



The Hamas and Israel War: A Public Statement
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Our hearts are being rent with almost unbearable pain from seeing the newsfeeds reporting the devastation within the land that has been described as “holy” and “promised.” The pathways of peace have never been clearly marked in the land beyond the Red Sea. The tattered thread of peace, however, has been severed by attacks resulting in the destruction of house, home, body and soul. Rather than witnessing a “peace that surpasses all understanding” (Philippians 4:7), our hearts and minds are overwhelmed with mourning, grief, and righteous indignation. Acts of aggression have been declared retaliation for acts of aggression. The violence between Hamas and Israel has filled the air with cries of rage and despair. The bombings and displacement have produced a level of suffering that has no words, even as we groan for words to explain what feels too complex for words.

As the struggle for peace has continued to evolve into escalating violence, the gaze from afar pleads for a resolution to end the march of death trampling Israelis and Palestinians. With fresh blood crying out from the soil, and a spirituality of rage not unlike the mournful declaration of Psalm 137, the community of Iliff School of Theology is doing the only thing we know to do. We are praying for all the residents of Israel and Palestine. We acknowledge there is a wailing that cannot be comforted; so, we mourn with all who mourn losses. We grieve with those who have been traumatized by the sight of ravaged bodies and rubble homes. We pray for all combatants—for those who are following orders, as well as for those who march to the beat of a drum of inconsolable pain. We pray for those who end a life in the name of survival and retribution. We pray knowing that the scars of war are enduring, and precious memories destroyed by war are lost forever. We pray for the days when Shalom and Salaam will be marked upon every forehead, indwell every heart, and expressed by every hand . . . Selah.