# THE FIRST ADVENT IN PALESTINE

## REVERSALS, RESISTANCE, AND THE ONGOING COMPLEXITY OF HOPE

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# 10

# HOMELAND, BUT NOT A HOME

*Holy Family, Return from Egypt*

*Nazareth | Matthew 2:19–23*

The advent narratives remind us of the hard truth that empires keep coming. Even as one wanes, another emerges with the same violent tactics. The exodus from Egypt, while emancipating the Hebrews, did not end empire. The release of the captives from Babylon brought their return and the rebuilding of Jerusalem, but it did not end empire. One imperial force replaced another. God's arrival was the divine's most direct action yet. And still Rome remained a superpower for the decades that followed. Nor was it the final empire.

It isn't only that atrocities happened in the aftermath of the first advent, but that empires and their economies remained. A resignation regarding peace came with the question, Is Caesar's peace the only possible peace? And the status quo was set. If it was not one empire, it was another. If it wasn't one emperor, it was another. Advent tells us something else: Until the newborn king, in all his vulnerability and gentleness, is embraced, God's peace

will be kept at bay. The promise of true peace is one no empire can keep.

We see this arc as Matthew offers the final details of his advent narrative. Joseph and Mary return to the land of Israel with their child. But their return to Bethlehem was complicated by another harsh ruler. Joseph's repatriation would be a retreat of sorts. He went instead to make a new home in Nazareth. Even there, no promise of safety held his family, given the tense nature of the Galilee region. Yet, they made their way north as newly-minted peacemakers in God's kingdom.

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As Herod had sensed his death approaching, he worried that no one would mourn him. So he rounded up regional leaders, those who would be missed and therefore mourned, and instructed his militia to kill those leaders upon his death. This assured him that the country would weep on the occasion of his death, one way or another. However, the plan was thwarted, and he alone died.

The occasion of Herod's death prompted a wave of rebellions across the region, especially in Galilee. Whiffs of hope stirred among the people, and they took the news of his death as an opportunity to push against the imperial yoke. With punishing force, Rome came in from the north, pounding the villages and towns of Galilee, notably Sepphoris, near Nazareth. So much loss in the wake





of Herod's death called for lament, but it was no longer about him. It never was, really. It was the successive nature of imperial violence on full and painful display—daily oppression, the slaughter of the innocents in Judea, and eventually the violent revolt of the people and the inevitable imperial backlash.

Then, Matthew writes, Joseph had a third dream. For who knows how long he'd been a refugee in Egypt along with his family. Now the divine instruction came to take Mary and their son back to the land of Israel because Herod was dead.

Joseph took his family back toward home. But though Herod was dead, his son now ruled Bethlehem and was already garnering a reputation for ruthlessness akin to that of his father. Word traveled fast when Archelaus ordered troops into Jerusalem, who then killed three thousand inhabitants[1] to quell a riot as mourners protested an earlier murder, by Herod, of two religious teachers in the temple.[2] There was no reason to believe Archelaus would be a gentler ruler than his father.

Joseph understood that if word of his return to Bethlehem got out, Herod's son would likely seek revenge. Maybe their return would trigger another slaughter. The risk was too high. As if his own calculations were not enough, in yet a fourth dream the fears were confirmed. Once more, Joseph protected his family. And it would cost him. Forced to abandon his home in Bethlehem, and

to avoid Judea altogether, he found his way to Galilee. He returned to his homeland, but not to his home.

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The last time I visited Bethlehem, we drove with Naïef past the Aida Refugee Camp. The camp clings to the edge of the town, wedged between Rachel's Tomb and the separation wall. Walking through the streets, you notice refugees from another atrocity, another forced flight from what was once home. No wonder they named the camp Aida, which means "she who will return"—indication of a fervent hope.[3] The residents of Aida left their villages during the Nakba, "catastrophe," in 1948, pushed out when Jewish immigrants from Europe arrived by the boatload after the Holocaust. As that tragedy's survivors looked for shelter and the new state of Israel was formed, Palestinian villagers were evicted—most by force.[4] Many fled with housekeys in hand and little else. Those keys became emblematic of the devastation that had beset Palestinian families. At the entry into Aida is the Key of Return, a massive black arch with a skeleton key sculpted at its top as a reminder for all who enter.[5]

Walking through the Key of Return arch and along the gray barrier walls, you can see resistance art that tells the story of martyrs and imprisoned fathers, rockets rained down on neighboring Gaza. Bullet holes in the wall authenticate the story of struggle. Messages encouraging steadfastness and hope for return also appear on





various streets. The alleys are so narrow that the trucks with skunk water can barely fit through for the frequent dowsing of homes and community spaces shared by those who still dare to await return.

One intersection in Aida displays the names of all the villages where the inhabitants of Aida come from—and hope to return one day. The villages may be gone now, and the homes their keys once matched likely destroyed or occupied by Jewish families, but the village names live on in the art and in the memory of the displaced. Their keys, once functional, are now aspirational. The people cling to keys as heirlooms, where justice has not afforded them the opportunity to cling to inherited homes, land, and orchards. Still, they wait for what they now know is a slow justice.

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As the Holy Family made their way north for a new start in the small town of Nazareth, maybe it felt like they were living as ever-displaced people, unable to go to their preferred home. Maybe Mary remembered her little garden in Bethlehem, the corner of the yard where she could sit in the sun and sip her morning tea before another set of daily chores. Maybe she sometimes thought of her favorite stall in the market full of the sweetest figs and apricots. Maybe she smiled at the memory of the elderly woman who always added a few extra herbs to the basket with advice on how to use them to prevent one sickness

or another—what a blessing she was during the final months of Mary's pregnancy. Along with the birth of her son and the magi's visit, Mother Mary likely pondered these things too.

But Nazareth was a place for those displaced from Jesse's tribe. Most had come by way of Babylon, after the captivity. Some made their way north from Judea looking for work, especially tradesmen hoping to secure a job on one of the many construction sites in Tiberias or Sepphoris, the latter closest to the town of the Nazarenes.[6] Joseph, Mary, and their son would be welcomed as kin since they were fellow branches of Jesse's tree, now transplanted into northern soil.

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They arrived to a turbulent time in Galilee, a tinderbox lit by the death of Herod. Revolts were unleashed across the region in the wake of the news. Finally free from Herod, hope for an overturn of power arose among the populace. Swift action could create the conditions for liberation from oppression, heavy taxation, and imperial meddling in their village life. Born was a season for messianic movements, bandits, and resistance fighters.[7]

Joseph and his small family circumvented the danger of Bethlehem and Archelaus, but moved right into the unrest and uprisings that were part of the whole region of Galilee. It is likely that Joseph, as a tradesman, found work with neighbors on a construction site in Sepphoris,





a reasonable walk across the shallow valley from Nazareth. This put him at the center of Galilee, as Sepphoris was the administrative hub for the region, filled with government functionaries and tax collectors.

About this time, local revolutionaries brought the full weight of their resistance efforts to bear on Sepphoris, breaking into the building that held a weapons cache, attacking military forces stationed there, and disturbing the regular operations of the regime. The resisters sought to unseat the current power structure and reclaim their sovereignty. When Rome heard of the attempted insurrection, Caesar dispatched a legion from the north to punish Galilee and deal a final blow to resistance to Rome once and for all, delivering a lasting message to any who might again consider revolution.

When Rome's forces came to Sepphoris, they devasted the landscape. The people who could do so fled from the arriving legions. Those who remained became victims. The historian Josephus recounts the mass crucifixions of men, enslavement of children, and rape of women during this siege. The military also razed villages and destroyed fields, leaving only smoldering ash and the sound of wailing. No one was untouched. Those who didn't lose their lives lost sons and daughters, husbands and homes, land and neighbors. They witnessed the unforgettable, exactly as Rome had planned.

While Luke records one additional event in the life of Joseph, Matthew's narrative for him comes to a close.[8]

Perhaps Joseph was among those lost to the Roman advance on Sepphoris and surrounding villages.[9] Mary and her young son might have hidden with neighbors in a nearby cave. But maybe the day the Romans came, Joseph was trapped in Sepphoris, unable to get to them. Once silence fell upon Sepphoris, families waited for their loved ones to find their way home. Many never returned. This scenario may explain why Joseph does not appear in the Gospel stories beyond the advent narratives.

So for at least part of his childhood, Jesus grew up without Joseph, in a landscape littered with reminders of men lost, his own father likely among them. Even he didn't escape the heartbreak or the haunting presence of empire. He was not spared the personal trauma of loss or the difficult learning of how to live without a loved one. Jesus not only inhabited a traumatized landscape; he was a victim of imperial trauma from a young age. Before he carried the cross through the narrow streets of Jerusalem, his body carried loss in Nazareth.

This is incarnation. Not inhabiting a body of privilege exempt from poverty and violence, but living in a body thick with the trauma common to most in Galilee and Judea.

God incarnated this pain in his own human body. It became a part of his human experience and is now woven into God's eternal memory. Jesus had a lifelong relationship with Roman soldiers and those who colluded with





the empire that killed so many of his neighbors and relatives and perhaps even his own father. Consider the deeper power, then, of Jesus's words of love, forgiveness, and mercy in light of his own trauma. To love those who wrought suffering on his family and himself is divine love. His human grief pierced straight into the heart of God, and God's love came in response.

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Hammers abound—those who reach for violence, like the Maccabees once did. In the West Bank, the signature of the Maccabean hammer is ubiquitous in the form of cement barriers and checkpoints, Israeli soldiers with machine guns slung across their chests, and coils of razor wire throughout the region. To the hammers, every Palestinian appears to be a nail.

But there are branches too: those who hope for justice and try to live at peace with their neighbors amid the daily obstacles of the occupation. Perhaps they are less obvious, tender leaves gently rustling in the breeze, barely noticeable. But rooted there, like the terraced hills lined with olive trees, the branches wave for reprieve from another punishing regime.

When I last visited Palestine, I made my way to one such place on an October morning. My friend Naïef took another friend and me to a small village called Kafr Malik, deep in the West Bank. We pulled up to a small plot of land, and Tahany came from among the olive trees

to greet us. Because we arrived while the olives were ripe, we were welcomed to help in the harvest.

We joined about twenty family members already at work. Khalid and his brothers balanced on ladders, using hand rakes to shake olives loose from the top branches of the massive trees. The purpled fruit rained down like Ping-Pong balls through the many boughs, landing on tarps where Tahany's sisters sat. Instructions for picking and sorting the olives came right along with introductions to the family. As Tahany translated, explaining how we met as neighbors in the United States and our kids attended school together and played together at the park most weekends, the women listened and nodded even as their hands never stopped working.

Khalid came down from his perch atop the ladder to make a fire and boil some sage tea. He remembered it was something I had enjoyed in their stateside home. I had vowed to not drink it again until we were together in Palestine, so when he handed us cups of the aromatic tea, I began to cry. Sipping the sage tea with Tahany under the ancient olive trees felt like communion, our friendship taking on a deeper hue as we drank together in her homeland after the obstacles had made our reunion a challenge in previous years.

For hours we picked, sorted, sifted, and talked endlessly. Stories told in Arabic were aided by some English translation, but the laughter was a universal language. Her sons, whom I hadn't seen in nearly seven years,





joined us under the trees, and I marveled at their growth. I met her sweet daughter, a toddler, for the first time and watched her rest in her mother's arms whenever Tahany dared to stop sorting olives or supervising us. Lunch was served under the canopy of trees—makluba, stuffed grape leaves, Arabic salad, and incessant conversation.

When Tahany translated, we heard variations of the same narrative from each person. They love their land. They desire the best for their families and neighbors. "We are peaceful," they said as if in unison. But the days are hard, with complications caused by the occupation: the injustices slow down everything from grocery shopping to commuting to town. And almost every request to go to Jerusalem to pray during Ramadan or to Jaffa to visit the sea is denied. Tahany told me that Khalid's mother, who sat in a chair among us, still holds a key to her home in a northern village she can no longer even visit. I sensed her resignation about ever being able to return, but a hope abides for relief from daily troubles in Kafr Malik, even as things remain hard for everyone under Israel's control.

The day ended with all of us under one tree, huge and ancient. The family said it was at least a thousand years old. The men took to the ladders; the women laid out the tarps one last time and began collecting the olives. Incessant laughter energized bodies otherwise tired and sore from hours of labor. A euphoria embraced the lot of us as we gathered one last time, a joyful crescendo as we finished a day of harvesting, as generations before have

done. I felt the hospitality of being invited into a tradition stewarded by generations of families, of being embedded for a day in an ancient rhythm.

Occupation makes life harder, but harvest days like this one persist. Empires rise and fall over and over again, but this olive tree stands a thousand years later as a testament to a rugged steadfastness and the capacity of its roots to grip the soil despite imperial hardship. It is equally true for the families tending the orchards, planting and harvesting for generations. Empires come and colonize, announcing their own version of peace, but the meek endure. The word of Jesus in Matthew's Gospel seemed to echo in the olive grove: that the meek will inherit the land.[10] Watching Tahany's family work together on that final tree as the sun set behind the hills and the air chilled, I experienced a swell of joy that felt old and somehow golden. I bore witness to the beauty of the meek that day in Kafr Malik.

Once we made our way to Tahany's house, she made us strong dark Arabic coffee. "It is so hard to live here," she said. "There are checkpoints that can be closed without notice for any reason—or no reason at all. Sometimes I am in the car with my children and groceries, and we are stuck at a checkpoint for hours. The food spoils before we even get home." Only a few cars in their entire village have permits to drive on the road to Ramallah, because it is so expensive to get the Israeli-approved plates. Our conversation that evening continued, with





more talk of hardship, yet they also shared their hunger to live at peace with others, even Israelis.

As I listened, I was struck by the alternating words—*hardship* and *peace*. Over the years, I have heard the meek of Palestine speak these words often, not only to each other but to anyone willing to listen. They are quick to point out that not all residents of the West Bank are involved in direct action. Many are the meek, those who remain from generation to generation. And their very survival and steadfast commitment to the land are a confounding peace to the empires of today.

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Jesus heralded the meek ones as true inheritors of the land. Teaching on a hillside in Galilee when he was now a mature adult, he reached to Psalm 37, making an ancient hope contemporary. The psalmist offers the first biblical text to say that the meek will inherit the land despite all evidence to the contrary. The opening image in the psalm instructs the worshippers to not be vexed by evil ones because they will wither like the grass, they will one day fade away.[11] Instead, the text directs the worshipper: trust in God and continue to do good. This practice of good included abiding (a dedication to staying) in the land. "Take delight in the Lord, and [God] will grant you the desires of your heart," the psalmist famously says. In the context of roiling violence and economic turmoil, possibly the roughshod days of the Maccabees, what most

peasants desired was the end of imperial warfare.[12] They wanted to live on their ancestral land untouched by violence and free from the heavy burden of indebtedness. Their heart's desire was peace.

When Babylon took the elite into captivity, they left behind those they deemed unimportant. Those who remained in the smoldering ruins of Jerusalem were the meek ones. They had nowhere else to go. But when the military left, the land was at last theirs. Perhaps this is what the psalmist had in mind, singing of the meek inheriting the land one day. Those with roots coiled into the soil of Palestine would one day lay claim to it again, despite the machinations of empire.

The same psalmist reminded the people that empires like Assyria, Babylon, and Persia had come and gone. The Syrian empire of Antiochus Epiphanes that the Maccabees struggled against also loomed large in the moment, but then faded like the grass. Perhaps when Jesus reached for Psalm 37 generations later, he wanted to assure those gathered in the agitated landscape of Galilee that day of their history, and of the deep hope they could hold on to amid the Roman occupation. In returning to Psalm 37, he reactivated an ancient hope; in essence, he told them to keep hope alive.

The meekness Jesus evoked wasn't about genteel people keeping Caesar's peace. The meek were the survivors of brutal empires and their economies. They were those with no resources to relocate, no option but to remain





under dire conditions. So it was the meek who survived despite the trauma inflicted by the empire. The meek outlasted empires time and time again. As Jesus looked into the eyes of his fellow Galileans and invoked the psalm, he said that they (or their kin) would outlast Rome.

This long view of history informs a deeper understanding of what it meant when Jesus said the land would be inherited by the meek ones. According to Mitri Raheb, a Bethlehemite, writer, and Palestinian theologian, the meek are those left behind. They are the remnant after an empire departs, which they all eventually do.[13] Raheb said this realization transformed his relationship with the iconic sermon of Jesus: as a Palestinian living under occupation, he found that it offered him and the Palestinian people around him a word of needed hope.

Raheb speaks with honesty and hope about the region. Yet he knows better than most that life remained hard even after the arrival of Jesus to his hometown. Raheb illustrates the hardship in one of his books, where he wrote about his own father's struggle living under multiple governing powers without ever leaving Palestine.

Born in 1905, when Bethlehem was under the control of the Ottoman Empire, Raheb's father was issued citizenship papers. When he was a teenager, he became a citizen of the British Mandate and was issued a Palestinian passport. In 1948, when Bethlehem became part of Jordan, he became a citizen of the Hashemite Kingdom. He died

in 1975 under occupation with an identity card issued by Israel.[14] In one lifetime he survived four empires.

The advent story names the reality imperial powers inflicted on families like Raheb's over decades—or centuries. The Gospels do not tell of an easy or quick peace, but of hard-borne hope as the meek endure hardship under one empire and then the next.

When Jesus pulls the thread of Psalm 37 into his Sermon on the Mount, he acknowledges the long history of empires in his homeland and sings the same song of hope that Mary sang as he looks out across the hillside and sees the meek ones. In doing so, he anticipates families like the Raheb clan, still surviving future empires. They will outlast Rome and any subsequent imperial force, Jesus declares; the land will at last be the inheritance of the meek.

This is the hope I carry as I write from the advent narratives, that the meek ones battered by perpetual cycles of violence, compounded by indebtedness and dispossession, will inherit the land. And those who inherit the land are the ones who live into the complexity and hope of advent peace.

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While in Bethlehem, Claude and I shared lunch with Sami Awad, a Palestinian Christian who has been working toward peace for more than twenty years from his





base on Star Street.[15] We ate together, overlooking the crescents, crosses, and settlements that dotted the landscape. We asked him, an expert practitioner in the region, what he considered the way forward for peace in this hallowed land he calls home. He sat back in the wooden chair and then took a long, slow breath.

"I don't know," he sighed. "I stay out of politics—there are no answers to be found there. Neither side has a good plan," he relayed flatly.

"Then how do you work for peace?" Claude pushed, one practitioner to another. My husband's voice betrayed his own confusion at Sami's answer. Here was a seasoned peacemaker, seemingly holding a naïve position, when political strategies for change had been seen as the necessary way forward.

"I just keep connecting people," he responded.

Indeed, the core of Sami's work all these years has been creating spaces where people connect across fractured lines. He brings Israeli and Palestinian youth together, brings the devout of all three Abrahamic faiths together in common initiatives, and hosts visitors from foreign lands, introducing them to the local people of Bethlehem.

Still the answer felt unsatisfactory. Claude and I hungered for a better one. Sensing our disappointment, Sami turned the conversation toward our schedule for the coming days. "You should visit Hebron, Aida Refugee

Camp, go enjoy some falafel at Afteem's." He pulled out his phone and began dialing. "Good news! I have a friend who can drive you to Hebron tomorrow morning."

Claude and I have returned to that conversation on Star Street many times since. How do you find the energy to keep working for peace when the support dries up? How do you cling to hope when the occupation is as entrenched as the settlements ringed round the city? Our time with Sami was good, but left us with disturbing questions.

Now, years later and with advent explorations in view, I find myself circling back. Maybe Sami was right. Connecting people is a work of continued hope, each connection an act of resistance against the status quo of occupation, injustice, and futility. Each introduction, resisting isolation. Every gathering he hosts between Palestinians and Israelis, a seeding of the soil for a different future. Maybe every conversation creates the possibility of a new reality to come, new facts on the ground. He is weaving the fabric of God's peace—which is the practice of hope in hard times. He doesn't know what it will look like when the imperial cycle breaks, but he is preparing the ground for it just the same.

In this way, Sami follows the trajectory set by the first advent. Like Mary, Elizabeth, the shepherds, and the magi, he practices hope, knowing that God's peace will inaugurate a just world. He does not doubt the end of the empires because he knows the God who will defeat them





all. So, with another deep breath, he makes another call, another connection, another step in hope.

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The advent narratives demand we take the political and economic world of Roman Palestine seriously. The Gospel writers named the empires of Caesar and Herod not for dramatic effect; they didn't mention a census or massacre for literary flourish. The Gospel writers used contextual markers to describe in concrete ways the turmoil of the times that hosted the first advent.

It is this very context that makes the advent narratives contemporary—whether in Israel-Palestine or lands beyond. Our troubled times, shaped by all manner of injustice, cause continued suffering, making the loud cries of lament and cries for peace timely, as they are answered by advent.

These narratives remind us that the birth of Jesus did not change the facts on the ground immediately. The first advent set in motion a new possible reality for the meek, like Zechariah and Elizabeth, Mary and Joseph, and a few shepherds. But societal transformation was not quick to come. That would require more time and collaboration with God's unfolding peace campaign, of which Luke and Matthew will have much more to say in the rest of their Gospel narratives about the life of Jesus.

After Jesus's birth, after the magi left covertly, the Holy Family fled for safety to Egypt. More innocent

blood spilled in the streets of Bethlehem. Joseph, Mary, and their child returned as internally displaced people with a hometown too hostile to host them. And losses kept coming, the aftermath of the first advent littered with atrocities. Luke and Matthew knew it; so did their first-century audience. Now so do we.

An Advent faith is one that is buoyed by a generational hope, a long view of history combined with an equally long view of the future. It recalls that God spoke a word, and by divine fiat, there was light. But when God was clothed in human skin, navigating our terrestrial landscape, transformation took longer to enact. It is not impossible, as Gabriel said, just slower. So we join God with generational patience, knowing that making peace takes hard work and much time. But the advent narratives set our trajectory toward God's peace manifest on earth, both now and not yet.

These advent narratives reveal the Incarnation as more than God entering a human frame. They are also the revelation of God engaging with human trauma of a specific place and specific people. God experienced the excruciating reality of empires and economies from the position of the weak and powerless ones. God absorbed loss and pain in that body.

The Incarnation positions Jesus among the most vulnerable people, the bereft and threatened of society. The first advent shows God wrestling with the struggles common to many the world over. And from this





disadvantaged stance, Jesus lives out God's peace agenda as a counter-testimony to Caesar's peace.

This is the story of advent: we join Jesus as incarnations of God's peace on this earth for however long it takes. God walks in deep solidarity with humanity, sharing in our sufferings and moments of hope. Amid our hardship, God is with us. Emmanuel remains the name on our lips in troubled times.

Advent isn't the acceptance of status-quo peace, but an incarnation of God's peace that we live in the world. The peacemakers formed by advent are those who resist empire, who practice hospitality with neighbors, and who enter into solidarity with God in the work of liberation for everyone.

May there be calm, bright nights ahead for the peacemakers, the meek, and all people God accompanies through advent still.

# CONTINUATIONS

You have reached the end of this book, but not the end of the story. The advent narratives of Luke and Matthew form the early pages of their Gospels and set the context for Jesus's birth. But both Gospels have so much more to say about the hope-filled witness of Jesus on earth. They continue to tell the story of Jesus's life and his pursuit of justice, incarnating God's peace campaign in Galilee and beyond. In each Gospel we watch Jesus, energized by hope, confronting the empire.

That Jesus, born into a traumatized landscape and to a family that suffered under the weight of an occupation, presents a new kind of king wracked by the pain of empire: family members lost, stigma suffered, homes and homeland stolen. Embedded in the deepest memory of God is the sting of trauma. And this is what also infuses the Gospel narratives with hope. The God who experienced this particular pain knows how to redeem it.

This God-with-us will not forget our shared human experience. God will transform the world and all its brokenness, from incarnation to resurrection to a land the meek want to inherit, free of imperial violence. Only

a God who knows and shares our pain can ultimately transform it.

It is this hope that energizes me as the Gospels continue their telling of the story that, in the end, empires don't stand a chance against this God. And it's a hope that energizes Palestinian Christians like Mitri Raheb, pastor and resident of Bethlehem. Raheb, familiar with life under occupation, reflects on what that hope means: "Holding to a hopeful vision in the context of war gives hope a new meaning. It is no longer something we see but rather something we practice, something we live, something we advocate, something we plant."[1]

Advent was never just about seeing the star over Bethlehem, but about practicing hope in hard landscapes, where hope isn't what we see—it's what we do. The advent narratives offer us a place to look as we begin our own practice of hope, as we trust God to break the cycle for good.

Each reversal in the advent narratives is a seed tossed into the soil, placed for hope to take root. Zechariah, Elizabeth, Mary, Joseph, and the shepherds are the grassroots practitioners showing us the hope that erodes empires. Among the tools we are given by the first advent in Palestine are hospitality, solidarity, and nonviolence—ready for the hopeful to use as we subvert the empires God will one day bring to an end.





As the magi don't just see the star from the East and marvel at it, we learn from them to act in hope and follow the star that guides us. We travel in the light of that star, in and through the trajectory of the advent story toward—always—resurrection!