

Quaker Tent Solidarity

Jeff Kisling



First Nation-Farmer Climate Unity March, 2018 Photo: Jeff Kisling

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Bear Creek Quaker Meeting Photo credit: Jeff Kisling

Quaker Tent Vision for Palestinian solidarity

A vision came to me during meeting for worship recently. I was connected to the Bear Creek meetinghouse remotely via ZOOM. I was in Madison, Wisconsin, and the meetinghouse is in the countryside near Earlham, Iowa. We gather for about an hour, listening for a spiritual message. Sometimes one of us will discern such a message and share it by speaking into the silence. It is not unusual to have no spoken messages. But our spirits are still nurtured.

At the time I received this message, I was led to speak it into the silence of our meeting for worship. It is difficult to write about spiritual matters. We don't have good language to express these things. And in our secular society it often feels awkward to have conversations about spiritual matters. Organized religions have the potential to constrain spiritual beliefs and practices. That, or other reasons, can make our spirituality passive.

Whereas I believe a crucial part of spirituality involves seeking how to put our beliefs into practice. Quaker faith is dynamic. We believe we can receive spiritual guidance, and we are compelled to discern how to put that into practice. There is an historic tension related to activism which continues today. And often exist within us.

Our spiritual beliefs are often at odds with the status quo, which often encapsulates inequities and injustices. There are consequences to acting against established social or political norms or laws.

Quakers have a history and reputation of speaking and acting publicly against injustices, often despite personal risk.

It is hard to know how many Quakers have had significant spiritual experiences. Whether because of the inadequacy of language or a reluctance to share something so deeply personal, it is hard to know. I have been blessed to have had several such experiences.

This vision was an image of a tent. It was an orange two-person tent, just like the one I used on an eight-day walk of ninety-four miles, from Des Moines to Fort Dodge, Iowa, in 2018. Around thirty native and non-native people walked along the path of the Dakota Access pipeline, the First Nation-Farmer Climate Unity March.

The vision of the tent is about the Palestinian children and their families who are forced to live in makeshift tents because their homes have been destroyed by the Israeli bombardment, of demolished by Israeli bulldozers. The United States continues to be deeply complicit in the genocide because of military air and weapons sent to Israel.

I also spent time at and wrote about the student Palestinian solidarity encampment at the University of Wisconsin here in Madison.

The image of the tent is clear. But I don't see anything else. I don't know where the tent is located, or if there are other tents. Visions of require further discernment.

I believe the tent is on the Bear Creek meeting grounds. And I think the time is during the upcoming Midyear meeting of Quakers. The theme is "The Fierce Urgency of Now: Quaker Discernment and Action for a Just Peace in Israel/Palestine," led by Steve Chase.

I have questions and concerns about my vision. Is the time Midyear Meeting? How do I indicate this is for Palestinian support? Should I invite others to join the encampment. Does Bear Creek meeting share this concern? Do the Quakers of my yearly meeting, the larger body of Quakers, support this vision?

In today's toxic political and social environment, there is the possibility of significant negative reaction against this from the wider community. Relationships among Quakers living in the area and the wider community could suffer. Violence and property damage could result. The meetinghouse is in the countryside, with no one living close enough to look out for the building.

There might not be time before Midyear Meeting in a couple of weeks to use the opportunity to further the exchange of ideas and feelings about the Palestinian's plight with the wider community.

I am seeking further guidance about this vision, both from the Spirit and from Quakers. Maybe the time and/or location is not Midyear Meeting. It clearly involves a tent as symbolic of Palestinian solidarity. Somewhere, sometime.

Further Reflections

This vision of the tent is about the Palestinian children and their families who are forced to live in makeshift tents because their homes have been destroyed by the Israeli bombardment or demolished by Israeli bulldozers. The United States continues to be deeply complicit in the genocide because of the military aid and weapons sent to Israel.

I have questions and concerns about my vision. Is the time Midyear Meeting? How do I indicate this is for Palestinian support? Should I invite others to join the encampment? Does Bear Creek Meeting share this concern? Do the Quakers of my yearly meeting, the larger body of Quakers, support this vision?

It's scary to talk about spiritual visions. I don't hear much about visions these days. I sometimes get apprehensive about how this will play out in my Quaker communities, before remembering the Spirit will guide us.

This isn't the first vision I've had. The first was when I was around nine years old sitting in the sunshine during meeting for worship in the Bear Creek meetinghouse. That vision was not an image, like my current vision of a tent. It was of a pure light and feeling heat. And a certainty that the Spirit is real.

I've drawn on that vision many times:

- To resist the draft during the Vietnam War
- To join Friends Volunteer Mission in Indianapolis
- To change my career path to respiratory medicine
- To accept a position in a pediatric clinical research lab
- To resist fossil fuel pipelines
- To live without a car
- To join a Black youth mentoring community, Kheprw Institute
- To join Des Moines Mutual Aid
- To work with the Great Plains Action Society
- To be part of the Decolonial Repair Network
- To join the Wisconsin Coalition for Justice in Palestine

The current accelerating authoritarianism in this country is making any witness of Palestinian support very risky. Bear Creek meeting is concerned about potential risks of violence to the meetinghouse of meeting members. More likely might be strained personal relationships.

Why do I believe we should take on this witness? There are so many other wars and conflicts all over the world.

But the atrocities against Palestinian children are unconscionable and could only have happened with the billions of dollars of military aid and equipment to Israel from us. And for the diplomatic cover, such as vetoing United Nations resolutions for a ceasefire, multiple times.

We are deeply complicit in the horrors of this genocide and ethnic cleansing.

You can not understand this if you have not seen what Israel, and we, have done, and continue to do today. This isn't shown by the mainstream media. We can't even watch videos like the Academy Award winning documentary "No Other Land".

You can get some sense of what is happening in the videos below by Macklemore. They are age restricted because of language and the horrors that are shown. You can do your own research if you're not able to bring yourself to watch Macklemore's videos.

People will question whether tent solidarity will help the Palestinian people. From the time I've spent here in Madison engaged with multiple solidarity efforts, I know how much our solidarity efforts mean.

We were hopeful the latest ceasefire would hold, and could begin a path to peace. Instead, Israeli tanks and soldiers are escalating the violence and genocide.

Macklemore

Macklemore has released a series of videos to show what you don't see in the censored, mainstream media. The videos are very graphic and contain age-restricted language and visuals. They have been viewed millions of times.

All proceeds to UNRWA USA. Donate Here: <https://www.unrwausa.org/>

Hind's Hall

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fgDQyFeBBIo>

Hind's Hall 2

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bjtDsd0g468>

F** Up

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sn9EKC9nqU4>

Palestinians in Gaza plea for help and solidarity

1. Social Media Appeals

Many Palestinians in Gaza use platforms like **Twitter/X, Instagram, and TikTok** to share their struggles, often with hashtags like:

- **#GazaUnderAttack**
- **#SaveGaza**
- **#FreePalestine**
- **#CeasefireNow**

Example: Journalist **Motaz Azaiza** ([@motaz_azaiza](#)) documented life under bombardment before evacuating.

2. UN and Humanitarian Reports

- **UNRWA (UN Relief and Works Agency)** reports on Gaza's humanitarian crisis: [UNRWA Gaza Emergency](#)
- **OCHA (UN Office for Humanitarian Affairs)** updates on displacement and aid shortages: [OCHA Occupied Palestinian Territory](#)

3. News Coverage

- **Al Jazeera:** ["‘We are dying slowly’: Palestinians in Gaza plead for ceasefire"](#)
- **The Guardian:** ["‘No water, no food, no hope’: Gaza civilians plead for help"](#)
- **BBC:** ["Gaza civilians: ‘Nowhere is safe’ as war continues"](#)

4. Testimonies from NGOs

- **Amnesty International:** ["Gaza: Unlawful Israeli blockades and attacks worsen humanitarian crisis"](#)
- **Human Rights Watch:** ["Israel/Gaza: Unprecedented levels of destruction and suffering"](#)

5. Palestinian Voices in Media

- **Bisan Owda** (Filmmaker in Gaza, [@wizard_bisan1](#)) shared daily survival updates.
- **Mohammed El-Kurd** ([@m7mdkurd](#)), a Palestinian writer, amplifies Gaza's calls for justice.

6. Protests & Global Solidarity

- **March 2024:** Global protests demanded a ceasefire, with chants like **"Gaza, don't you cry, we will never let you die."**

- **Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) Movement:** Calls for economic pressure on Israel ([BDS Movement](#)).

Global Inaction

This document analyzes the deeply concerning **global inaction regarding the suffering of Palestinians**, which includes ongoing displacement, loss of life, and denial of basic rights. It argues that despite the clear evidence of this tragedy, the **international community has largely remained passive**, offering few meaningful solutions and often acting as mere observers. The analysis points to several contributing factors, including the **ineffectiveness of international law**, the **complicity of powerful nations** through arms supply and diplomatic cover, and the prioritization of **political and economic interests over human lives**. Ultimately, the source suggests this inaction perpetuates injustice and fails to address fundamental Palestinian rights, such as the right to return.

Global Inaction and Palestinian Suffering

An analysis of global inaction on Palestinian suffering reveals a complex and deeply concerning situation highlighted in the sources. The suffering of Palestinians is characterized by **ongoing displacement, loss of life, destruction of homes, and a denial of basic human rights**. Despite this, the international community has largely remained passive.

Here's a breakdown of the global inaction based on the sources:

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Lack of Tangible Solutions and Intervention: The international community has offered **few tangible solutions or interventions** in the face of the evident violence targeting the Palestinian population in Gaza.

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Passive Observation: The international community is often relegated to the role of **passive observers** of the plight of the Palestinian people, failing to hold the occupying force accountable.

-

Ineffectiveness of International Law: International law appears **passive and ineffective** in preventing the ongoing atrocities and protecting displaced Palestinians, even as they face bombings and adverse weather conditions in tents. The right of veto within international bodies shields perpetrators from condemnation.

-

Complicity of Global Powers: Countries such as the **USA, Germany, and the UK** are identified as **complicit** in the atrocities due to their continued supply of arms to Israel. The silence of global powers in the face of widespread violence is deemed unacceptable, risking their becoming accomplices in the "massacre". The United States is specifically mentioned for its **billions of dollars in military aid and equipment to Israel**, and for using its diplomatic cover, such as **vetoing United Nations resolutions for a ceasefire multiple times**.

-

Prioritization of Political and Economic Interests: The global response is characterized by **indifference**, with nations that claim to advocate for human rights seemingly turning a blind eye and **placing political and economic interests above the preservation of innocent lives**. The pursuit of "selfish agendas" by the global elite is contrasted with the wiping out of entire Palestinian families.

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Failure to Respond with Urgency: Despite reports labeling Israel's actions as genocide, the international community has **failed to respond with the urgency the situation demands**.

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Ignoring the Right to Return: The fundamental right of Palestinian refugees to return to their ancestral homeland, despite decades of displacement and the symbolic representation of this longing, continues to be largely unaddressed by effective international action.

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Historical Parallels and Lack of Accountability: Elderly Palestinians are drawing parallels between the current situation and past Nakbas, noting that the present surpasses even those dark chapters, yet there is a continued failure to hold those responsible accountable. History teaches that actions of such magnitude lead to eventual reckoning, but the world appears to be standing idle.

The sources strongly suggest that global inaction on Palestinian suffering is not due to a lack of awareness, as the tragedy is described as "open" and "visible," documented globally. Instead, it appears to stem from a complex interplay of political and economic interests, the complicity of powerful nations, and the ineffectiveness of international mechanisms to enforce accountability and protect Palestinian rights. **This inaction perpetuates cycles of violence and injustice, denying Palestinians their basic human rights and their connection to their ancestral land, symbolized so poignantly by the tent.**

Quaker Meeting in Solidarity with the Palestinian People

Expressions of Support and Advocacy

The act of setting up a tent at a Quaker meetinghouse in solidarity with the Palestinian people can convey a multitude of powerful messages. Rooted in the Quaker tradition of peace, justice, and equality, such a gesture serves as a symbol of support and a call to action for the broader community.

Solidarity and Support

One of the primary messages is one of solidarity. By setting up a tent, participants are physically and symbolically aligning themselves with the Palestinian people. This act demonstrates a shared commitment to their struggles and aspirations, signaling that they are not alone in their plight. It is an expression of empathy and a public declaration that their suffering and perseverance are acknowledged and supported by others.

Nonviolent Resistance

Quakers have a long history of advocating for nonviolent solutions to conflicts. The tent, as a nonviolent symbol, echoes this tradition. It underscores the belief that peaceful resistance and dialogue are essential in addressing and resolving conflicts. This message is particularly poignant in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, where violence has often overshadowed efforts for peace. The tent stands as a testament to the power of nonviolence and an appeal for both sides to seek peaceful pathways to coexistence.

Human Rights and Justice

Another key message is the emphasis on human rights and justice. Setting up a tent can draw attention to the human rights violations and injustices faced by Palestinians. It serves as a reminder of the importance of upholding international human rights standards and advocating for justice for all people, regardless of their nationality or ethnicity. This message aligns with the Quaker testimony of equality, which asserts that all people are of equal worth and deserving of fair treatment.

Raising Awareness

The act of setting up a tent can be a powerful tool for raising awareness. It can attract the attention of passersby, media, and the broader community, sparking conversations and increasing understanding about the Palestinian situation. Informational materials, discussions, and events held at the site can further educate and engage the public, fostering a more informed and compassionate community.

Community and Collaboration

Setting up a tent at a Quaker meetinghouse also conveys a message of community and collaboration. It reflects the Quaker value of community and the belief that collective action can bring about positive change. This action can serve as an invitation for others to join in solidarity and cooperation, promoting a sense of unity and shared purpose in the pursuit of justice and peace.

Hope and Resilience

The tent itself can be seen as a symbol of hope and resilience. Despite the challenges and adversities faced by the Palestinian people, the tent stands as a beacon of hope for a better future. It signifies the enduring human spirit and the belief that change is possible. This message of hope is crucial, as it inspires continued efforts and perseverance in the pursuit of peace and justice.

Interfaith and Cross-Cultural Solidarity

Given the diverse religious and cultural backgrounds of both the Quaker community and the Palestinian people, the tent can also symbolize interfaith and cross-cultural solidarity. It highlights the importance of building bridges across different faiths and cultures, fostering mutual respect and understanding. This message promotes a vision of a world where diverse communities can come together in support of common goals and values.

Highlighting Specific Issues

Setting up a tent can also draw attention to specific issues faced by the Palestinian people, such as displacement, restrictions on movement, and access to resources. By focusing on these issues, the action can bring them to the forefront of public consciousness and encourage discussions and actions aimed at addressing them.

Advocacy for Policy Change

Finally, the act of setting up a tent can serve as a form of advocacy for policy change. It can signal a call to action for governments, organizations, and individuals to take concrete steps towards supporting the Palestinian people and addressing the root causes of the conflict. This message can include advocating for diplomatic solutions, humanitarian aid, and policies that promote peace and justice.

In conclusion, setting up a tent at a Quaker meetinghouse in solidarity with the Palestinian people is a multifaceted gesture that conveys profound messages of support, nonviolence, human rights, awareness, community, hope, interfaith solidarity, specific issues, and advocacy for policy change. It is a powerful expression of the Quaker commitment to peace and justice, and a call to the broader community to join in these efforts.

Timeline of Events:

- **2018:** Jeff Kisling participates in the First Nation-Farmer Climate Unity March, walking along the path of the Dakota Access pipeline from Des Moines to Fort Dodge, Iowa. He uses an orange two-person tent during this eight-day, ninety-four-mile walk.
- **Recent (Time of writing):** Jeff Kisling attends a Bear Creek Quaker Meeting remotely via ZOOM from Madison, Wisconsin. During the meeting for worship, he receives a spiritual vision of an orange two-person tent.
- **The Vision:** The vision connects the orange tent to the plight of Palestinian children and families living in makeshift tents due to the destruction of their homes by Israeli actions, with the United States being complicit through military aid.
- **Kisling's Reflection:** Kisling reflects on his vision and wonders about its meaning, location, and timing. He considers if the tent should be set up at the Bear Creek meeting grounds during the upcoming Midyear meeting of Quakers, the theme of which is "The Fierce Urgency of Now: Quaker Discernment and Action for a Just Peace in Israel/Palestine," led by Steve Chase.
- **Kisling's Concerns:** Kisling expresses concerns about potential negative reactions from the wider community, strained relationships among Quakers, and possible violence or property damage to the isolated meetinghouse. He also questions whether Bear Creek meeting and the larger Quaker community support this vision.
- **Kisling's Past Visions:** Kisling recalls his first spiritual vision as a child at the Bear Creek meetinghouse, a vision of pure light and heat that affirmed the reality of the Spirit. He notes how this earlier vision has guided many significant actions in his life, including resisting the Vietnam War draft, working with various social justice organizations, and resisting fossil fuel pipelines.
- **Current Context:** Kisling notes the "accelerating authoritarianism" in the US, making public support for Palestinians risky. He highlights the Bear Creek meeting's concern about potential risks.
- **Kisling's Motivation:** Despite the risks, Kisling feels compelled to act due to the "unconscionable atrocities against Palestinian children" made possible by US military aid and diplomatic support for Israel. He believes the US is "deeply complicit in the horrors of this genocide and ethnic cleansing."
- **Call to Understanding:** Kisling emphasizes the need to understand the situation beyond mainstream media portrayals and encourages research, mentioning Macklemore's uncensored videos as one source.
- **Belief in Solidarity:** Kisling believes that solidarity efforts, like the potential tent, are meaningful to the Palestinian people based on his engagement with solidarity movements in Madison.

- **Ongoing Conflict:** Kisling notes the failure of the latest ceasefire and the continued escalation of violence.
- **Exploration of Tent Solidarity:** The document then shifts to a broader exploration of "Quaker Meeting in Solidarity with the Palestinian People," outlining the various messages and significance of setting up a tent as an act of solidarity and advocacy. This section includes a study guide, quiz, essay format questions, and a glossary of key terms related to solidarity, nonviolence, human rights, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Cast of Characters:

- **Jeff Kisling:** The author of the text and a member connected to the Bear Creek Quaker Meeting (near Earlham, Iowa) while residing in Madison, Wisconsin. He experienced a spiritual vision during a remote meeting for worship concerning Palestinian solidarity, symbolized by an orange tent. He has a history of activism rooted in his Quaker faith and previous spiritual experiences, including involvement in the Dakota Access pipeline protest, anti-war efforts, and various social justice organizations. He is currently grappling with the implications of his vision and the potential actions it might inspire within his Quaker community.
- **Steve Chase:** The leader of the upcoming Midyear meeting of Quakers, where the theme is "The Fierce Urgency of Now: Quaker Discernment and Action for a Just Peace in Israel/Palestine." Kisling considers this meeting as a potential time and place for his vision to be realized.
- **Members of Bear Creek Quaker Meeting:** The Quaker community based near Earlham, Iowa. They are mentioned in the context of Kisling's remote participation in their meeting for worship and their potential reaction to Kisling's vision of a solidarity tent on their meeting grounds. The text notes their concern about potential risks of violence to the meetinghouse or its members.
- **Members of Kisling's Yearly Meeting (larger body of Quakers):** The broader regional or national organization of Quakers to which Kisling and the Bear Creek Meeting belong. Kisling wonders about their potential support for his vision.
- **Palestinian Children and Families:** The primary focus of Kisling's vision and the intended recipients of the solidarity expressed by the tent. They are described as being forced to live in makeshift tents due to the destruction of their homes by Israeli bombardment or bulldozers.
- **Native and Non-Native People (participants in the First Nation-Farmer Climate Unity March):** Individuals who walked alongside Jeff Kisling in 2018 to protest the Dakota Access pipeline. This event and the orange tent he used serve as a symbolic basis for his current vision.
- **Students at the University of Wisconsin (Madison):** Individuals involved in a Palestinian solidarity encampment that Kisling spent time at and wrote about, indicating his prior engagement with the Palestinian solidarity movement in his local community.

- **Macklemore:** A musician who has released videos showing uncensored perspectives on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which Kisling recommends as a way to understand the situation beyond mainstream media. Proceeds from these videos go to UNRWA USA.

Palestinian refugees

The issue of Palestinian refugees is a central aspect of the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict, marked by **displacement, loss, and a persistent longing for return**¹.... The sources highlight several key dimensions of this complex situation:

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Historical Displacement: The history of Palestinian refugees is deeply rooted in events like the **1947-49 Nakba**, during which at least 750,000 Palestinians were forcibly displaced from their ancestral homes³.... This displacement led to many living in tents for years, waiting to return³.... The **1967 war** caused further displacement of approximately 200,000 more Palestinians, also often living in tents³.... Today, the number of these refugees and their descendants has grown to around **5 million**, who continue to await their right to return⁴....

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Ongoing Displacement: The sources indicate that displacement continues to be a pressing issue for Palestinians. Recent events, particularly in Gaza, have forced thousands more to seek shelter in tents after their homes were destroyed by Israeli bombardments⁶.... The Israeli government's announcement of plans for a "voluntary" migration office is viewed by some as a broader effort to **forcibly displace** the Palestinian population, stripping them of their homes, heritage, and identity⁶.

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The Meaning of Tents: Tents have become a **powerful symbol** in the Palestinian narrative².... They represent not only the physical reality of being without a home but also the **loss of their ancestral lands, culture, and history**².... For Palestinians, tents are a poignant reminder of the Nakba and the ongoing struggle, embodying both the **hardship of displacement and the steadfastness of their hope for return**².... The "Tent Campaign" proposed by the Global Campaign to Return to Palestine uses tents as a metaphor for refugees and demolished homes, aiming to educate the public about the situation¹⁰.... Even pro-Israel groups have used tents to convey their message, prompting counter-efforts to provide the Palestinian perspective on what tents truly signify for them³....

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Humanitarian Crisis: The displacement leads to dire living conditions for many Palestinian refugees. In Gaza, those living in tents face harsh realities like **winter winds, rain, and a lack of basic necessities** such as potable water, food, and medicine¹⁵.... The destruction of infrastructure, including homes, mosques, churches, and even UN-run facilities, exacerbates the crisis, leaving few safe havens⁹....

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Right to Return: A central demand for Palestinian refugees is the **right to return** to their ancestral homeland⁵.... This right is seen as fundamental and belonging to all refugees, regardless of race,

nationality, religion, or ethnicity⁴.... The "Great Return March" along the Gaza border is a testament to the enduring desire for this right¹¹.... However, the international community has largely failed to effectively address this issue¹.

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International Inaction and Complicity: The sources express strong criticism of the **global inaction** in the face of Palestinian suffering, including the plight of refugees¹.... This inaction is attributed to factors such as political and economic interests, the complicity of powerful nations like the USA, Germany, and the UK (due to their continued arms supply to Israel), and the ineffectiveness of international law and bodies (like the UN, where veto power can shield perpetrators)¹.... The United States' significant military aid to Israel and its use of vetoes on ceasefire resolutions are specifically mentioned¹.... This inaction is seen as perpetuating cycles of violence and injustice²².

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Symbol of Resistance and Solidarity: Despite the suffering, the tent also serves as a **symbol of Palestinian resilience and nonviolent resistance**²³.... Initiatives like the "Quaker Tent Solidarity" use the tent as a visible act of support for displaced Palestinians, aiming to raise awareness, advocate for human rights and justice, and build interfaith and cross-cultural understanding²³.... These actions highlight the desire to convey solidarity, emphasize nonviolent means of addressing conflict, and call for policy changes to support Palestinians²³....

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Historical Memory: Elderly Palestinians draw parallels between the current displacement and past Nakbas, emphasizing that the present situation often surpasses even those earlier horrors¹.... The memories of tents and refugee camps from previous waves of displacement underscore the long-standing nature of the refugee crisis¹⁶.

In conclusion, the issue of Palestinian refugees is a deeply historical and ongoing tragedy, characterized by forced displacement, precarious living conditions often in tents, and a persistent demand for the right to return. The tent itself has evolved into a potent symbol of loss, resilience, and the protracted struggle for justice and self-determination, amidst concerns about international inaction and complicity.

Palestinian Forced Displacement

Based on the sources and our conversation history, forced displacement is a significant and ongoing aspect of the Palestinian experience, characterized by the **involuntary removal of people from their homes and ancestral lands**¹. This displacement has deep historical roots and continues to the present day, profoundly impacting Palestinian lives, culture, and identity¹....

Key aspects of forced displacement of Palestinians include:

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Historical Roots in the Nakba: The primary catalyst for mass Palestinian displacement was the **1947-49 Nakba**, where at least 750,000 Palestinians were violently forced from their homes³.... Many of these individuals became refugees, often living in tents for extended periods, awaiting their return⁴....

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Further Displacement in 1967: The **1967 war** led to another wave of displacement, with approximately 200,000 more Palestinians being forced from their homes⁴.... This further entrenched the refugee crisis and the reliance on temporary shelter like tents⁴.

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Ongoing Displacement Due to Israeli Actions: Displacement is not merely a historical event but an ongoing reality. The sources detail how **Israeli bombardments and military actions**, particularly in Gaza, continue to render Palestinians homeless and in need of shelter, often tents¹....

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Home Demolitions: Israel's policy of **demolishing Palestinian homes** in the West Bank, with over 48,743 demolitions ordered since 1967⁵..., directly contributes to forced displacement, leaving more Palestinians without adequate housing⁵....

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Restrictions on Rebuilding: The prevention of building supplies, such as cement, from entering Gaza since 2009⁵... hinders the ability of Palestinians to rebuild homes destroyed in conflicts. This perpetuates their reliance on temporary and often inadequate shelters like tents¹².

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The "Voluntary" Migration Scheme: The recent announcement by the Israeli government of a "voluntary" migration office for Palestinians in Gaza is viewed by some as a continuation of efforts to **forcibly displace** the population¹. The source argues that this scheme is not truly voluntary and aims to strip Palestinians of their homes, heritage, and identity¹.

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Impact on Palestinian Identity and Culture: Forced displacement is described as more than just a geographical relocation; it is an attempt to **erase Palestinian culture, history, and identity**¹. The deep connection of Palestinians to their ancestral lands means that displacement attacks the very foundation of their existence, going beyond the loss of territory to the obliteration of their roots¹....

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Humanitarian Crisis and Living Conditions: Displaced Palestinians often face dire living conditions. In Gaza, those in tents are exposed to **harsh weather conditions** like winter winds and rain, and lack basic necessities such as potable water, food, and medicine⁹....

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Symbolism of the Tent: The **tent has become a potent symbol** in the Palestinian narrative, representing both the loss of home and the **steadfastness of hope for return**¹.... The "Tent Campaign" uses this symbolism to raise awareness about the plight of refugees and those whose homes have been demolished¹⁴.

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International Inaction and Complicity: The sources are critical of the **global inaction** on Palestinian suffering, including forced displacement².... This inaction is attributed to political and economic interests, the complicity of powerful nations (like the USA, Germany, and the UK through arms supply), and the ineffectiveness of international law².... The US's military aid to Israel and its vetoes of UN resolutions for a ceasefire are specifically mentioned as contributing to the situation⁶....

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Historical Parallels and Memory: Elderly Palestinians draw parallels between the current forced displacement and the historical Nakbas, noting that the present circumstances often surpass even those earlier tragedies¹⁰. This highlights the cyclical nature of displacement in Palestinian history.

In essence, forced displacement is a central and devastating aspect of the Palestinian experience, rooted in historical events and perpetuated by ongoing policies and actions. It results in significant human suffering, loss of identity, and a continued struggle for the right to return to ancestral lands, amidst concerns about international inaction and complicity¹....

Symbolism of Tents

Based on the sources, there are several Gaza solidarity campaigns and initiatives that utilize the symbolism of tents to raise awareness and express support for Palestinians:

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The "Tent Campaign" for Solidarity with Gaza and Truth-sharing: Proposed in 2018 by the Global Campaign to Return to Palestine (GCRP), this campaign encourages Palestine advocates to erect tents in conspicuous public places to share information with passers-by¹.... These tents serve as a conversation starter, symbolizing the plight of refugees and those whose homes have been demolished by Israel². The campaign aimed to educate Americans about the Great March of Return and the broader Palestinian situation².... Activities within these tents could include exhibitions about the right of return and the situation in Gaza, intellectual seminars, hosting figures for interviews, and communicating with legal and health institutions⁴. The objectives included expressing solidarity with Palestinians in Gaza, providing a space for supporters, hosting media, and enhancing the visibility of the Palestinian cause⁵.

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"If Americans Knew" Tent Cards: In response to pro-Israel groups setting up tents, "If Americans Knew" created "tent cards" and other materials to provide facts and context about the Palestinian situation⁶.... These materials highlight the history of Palestinian displacement since 1948, the ongoing impact of Israeli military actions in Gaza (such as the 2008-09 and 2014 attacks which left many homeless), and the demolition of Palestinian homes⁸.... The tent is presented as a recurring symbol of Palestinian displacement⁸.... These materials are designed to be used even where pro-Israel "tent events" are not taking place to educate a wider audience⁷.

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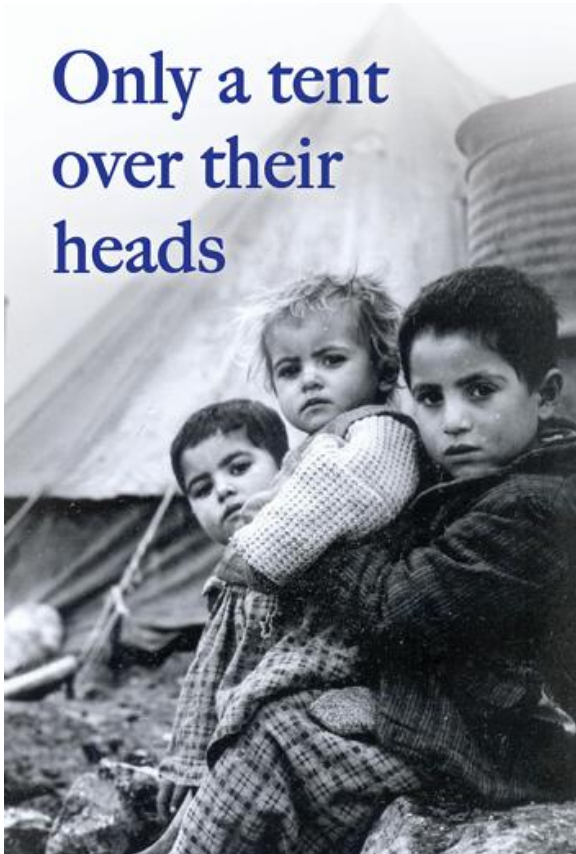
Quaker Tent Solidarity with Palestine: This initiative involves setting up a tent at a Quaker meetinghouse as a visible and symbolic act of support for the Palestinian people, particularly those displaced and suffering¹¹. Rooted in Quaker values of peace, justice, and equality, the tent symbolizes solidarity, nonviolent resistance, and the advocacy for human rights and justice for Palestinians¹¹.... The tent aims to raise awareness within the local community, spark conversations, and become a focal point for distributing information and hosting educational events¹³.... Key messages include solidarity, nonviolent resistance, the importance of human rights, raising awareness, community collaboration, hope, interfaith solidarity, highlighting specific issues like displacement, and advocating for policy change¹⁴.... A vision of a tent was seen as directly related to Palestinian children and families forced to live in tents due to the destruction of their homes by Israeli bombardment and bulldozers, with the US complicity due to military aid²²....

The sources emphasize that **tents have become a significant symbol for Palestinians**, representing displacement, loss, and the longing to return to their ancestral homes²⁴.... The use of tents in solidarity campaigns draws upon this powerful symbolism to connect with the public and highlight the ongoing

suffering and resilience of the Palestinian people2.... These campaigns aim to counter what they perceive as global inaction and a lack of accountability for the suffering of Palestinians31....

What tents mean to Palestinians

Only a tent over their heads



What tents mean to Palestinians

In 1947-49 at least 750,000 Palestinian men, women, and children were violently forced from their ancestral homes into exile. Many of these refugees lived in tents for years, waiting to return home. They are still waiting, in cinder block houses and crowded shanties.

In 1967 Israel forced out another 200,000 Palestinians. More refugees, more tents.

Today, these refugees and their families number 5 million, still waiting to return home – a right that belongs to all refugees regardless of race, nationality, religion, or ethnicity.

In Dec 2008 - Jan 2009 Israel attacked tiny Gaza with its powerful military, killing 1,417 Palestinians and making 100,000 homeless. More tents. (13 Israelis died in the conflict.)

Ever since, Israel has prevented building supplies, including cement, from entering Gaza.

In 2014, Israel attacked again, this time leaving another 100,000 Palestinians homeless as entire neighborhoods were destroyed. (In this “war,” 4 Israelis became homeless.)

In addition, Israel has ordered demolition of 48,743 Palestinian homes since 1967, resulting in more tents.

The world repeatedly condemns Israel’s actions, but still they continue because most Americans don’t know the facts. So we allow our government to give Israel over \$10 million per day of U.S. tax money – more than to any other country – fueling the violence.

We must all join together to call for Israel to abide by international law and to end to its military aggression in the Holy Land. All children deserve to have a safe place they can really call home.

IFAMERICANSNEW.ORG
COUNCILFORTHE NATIONALINTEREST.ORG

Tent Solidarity with Palestine: A Study Guide

Study Guide: Tent Solidarity with Palestine at Quaker Meetinghouses

Quiz

1. What is the primary message conveyed by setting up a tent at a Quaker meetinghouse in solidarity with the Palestinian people?
2. How does the act of setting up a tent connect with the Quaker tradition and its core values?
3. Explain how the tent serves as a symbol of nonviolent resistance in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
4. In what ways does setting up a tent aim to raise awareness about the Palestinian situation within the broader community?
5. How does the act of tent solidarity reflect the Quaker value of community and collaboration?
6. Beyond its symbolic value, what practical actions might accompany the presence of a solidarity tent?
7. What is the significance of the tent as a symbol of hope and resilience for the Palestinian people?
8. How does the tent initiative promote the idea of interfaith and cross-cultural solidarity?
9. Give two examples of specific issues faced by Palestinians that the tent action might highlight.
10. How can setting up a tent be understood as a form of advocacy for policy change related to the Palestinian issue?

Quiz Answer Key

1. The primary message conveyed is one of solidarity and support for the Palestinian people, demonstrating a shared commitment to their struggles and aspirations and signaling that they are not alone in their plight.
2. The act aligns with the Quaker tradition of peace, justice, and equality, serving as a vivid and nonviolent symbol rooted in these core values to advocate for the Palestinian people.
3. The tent, as a nonviolent symbol, echoes the Quaker history of advocating for peaceful solutions, underscoring the belief that dialogue and nonviolent resistance are essential in resolving conflicts like the Israeli-Palestinian one.
4. Setting up a tent attracts attention from the public and media, sparking conversations and increasing understanding about the Palestinian situation through its visual presence and potential informational materials and discussions.
5. This action reflects the Quaker value of community and the belief in collective action for positive change, inviting others to join in solidarity and cooperation to pursue justice and peace for the Palestinian people.
6. Beyond symbolism, the tent can be a site for distributing informational materials, hosting discussions and educational events, and organizing advocacy efforts related to the Palestinian issue.
7. Despite the challenges faced by Palestinians, the tent stands as a visual representation of hope for a better future and signifies the enduring human spirit and the belief that positive change is achievable.
8. Given the diverse backgrounds of Quakers and Palestinians, the tent symbolizes building bridges across faiths and cultures, fostering mutual respect, understanding, and collective support for shared values.
9. Examples include highlighting displacement of Palestinians, restrictions on their movement, or limited access to essential resources, bringing these specific hardships to public attention.
10. By its visible presence and associated activities, the tent action serves as a call to action for governments, organizations, and individuals to take concrete steps, such as diplomatic solutions or humanitarian aid, to support Palestinians and address the root causes of the conflict.

Essay Format Questions

1. Analyze the effectiveness of setting up a tent at a Quaker meetinghouse as a form of nonviolent communication and advocacy in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Consider the strengths and limitations of this approach in raising awareness and promoting policy change.
2. Discuss the significance of Quaker values, such as peace, justice, equality, and community, in motivating and shaping the act of setting up a solidarity tent for the Palestinian people. How do these values inform the messages conveyed by this action?
3. Explore the various messages conveyed by the act of setting up a tent in solidarity with Palestinians, explaining how each message (e.g., solidarity, nonviolence, human rights, hope) contributes to the overall impact and meaning of the action.
4. Evaluate the potential of interfaith and cross-cultural solidarity, as symbolized by the tent action, to foster understanding and cooperation in addressing complex global issues like the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. What role can such symbolic acts play in building bridges between diverse communities?
5. Consider the long-term implications and potential for sustained engagement resulting from a tent solidarity action. How can this initial symbolic act lead to further education, advocacy, and meaningful contributions towards a resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Solidarity:** Unity or agreement of feeling or action, especially among individuals with a common interest; mutual support within a group.
- **Nonviolent Resistance:** The practice of achieving socio-political goals through symbolic protests, civil disobedience, economic or political noncooperation, and other methods, without using violence.
- **Human Rights:** Rights inherent to all human beings, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, or any other status. These rights are universal, inalienable, and indivisible.
- **Justice:** The upholding of what is just, fair, and right. It often involves the fair treatment of individuals and the redress of wrongs.
- **Awareness:** Knowledge or perception of a situation or fact. In this context, it refers to increasing public understanding of the Palestinian situation.
- **Community:** A group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common; a feeling of fellowship with others, as a result of sharing common attitudes, interests, and goals.
- **Collaboration:** The action of working with someone to produce or create something; joint effort.
- **Hope:** A feeling of expectation and desire for a certain thing to happen; a reason for this feeling.
- **Resilience:** The capacity to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness. In this context, it refers to the enduring spirit of the Palestinian people.
- **Interfaith Solidarity:** Unity and mutual support among people of different religious faiths, often working together towards a common goal.
- **Cross-Cultural Solidarity:** Unity and mutual support among people from different cultural backgrounds, often working together towards a common goal.
- **Advocacy:** Public support for or recommendation of a particular cause or policy.
- **Policy Change:** Alterations or modifications to existing laws, regulations, rules, or courses of action adopted by a government, organization, or institution.
- **Quaker:** A member of the Religious Society of Friends, a Christian denomination emphasizing direct experience of God, pacifism, social justice, and equality.
- **Meetinghouse:** The place of worship for Quakers.
- **Palestinian People:** An Arab ethnonational group descended from people who have historically inhabited the region of Palestine.
- **Israeli-Palestinian Conflict:** An ongoing dispute between Israelis and Palestinians over land and self-determination.

Frequently Asked Questions: Quaker Tent Solidarity and the Palestinian People

1. What is the central idea behind the Quaker Tent Solidarity initiative? The central idea behind the Quaker Tent Solidarity initiative is to create a visible and symbolic act of support for the Palestinian people, particularly those displaced and suffering due to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Drawing on the Quaker tradition of peace, justice, and equality, the setting up of a tent at a Quaker meetinghouse serves as a physical and symbolic alignment with Palestinians, acknowledging their plight and demonstrating solidarity with their aspirations for justice and peace.

2. How does the act of setting up a tent relate to core Quaker values and historical practices?

Setting up a tent deeply resonates with core Quaker values such as peace, justice, equality, and community. Quakers have a long history of speaking out and acting against injustice through nonviolent means, often at personal risk. The tent, as a nonviolent symbol, echoes this tradition of bearing witness and advocating for the marginalized. It embodies the Quaker belief in the power of peaceful resistance and the importance of putting spiritual beliefs into practice by actively working towards a more just and equitable world for all.

3. In what ways is the tent intended to function as a form of nonviolent resistance and raise awareness about the Palestinian situation?

The tent serves as a potent symbol of nonviolent resistance by offering a peaceful and visible form of protest against the injustices faced by Palestinians. It aims to raise awareness by attracting the attention of the local community, media, and passersby, thereby sparking conversations and increasing public understanding of the Palestinian situation. The tent can also become a focal point for distributing informational materials, hosting discussions, and organizing educational events, further contributing to a more informed and compassionate public.

4. What are some of the key messages that the Tent Solidarity initiative seeks to convey? The Tent Solidarity initiative seeks to convey several key messages, including:

- **Solidarity and Support:** Demonstrating that Palestinians are not alone and their struggles are acknowledged.
- **Nonviolent Resistance:** Emphasizing the importance of peaceful means to address conflict.
- **Human Rights and Justice:** Highlighting human rights violations and advocating for fairness and equity for Palestinians.
- **Raising Awareness:** Educating the public about the realities faced by Palestinians.
- **Community and Collaboration:** Inviting others to join in solidarity and collective action.
- **Hope and Resilience:** Symbolizing the enduring spirit of the Palestinian people and the possibility of a better future.
- **Interfaith and Cross-Cultural Solidarity:** Building bridges across different backgrounds to support a common cause.

- **Highlighting Specific Issues:** Drawing attention to issues like displacement and restricted access to resources.
- **Advocacy for Policy Change:** Calling for actions from governments and organizations to support Palestinians and address the root causes of the conflict.

5. What are the potential risks and concerns associated with engaging in Tent Solidarity, as highlighted in the source? The source highlights several potential risks and concerns associated with Tent Solidarity, particularly in the current political climate. These include the possibility of negative reactions from the wider community, strained relationships among Quakers and with neighbors, and even potential risks of violence or property damage to the meetinghouse. There are also internal questions about whether the broader Quaker community supports such an action and whether the timing and location of the proposed tent encampment are appropriate and will be effective in furthering the cause of Palestinian solidarity.

6. Beyond the symbolic act, what practical steps or activities might be associated with a Tent Solidarity encampment? Beyond the symbolic act of setting up a tent, a Tent Solidarity encampment could involve various practical steps and activities. These might include distributing informational materials about the Palestinian situation, hosting discussions and educational sessions for the community, organizing letter-writing campaigns or other forms of advocacy aimed at policymakers, facilitating opportunities for dialogue and understanding, and potentially collecting donations for humanitarian aid organizations working with Palestinians.

7. Why does the author specifically connect the vision of the tent to the plight of Palestinian children and families? The author specifically connects the vision of the tent to the plight of Palestinian children and families because the image of a tent powerfully symbolizes the precarious living conditions and displacement they face due to the destruction of their homes. The author highlights the devastating impact of Israeli bombardments and demolitions, as well as the complicity of the United States through military aid. This connection aims to evoke empathy and underscore the urgent need for solidarity with those most vulnerable in the conflict.

8. How might Tent Solidarity contribute to broader interfaith and cross-cultural understanding and action regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict? Tent Solidarity can contribute to broader interfaith and cross-cultural understanding by providing a shared space and a common focus for individuals from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds to come together in support of the Palestinian people. The act of solidarity itself transcends religious and cultural boundaries, emphasizing shared values of justice, peace, and human dignity. By working together on this initiative, participants can build relationships, foster mutual respect, and collectively advocate for a resolution to the conflict, demonstrating that solidarity across different communities is possible and impactful.

Audio Overview



Quaker Tent Solidarity for Palestine.wav

Summary

This audio excerpt delves into a deeply personal and spiritually motivated act of solidarity with Palestine envisioned by Jeff Kisling, a Quaker activist. The speakers unpack **Kisling's vision of an orange tent**, connecting it to his past activism and a Quaker meeting for worship, emphasizing the **centrality of this symbol**. They explore the multifaceted meanings of the tent, ranging from **direct solidarity with displaced Palestinians to embodying Quaker values of non-violent resistance, justice, and community**. Furthermore, the discussion examines Kisling's internal wrestling with how to manifest this vision and his call for broader awareness and action regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, highlighting his belief in US complicity and the need for critical engagement with information.

Transcript of Quaker Tent Solidarity for Palestine Audio Overview

All right, diving right in today. We've got this uh this piece Quaker Tense Solidarity by Jeff Kistling. It's it's pretty powerful stuff.

Yeah. And you know what really struck me about this one is, you know, we often look at analyses or reports, right? But this is this is personal. It's it's a guy grappling with the spiritual experience and and how that pushes him to to do something to take action in a in a really complex situation. I mean, you really get a glimpse into what's driving him.

It is he's he's putting himself out there and and you know, he was part of that First Nation Farmer Climate Unity March back in 2018. So, so activism, you know, taking action. That's that's part of his his background. And now he's sharing this vision he had during a Quaker meeting for worship, which for those that might not be familiar, it's it's often silent, a time for reflection, for seeking guidance, you know, pretty different from from a lot of other faith traditions. And and what we're trying to unpack today is this vision of a tent, what it means to him, to Kisling, and how it ties into, you know, everything going on in Israel and Palestine.

Okay, so let's let's get into it. What What exactly did he see this vision? What was it?

So, at the center of it, there's this this orange tent, a twoperson tent, but it's not just any tent, right? It it immediately takes him back to the Dakota Access Pipeline March, the tent he used there.

Ah, okay. So, so that's the connection I see.

Right. And and this is where it gets, you know, really powerful. He connects that image, that tent to to the Palestinian families, the children living in tents right now because their homes have been, you know, destroyed. And and he sees he sees a direct link, you know, between US support for Israel, the military aid, and and what's happening there.

Yeah, that's that's a pretty strong parallel. I mean, for a lot of folks, a tent might mean, you know, camping, something temporary, even even fun, but but here it becomes this symbol of of loss, of displacement.

Yeah, exactly. And and he was just at that student encampment, you know, the solidarity encampment for Palestine at the University of Wisconsin. So, so these are, you know, very present concerns for him, you know, just something abstract and and what I found interesting was, you know, he's he's even uncertain about some of the details of the vision itself.

Oh, how so? Like what's what's unclear?

Well, it you know, is it specifically tied to the Bear Creek meeting grounds or or was it about the the midyear meeting, the Quaker meeting, and and most importantly, what's the tent for? Is it just, you know, showing solidarity with Palestinians, or is there is there something more to it?

Which brings us to the midyear meeting, right? And and the theme was wow, talk about timely. The fierce urgency of now Quaker discernment and action for a just peace in Israel Palestine led by Steve Chase and you know discernment for Quakers that's that's a big deal it's about seeking that that inner guidance you know what's the right thing to do you can see how this vision fits right in

absolutely and and for Kisling it raises all these questions how do you make it clear that the tent is you know about Palestine should he invite others to join him and then there's you know what's the reaction going to be from from other Quakers from the the wider community. I mean, he's really wrestling with that

and he's he's got good reason to, right? He he talks about the potential for backlash for strained relationships, you know, within the Quaker community and with their neighbors and even even violence, property damage, especially since the meeting house is, you know, pretty rural, isolated.

It's it's that balance, isn't it? This this idea of, you know, Quakers being active in the world, but also trying to maintain that that peaceful harmony, that sense of community. And it can it can be tricky.

Yeah, there's definitely a tension there.

Plus, there's the time crunch.

He was writing this just a couple of weeks before the meeting. So, he's he's actively seeking guidance, you know, both both spiritually and from other Quakers about the when and the where. It's not, you know, a fully formed plan, more like like a call to to consider this specific way of of taking a stand of being a witness.

Which brings us to those those deeper reflections, right? What's really motivating him? And he comes back to that connection between the tent and and what Palestinian families are going through and and that strong belief that the US is, you know, complicit. But he also gets really personal.

Yeah.

About his own his own hesitation about sharing these kinds of spiritual experiences, these visions.

It's really interesting because he points out that, you know, in our society, we don't we don't always have the language, the understanding to talk about these things. You know, in a more secular world, it can feel strange to even bring them up. But for him, they're deeply connected to action, to doing something about what he sees as wrong in the world.

Yeah. And it's not just, you know, talk. He shares this experience he had as a kid at Bear Creek, this really profound feeling of light and heat during worship. And he talks about how it really solidified, you know, his faith, his belief in the spirit,

right? And it wasn't just, you know, of a feeling he had and then forgot.

He goes on to list all these choices he's made in his life, and he connects them directly to that experience. It's almost like a timeline of a life lived according to these deeply held convictions.

Absolutely. I mean, resisting the draft during Vietnam, joining the Friends Volunteer Mission, even switching careers, you know, his commitment to fighting against fossil fuel pipelines, choosing to live without a car, and then all the organizations he's part of, the Keru Institute, De Mo Mutual Aid, the Great Plains Action Society, the Decolonial Repair Network, the Wisconsin Coalition for Justice in Palestine. I mean, it's clear that that he's walking the walk.

It's not just this isolated idea, this tent. It's part of a pattern. He sees this guidance, this spiritual guidance, and then he acts on it. But he also acknowledges, you know, the risks that it's more, you know, difficult, maybe even dangerous to speak out for Palestine now in this political climate.

And that brings us to, you know, the question he asked, the one a lot of people might have, why Palestine? You know, there's so many conflicts, so much suffering in the world. Why focus on this one? And he's pretty straightforward about it. He sees what's happening to Palestinian children and he believes the US is directly involved, you know, with the military aid, the diplomatic cover. And he calls it he calls it genocide, ethnic cleansing. I mean, those are those are strong words.

Yeah. And he doesn't think that the media is showing the full picture. He talks about how hard it is to get information, you know, uncensored information. And he mentions Mmore, the rapper, his videos, which are age restricted, and that documentary, No Other Land. He's really urging people to, you know, to look for themselves, to not just accept what they're being told.

Yeah. It's a call to dig deeper, to be critical, to question. And then he talks about his experiences in Madison, you know, with the solidarity efforts there and how he feels like even small actions can make a difference, can give hope

and he's honest about his disappointment,

you know, that the hopes for a ceasefire, for a lasting peace, they haven't

they haven't come true that the violence is, you know, still going on, which makes his urgency, you know, his need to do something, it makes it all the more understandable.

So speaking of looking for yourself, digging deeper, let's talk about these Mackammore videos. He specifically brings them up as showing a perspective that you might not see elsewhere in the mainstream media.

Yeah, he does. And he's upfront about the content. He says it's graphic, that there are age restrictions, but he also points out that all the money from these videos is going to UNRWA USA. He even gives the website for anyone who, you know, wants to donate.

So he's not just, you know, presenting it. He's encouraging engagement and the titles for anyone who's curious they're Hinesaul, Hines 2 and FU up all on YouTube, you know, take a look, see what you think.

Now, let's get into the tent itself. What does it mean? Because Kisling lays out, you know, all these different messages that it can convey and they're all, you know, rooted in queer values in that tradition.

And it's amazing, right, how something so simple, so basic like a tent can become so powerful. He starts with solidarity, with support, just the act of putting up a tent, being there physically present. It says, "We see you. We stand with you. We acknowledge your suffering."

Yeah. It's empathy and action. You know, it's saying you're not alone. And then there's the non-violent resistance part, which is, you know, huge for Quakers. The tent becomes this symbol of peaceful opposition, saying, "We're not going to fight violence with violence. We're going to stand up for what we believe in, but we're going to do it peacefully."

Right? It's about dialogue, understanding, not aggression. And he also talks about human rights, about justice, that the tent draws attention to the injustices, the violations that Palestinians are facing. It's a call for fairness, for equality for everyone,

and you can't miss it, right? A tent outside a Quaker meeting house. It's going to make people stop, think, ask questions. It raises awareness, sparks conversations, and hopefully leads to a deeper understanding of the whole situation. And he even mentions, you know, having information there maybe having discussions around the tent.

Yeah. It becomes a focal point, a way to educate, to engage, and then there's the community aspect, the collaboration, which again very Quaker, right? It's not about, you know, one person doing their own thing. It's about coming together, inviting others to join to be part of this act of solidarity.

It's a shared witness. And you know, even in the midst of all the hardship, the conflict, the tent can also represent hope,

resilience that you know, the human spirit, it endures that things can get better, that there's a possibility of a more just future for Palestinians.

That's such an important point, that hope, especially when, you know, when things seem so bleak. And he also mentions, you know, the potential for interfaith solidarity, cross-cultural solidarity, recognizing that both the Quaker community and the Palestinian people are diverse and building bridges, you know, based on mutual respect, on understanding

and by focusing on the tent, they can also highlight, you know, the specific issues displacement, the restrictions on movement, the lack of access to basic resources, things that you know often get overlooked.

Yeah.

At the end of the day, he sees it as a way to push for policy change to send a message to governments, to organizations that they need to take action, to do something to bring about peace and justice. It's a lot packed into, you know, one symbol.

He really emphasizes that this isn't just about, you know, Quakers doing their thing. It's a call to the wider community to get informed, to get involved, to not just be bystanders

and to help people do that, to really engage with the issue. He includes this study guide to help folks, you know, wrestle with the core messages and think about their own responses.

Yeah, it's pretty neat. He starts with a quiz asking you to think about, you know, what the tent represents, how it connects to Quaker beliefs, how it symbolizes non-violence, what it aims to achieve in terms of raising awareness, how it reflects the value of community, and what concrete actions might go along with this symbolic gesture.

It also makes you think about the tent as a symbol of hope about interfaith solidarity, the specific issues it brings to light and how it can be a way to push for policy change and he even provides an answer key, you know, so you can check your understanding.

But he doesn't stop there. Yeah. He also has these essay questions to encourage, you know, a deeper dive. He wants you to analyze how effective the tent is as a form of nonviolent communication. to discuss the importance of Quaker values in motivating this action to explore all the different messages it conveys and to consider the potential for building interfaith solidarity through this kind of witness.

Yeah, those essay questions really make you think critically about the nuances about the bigger picture. And the last one asks you to consider the long-term implications how this symbolic act could lead to more sustained engagement.

And he even throws in a glossary, you know, just to make sure everyone's on the same page, defining terms like solidarity, non-violent resistance, human rights, justice, and also explaining a little bit about, you know, what it means to be a Quaker, the history of the Israeli Palestinian conflict. It's really thorough.

So, wrapping up our deep dive today, we've really looked closely at this vision Kisling had, this tent as a symbol of standing with the Palestinian people,

and we've seen how it's tied to his own spiritual journey, his commitment to activism, to social justice and we've unpacked all the layers of meaning, you know, from empathy to justice to community to advocacy.

And for you, our listener, you know, who wants to learn a lot in a short amount of time, we hope this deep dive has given you a solid understanding of this specific act, this tent, and what's behind it.

And that leads us to this final thought. You know, thinking about the power of symbols, about how our convictions can lead us to action. What small act of solidarity speaks to you? What does it mean to be truly well informed. What is it? What does it call you to do?

It's something to wrestle with, to really sit with.

Absolutely.

Thanks for joining us on the deep dive.

Until next time.

Visualizing Palestine

On May 15, 2024, we will commemorate the 76th anniversary of the Nakba amid another catastrophe. Since 1948, Palestinians have suffered a profound and enduring trauma, as families were forcibly uprooted from their ancestral lands by Zionist militias, villages were destroyed, and communities were torn apart to create the settler colonial state of Israel. The Nakba represents not only a historical event but an ongoing reality, as it laid the foundation for the continued colonization and occupation of Palestinian land and violent dispossession of the Palestinian people. This series captures how the genocide and mass displacement of Palestinians in Gaza is an extension of the 1948 Nakba.

ONGOING EXPULSION

1947–1949

Palestinian Nakba (catastrophe)



Palestinian refugees in Syria, 1948

2023–2024

Ongoing Nakba in Gaza



Displaced Palestinians in Rafah, Gaza, 2023

750,000+

Palestinians, or 80% of the Palestinian population in the lands taken by Israel, were **ethnically cleansed from their homes.**

1,900,000+

Palestinians, or 85% of Gaza residents, were **expelled from their homes and are at risk of being ethnically cleansed from Gaza.**

VISUALIZING PALESTINE

مركز أكتيف ستيلز
AL-ACTIVE STILL CENTER FOR DOCUMENTATION

Photo by Active Stills, Mohammed Zaanoun
SOURCES bit.ly/vp-Nakba2024

MAY 2024

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ONGOING DESTRUCTION

1947–1949

Palestinian Nakba (catastrophe)

2023–2024

Ongoing Nakba in Gaza



Ruins of Manshiyya neighborhood, Yafa, 1948



Ruins of Al-Rimal neighborhood, Gaza, 2023

50%*

of Palestinian villages/urban neighborhoods **depopulated**. Many were **destroyed** to prevent refugees from returning.

*estimate based on village statistics of 1945

70%

of housing in Gaza **damaged or destroyed**.

VISUALIZING**PALESTINE**



مركز البزاري لحقوق الإنسان
AL BAZARI CENTER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

SOURCES bit.ly/vp-Nakba2024

MAY 2024



ONGOING COLONIZATION

1947–1949

Palestinian Nakba (catastrophe)

2023–2024

Ongoing Nakba in Gaza



"With compulsory transfer we [would] have a vast area [for settlement] I support compulsory transfer. I don't see anything immoral in it." —David Ben-Gurion, first Israeli Prime Minister, 1937 statement to Zionist Assembly

"Our problem is [finding] countries that are willing to absorb Gazans, and we are working on it." —Benjamin Netanyahu, Israeli Prime Minister, 2024 statement to Likud party

VISUALIZING**PALESTINE**



SOURCES bit.ly/vp-Nakba2024

MAY 2024



"Every bombed village is my hometown"
- James Baldwin

And every dead child is my child.
Every grieving mother is my mother.
Every crying father is my father.
Every home turned to rubble
is the home I grew up in.
Every brother carrying the remains
of his brother across borders
is my brother.
Every sister waiting for a sister
who will never come home
is my sister.

Every one of these people are ours,
Just like we are theirs.
We belong to them
and they belong to us.

Days after they arrived at Tal al-Sultan camp,
Israel bombed it, killing 45 Palestinians in
what became known as the "**tent
massacre.**"

Many were burned alive in their tents.

"All the children started screaming... The
sound was terrifying."

Umm Mohamed Al-Attar

