

## Who does God support in Gaza?

It is tempting to characterize the conflict in Israel and Gaza as based on a religious divide. The protagonists are, after all, possessed of different religions, aren't they? Indeed their states (or would-be states) are built upon strong religious bases.

On the other hand, these "different religions" are nowhere near as different as they are from others. These peoples arguably worship the same God. He is the god of Abraham and Moses, of Jonah and Ezekiel, of Isaac and Joseph. On their own sides of the border these people eat similar foods and abstain from similar foods. They are both meant to wash a lot. Culturally speaking, a great deal is shared.

Perhaps God should be asked to intervene? No doubt many people on both sides are asking him to do just that every day. If the Lord is indeed a *jealous and vengeful God* he will have no problem visiting himself upon the less worthy team.

Perhaps he has. Israel is 'winning'. Over the course of the conflict Israel has managed to kill many more people on the Palestinian side than the Palestinians have managed to kill Israelis. Perhaps we can say that this is evidence of Israel being favoured by God?

Of course, that is a bit like saying that a cricket score indicates the moral supremacy of one side over another. It does no such thing. Sometimes it does, however, indicate that one side has more money to spend on preparation and equipment.

God has, no doubt, been busy in Israel and Gaza. Every day his angels, angels that both sides believe in, collect the souls of the dead and fly them back to him. Many of these are the souls of children. The souls are not draped in flags. They aren't Palestinian or Israeli when he receives them. Maybe God knows what they were, before, maybe he doesn't.

And maybe he doesn't care which side they were on. He is the God of Abraham and Moses.



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