

The Sky Is Raining Iron: “If Christ were Born Today, he would be Born under the Rubble”

By [Abby Zimet](#)

Global Research, December 27, 2023

[Common Dreams](#) 26 December 2023

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [Law and Justice](#)

In-depth Report: [PALESTINE](#)

All Global Research articles can be read in 51 languages by activating the Translate Website button below the author’s name (only available in desktop version).

To receive Global Research’s Daily Newsletter (selected articles), [click here](#).

Click the share button above to email/forward this article to your friends and colleagues. Follow us on [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#) and subscribe to our [Telegram Channel](#). Feel free to repost and share widely Global Research articles.

Given the unholy dissonance, Bethlehem’s usual celebration of the birth of a Palestinian Prince of Peace was cancelled this year as Gaza endured – and an indifferent West watched – genocide unfold beneath pitiless Israeli airstrikes. Along with a “Liturgy of Lament,” the Rev. Munther Isaac created a nativity scene for the times: Baby Jesus lying amidst the rubble. Meanwhile, rescue workers still struggle to dig, pull, save children from it. Peace on earth, indeed.

Now more than ever, “one of the most intense civilian punishment [campaigns](#) in history” has leveled Gaza to a hellscape where, per Doctors Without Borders, “no one and nowhere is safe.”

Over the holiday weekend, 90 people were [killed](#) in strikes on Gaza City, including 76 members of one extended family and a longtime UN [official](#) alongside his wife and five children, and a “Christmas Eve massacre” saw over 100 [killed](#) in Khan Younis, Bureij refugee camp and Al-Maghazi refugee camp, about half women and children. In a genocidal crusade where “everything is intentional,” such collateral damage is no concern to Netanyahu; after griping critics are “unjustly blaming Israelis for these casualties,” he proclaimed, “We have no choice (but) to continue to fight... We are not stopping.”

Appalled by the ongoing carnage, Bethlehem officials [cancelled](#) traditional Christmas celebrations in the presumed place of Jesus’ birth. At the Church of the Nativity, a searing sculpture [depicts](#) a bombed-out version of the nativity scene with debris, barbed wire, and angels representing the souls of too many murdered Palestinian children. At the Evangelical Lutheran Church, Rev. Munther Isaac set up a creche with baby Jesus in a Palestinian keffiyeh – “A Jewish [infant](#). A homeless infant. A refugee infant” – lying in the concrete remains of a building.

"We are angry. We are broken. This is an annihilation," he said in his sermon, [Christ in the Rubble: A Liturgy of Lament](#). "If Christ were born today, he would be born under the rubble. This is where we find God right now."

Honoring a Jesus "born among the occupied and marginalized...in solidarity with us in our pain and brokenness," Isaac also [blasted](#) the hypocrisy of a Western world that "sent us bombs whilst celebrating Christmas."

"They sing about the Prince of Peace in their land, while playing the drum of war in our land," he said. "Your charity, your words of shock *after* the genocide won't make any difference. Words of regret will not suffice...I want you to look at the mirror (and) ask: Where was I?"

The Intercept echoes him, wishing us "Merry Christmas!" while [noting](#) that, "in any just universe," we should all be imprisoned at the Hague for our failure to act on ills from the "junkyard of the U.S. war on terror" to "the Palestinian nightmare." Hillel the Elder: "What is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow."

In Gaza, for now, 14,000 rescue workers making up civil defense teams across the enclave daily [toil](#) to save lives in an apocalyptic landscape where, "Everyone is a target." "I cannot sleep," says Ibrahim Musa, 27. "I am constantly haunted by the voices and screams of people under the rubble as they beg us to pull them out. These are our children, our siblings, our families whom we are saving." After each airstrike, they arrive at the scene and quickly try to determine what lies under the tangle of wire and concrete: "We scream until someone hears us." Often, as they begin to dig, they must calm children trapped beneath, asking about their families: "We sometimes lie and tell them everyone is okay so they don't go into shock...This is our work."

At a bombing in southern Al-Qarara, Ahmed Abu Khudair [recalls](#) hearing moaning, starting to dig, finding "two stuck legs." He frees a 12-year-old girl named Aisha, who says eight members of her family are buried there with several other families, including nine children. But without equipment, they cannot reach them. This is their ultimate horror: "Leaving a place knowing there are people alive under the rubble, but you cannot do anything for them." From poet Nasser Rabah:

"When I return from the war, if I do/don't look into my eyes/do not see what I saw...if war knew/that it made good poets/it would shoot itself."

Yet life goes on. In this world, we wish you a holiday season of peace, joy, family, compassion and no savage military incursions. We are unfairly blessed.

Explaining our Christmas manger on the rubble. "If Jesus were born today, he would be born in Gaza under the rubble." Christmas in Bethlehem pic.twitter.com/qGeqj29HiC

— Munther Isaac منذر اسحق (@MuntherIsaac) [December 7, 2023](#)

The children of Gaza who are seeking refuge in the Catholic Church praying this morning. The sound of bombing can be heard in the beginning, but they

continue their prayer. Resilience. We pray for and with all the children of Gaza
pic.twitter.com/0GrxVPr05z

— Munther Isaac منذر اسحق (@MuntherIsaac) [October 29, 2023](#)

From Common Dreams: Our work is licensed under Creative Commons (CC BY-NC-ND 3.0).
Feel free to republish and share widely.

*

Note to readers: Please click the share button above. Follow us on Instagram and Twitter
and subscribe to our Telegram Channel. Feel free to repost and share widely Global
Research articles.

*Abby Zimet has written CD's Further column since 2008. A longtime, award-winning
journalist, she moved to the Maine woods in the early 70s, where she spent a dozen years
building a house, hauling water and writing before moving to Portland. Having come of
political age during the Vietnam War, she has long been involved in women's, labor, anti-
war, social justice and refugee rights issues. Email: azimet18@gmail.com*

Featured image [source](#)

The original source of this article is [Common Dreams](#)
Copyright © [Abby Zimet](#), [Common Dreams](#), 2023

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Abby Zimet](#)

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca
www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca