

# **My Reflections on Palestine and Native America: Parallel Struggles Against Settler Colonialism**

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## **Introduction**

I've always been curious about how history, politics, and religion intersect—especially around the story of Moses and the land of Israel. As I explored the Abrahamic traditions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—I came to understand the complex religious narratives that shape political realities today. My interest eventually led me to question why Jews claim modern-day Israel, how Zionism works, and why America supports it so strongly. But what really struck me was the stark contradiction between how America justifies Jewish claims to Israel while completely ignoring Native American claims to the very land it occupies.

## **1. The Story of Moses Across Religions**

In the Abrahamic religions, Moses is a towering figure. In Judaism, he's the lawgiver and leader who brought the Israelites out of Egypt and received the Torah. In Christianity, he's honored as a prophet and moral teacher, often seen as a forerunner to Jesus. In Islam, Musa (as) is one of the most frequently mentioned prophets in the Qur'an—known for challenging Pharaoh and guiding Bani Isra'il (the Children of Israel).

The Qur'an acknowledges that Allah promised the Children of Israel a blessed land. Many scholars believe this refers to the region that includes Palestine. However, the Qur'an also emphasizes that they were denied entry because of their disobedience and that they wandered for 40 years.

## **2. Is Modern Israel the Promised Land?**

From what I've learned, many interpret the "Promised Land" as the territory that today includes Israel and Palestine. But the Qur'an never explicitly validates modern Zionism, which claims that the land belongs exclusively to Jews. In fact, it condemns arrogance and injustice—even by Bani Isra'il themselves.

### 3. Who Are the Jews in Israel Today?

This led me to another important question: Are today's Jews in Israel the same Israelites of Moses' time? Historically, Jewish people were scattered after the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE. Over centuries, many communities developed in Europe, especially in Poland and Eastern Europe. A large number of modern Israeli Jews are Ashkenazi—descendants of these European communities, many of whom fled persecution during the Holocaust.

So, when people say the Jews “returned,” it's complicated. Ethnically, culturally, and even religiously, they aren't necessarily the same as the ancient Israelites. And if we accept a 2,000-year-old historical claim, why do we deny Indigenous peoples the right to reclaim lands taken only a few hundred years ago?

### 4. The Double Standard That Bothered Me

This is what led me to question American support for Zionism. The U.S. justifies its alliance with Israel by saying Jews were historically connected to the land and were victims of genocide. But then I look at Native Americans—whose land was taken by force only a few generations ago, whose people were systematically exterminated, and whose culture was erased—and I see no such moral support.

Why? If ancestral ties matter, Native Americans should be at the top of the list for reparations and restitution. But they're not. It shows that this isn't about justice. It's about power.

### 5. U.S. Interests and Hypocrisy

I now understand that the U.S. supports Israel not just for religious or humanitarian reasons but for geopolitical ones:

- Israel is a strategic ally in the Middle East.
- Christian Zionists see it as fulfilling prophecy.
- Guilt from the Holocaust drives moral justification.
- Recognizing Indigenous rights in Israel would set a precedent the U.S. doesn't want to follow at home.

### 6. Connecting With Other Thinkers

The more I explored this contradiction, the more I found others who had the same thoughts:

**Angela Davis** said: *“Palestinians are today's Native Americans.”*

**Steven Salaita** described Palestinians as: *“the ‘Indians of the Middle East’.”*

**Winona LaDuke** shared: *“We stand with Palestinians because we see our own story in theirs.”*

**Nick Estes** explained: *“The logics of elimination and erasure that built America are the same ones at work in Palestine.”*

**Noura Erakat** summarized it perfectly: *“Palestinians are not asking for anything extraordinary. They are asking for what Native Americans are asking for: recognition of their humanity, their land, and their history.”*

## 7. Real Solidarity I’ve Seen

What’s inspiring is that these aren’t just abstract ideas. I saw real solidarity:

- At Standing Rock, Palestinian flags flew alongside tribal banners.
- Native leaders joined BDS rallies and spoke out against Israeli apartheid.
- Both groups recognize that they are up against the same settler logic.

## 8. Shared Struggles

Here are the themes I keep seeing:

- **Colonization:** Displacement through violence or manipulation.
- **Erasure:** Denial of history, language, and identity.
- **Militarization:** Police and military forces trained in colonial logic.
- **Demonization:** Defenders labeled terrorists or criminals.
- **Resistance:** A refusal to be erased.

## Conclusion

For me, learning about Moses, Zionism, and the politics of land made me reflect more deeply on the hypocrisy of modern empires. They support Jewish claims to Israel based on ancient history but silence Native Americans who were displaced in recent memory. I believe in justice—real justice. Not one built on power, convenience, or selective memory. That’s why I stand in solidarity with both Palestinians and Native Americans. Because if land, history, and trauma matter—then they must matter for everyone.