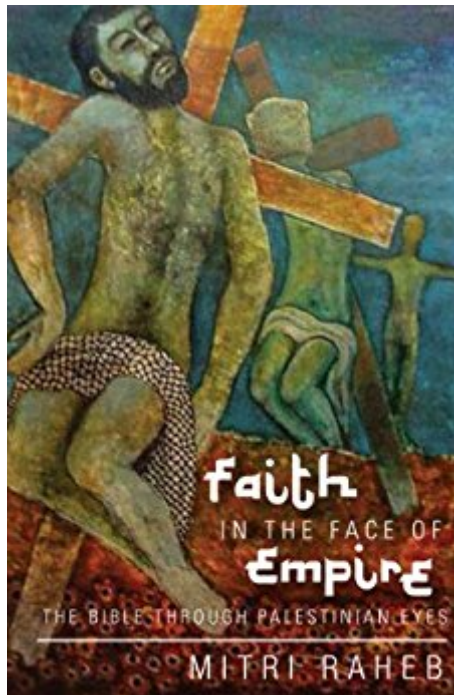


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Faith In The Face Of Empire: The Bible Through Palestinian Eyes



Synopsis

A Palestinian Christian theologian shows how the reality of empire shapes the context of the biblical story, and the ongoing experience of Middle East conflict.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book is courageous and essential reading for anyone wishing to place Israel's 47-year occupation of the Palestinian territories into its proper historical, humanitarian, Christological and Biblical context. Dr Mitri Raheb is a Lutheran pastor from Bethlehem. He notes that for most of its long history, "Occupied Palestine has unfortunately been the norm". Raheb makes some striking parallels between the Roman occupation and the present time. Emphasising the Palestinian identity of Jesus, without of course denying his Jewishness, he draws on Christ's teachings to construct a theology of non-violent resistance to oppression and injustice (Raheb prefers the term "creative resistance", since non-violence is a "negation of a negative"). It is an invigorating and challenging read. It is all too easy to get depressed about the prospects for peace in Israel and Palestine. But Raheb strikes a surprisingly positive note. In what is perhaps the most striking part of his book, based on his detailed exegesis of Matthew 5:5 ("Blessed are the meek,

for they will inherit the earthâ •), he sees the plight of Palestine through the prism of *longue durée*, an historical continuum. He writes:â œThere isnâ™t a single regional empire that at some point did not occupy Palestine. The first empire to occupy Palestine was that of the Assyrians, in 722 BC; it stayed for over two hundred years. The Assyrians were replaced by the Babylonians in 587 BC, who didnâ™t last because they were pushed out by the Persians in 538 BC. The Persians didnâ™t stay long either, because they were forced to leave by Alexander the Great. Then there were the Romans.

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