

TREES FOR TENT OF NATIONS



JERUSALEM/WEST BANK/GAZA



In the troubled Holy Land, Tent of Nations stands out as a peacebuilder, working to create bridges of understanding and reconciliation between people from different cultures. In May 2014, Israeli Defense Forces destroyed more than 1,500 fruit trees belonging to Tent of Nations, endangering the livelihood and work of this organization. World Vision is leading an effort to support Tent of Nations in replacing the trees that were destroyed.

TENT OF NATIONS

“We refuse to be enemies,” proclaims the stone marker at the entrance to Tent of Nations, located on the farm of the Nassar family, Palestinian Christians who started the Tent of Nations project.

This land, known as Daher’s Vineyard, was purchased in 1916 by Daher Nassar, the grandfather of the Nassar family who now runs the Tent of Nations project. Although the family has all the original land registration papers from each ruling government since that time (Ottoman, British, Jordanian, and Israeli), the farm was declared Israeli state land in 1991 and is under threat of confiscation.

Tent of Nations was born out of this conflict, and endures as an organization that exemplifies what it means to be pro-peace, pro-justice, and pro-Jesus. Rather than respond with violence or withdrawal, this family chose peaceful resistance. After more than 20 years of legal battles, they remain on their land as champions for nonviolence, reconciliation, and love.

Tent of Nations seeks to bring people of various cultures together to build bridges of understanding, reconciliation, and peace. They invite youth from around the world, especially from areas of conflict, together for face-to-face interaction. They also teach about sustainable agriculture to promote a deeper understanding of the environment and to inspire creativity.

THE DESTRUCTION OF FRUIT TREES

On May 19, 2014, Israeli Defense Forces uprooted more than 1,500 apricot and apple trees from land belonging to Tent of Nations. These trees were planted

“We cannot overcome evil with more evil. We cannot overcome hatred with more hatred. We must do good. We must live the Jesus way.”
—Daoud Nassar
Tent of Nations

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by the Nassar family 10 years ago, were some of the most fruitful trees on the farm, and were nearly ready to be harvested.

Two weeks prior to the unlawful destruction of the trees, military authorities placed a sign declaring the trees were planted on state land. The Nassars immediately filed an appeal to clarify the land was not state land, but belonged to them and that the case was currently in process. According to Israeli law, once an appeal is filed, no demolition or evacuation is allowed until the final verdict has been decided, yet the trees were destroyed.

WORLD VISION RESPONDS

Tent of Nations is one of World Vision's partner organizations in the West Bank, and is truly light and inspiration in a dark place. For many years, World Vision has supported their work in providing psychosocial support and safe spaces for hundreds of children and youth, while encouraging creative expression, interfaith dialogue, and nonviolent approaches to resolving the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians.

World Vision is supporting Tent of Nations through the purchase of 3,000 fruit trees—doubling the size of the original orchard.

The project will purchase replacement trees, including some mature trees that are expected to bear fruit within a couple of years. The project also will prepare the land for planting and excavate the roots left behind when the terraced land where the orchard stood was bulldozed and left as rubble. If funds raised exceed expenses for replanting the trees, the project will help contribute to related activities such as legal expenses related to the trees' destruction.

The total project cost is \$120,000 or \$40 per replacement tree.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Pray for the Tent of Nations project and the Nassar family.
- Join World Vision (<http://prayersfortheholylan.org>) in praying for peace in the region.
- Contact your congressional representative or U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry about the illegal destruction of these trees. (For more information or sample letters, contact Craig Swandby, World Vision Advocacy, at cswandby@worldvision.org.)
- Support Tent of Nations' peacebuilding efforts in the Holy Land through a gift to the Trees for Tent of Nations project.

Thank you for your prayerful consideration of this opportunity to make a difference in the Holy Land. For more information, please contact your World Vision representative.



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Christian educator Tony Nassar, right, examines the remnants of one of the trees that was uprooted and destroyed.

The background shows the area that was once a thriving orchard.

Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and mutual edification.

Romans 14:19 (NIV)



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World Vision is a Christian humanitarian organization dedicated to working with children, families, and their communities worldwide to reach their full potential by tackling the causes of poverty and injustice. World Vision serves all people, regardless of religion, race, ethnicity, or gender.