded in 2006. Israeli and Palestinian former combatants, people who had taken an active role in the conflict, laid down their weapons and established Combatants for Peace. “The egalitarian, bi-national, grassroots organization was founded on the belief that the cycle of violence can only be broken when Israelis and Palestinians join forces.” Itamar is now a pro-equality Israeli activist currently working on a Master of Arts in Anthropology at Haifa University. He is a flamenco musician and has been a tour guide in Jerusalem and Israel/Palestine since 2006. Itamar has intimate knowledge of the political realities and historical narratives in Israel/Palestine and addresses collective traumas like the Holocaust and the Nakba (the forced expulsion of Palestinians from historic Palestine by Israeli soldiers in 1948-1949).

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# CAST



## SAHAR VARDI

Israeli Activist, American Friends Service Committee

Sahar Vardi is a Jerusalem-based activist. She publicly refused her military service and was imprisoned in 2008. Since then she has been active with Israeli anti-militarist groups such as New Profile, and today she works as the Israel Program Manager for the American Friends Service Committee based in Jerusalem. Sahar is part of Boycott from Within (a group of Israelis supporting the Palestinian call for a boycott of Israeli products) and has been active with direct action groups such as Taayush and Free Jerusalem. Today much of her work focuses on the economic aspects of the Israeli occupation and the military industry, as well as Israel's weapons exports.



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