



Son of Hamas: A Gripping Account of Terror, Betrayal, Political Intrigue, and Unthinkable Choices

Mosab Hassan Yousef, Ron Brackin

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Son of Hamas is now available in softcover with an all-new chapter about events since the book's release such as the revelation of Mosab's Israeli intelligence handler's true identity, and Homeland Security's effort to deport the author.

Since he was a small boy, Mosab Hassan Yousef has had an inside view of the deadly terrorist group Hamas. The oldest son of Sheikh Hassan Yousef, a founding member of Hamas and its most popular leader, young Mosab assisted his father for years in his political activities while being groomed to assume his legacy, politics, status . . . and power. But everything changed when Mosab turned away from terror and violence, and embraced instead the teachings of another famous Middle East leader. In *Son of Hamas*, Mosab reveals new information about the world's most dangerous terrorist organization and unveils the truth about his own role, his agonizing separation from family and homeland, the dangerous decision to make his newfound faith public, and his belief that the Christian mandate to "love your enemies" is the only way to peace in the Middle East.

Son of Hamas: A Gripping Account of Terror, Betrayal, Political Intrigue, and Unthinkable Choices Details

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K says

What the heck do I do with this book?

Initially Mosab enraged me. The author's perspective as a Palestinian engaging in gratuitous acts of violence toward Israelis as a child and painting the Israelis as the big bad bullies was infuriating, especially in light of the recent murder of a three-month-old Israeli baby by Palestinians, not to mention a bomb just a few blocks away from me targeting innocent civilians at a bus station going about their business.

But then Mosab writes about his offer from the shin-bet (Israeli secret police) to work for them as an infiltrator, and how he originally accepted this offer with the intention of sabotaging the shin-bet but ultimately switched sides, still pretending to be Hamas to his friends and family but reporting everything to which he was privy to his Israeli bosses. During this time the author also converted from Islam to Christianity.

Is this for real? How was the author not afraid to write his story and put his name to it? Ayaan Hirsi Ali needs bodyguards 24/7 and this guy's fine? I suppose it's not impossible, but I did find it hard to believe.

I found it interesting that this book seemed to be written at a second grade level, especially since the author apparently hired someone to help him write it. Maybe the hired hand thought it would sound more authentic if the book was written in telegraphic ESL speech, but I think it's a little odd to hire someone to help you sound like a foreigner.

All in all, I don't know what to make of this book. Mosab's transition from angry Palestinian to Benedict Arnold turncoat/loyal shin bet mole seemed a bit abrupt and superficial to me. As a Jew living in Israel it's pretty clear where my sympathies lie; it's always validating to hear about someone rejecting your enemy and joining your side, and many of Mosab's statements about peace and Israel were gratifying to hear, especially considering where he was coming from. I just wish I found his story more credible.

Petra X says

I haven't read much so far, and I am duly and genuinely shocked, just as I am supposed to be, about the terrible things the Israelis did on a daily basis to the occupants of the Gaza strip. I am not terribly impressed with the glossing-over of the 'guaranteed-non-violent, peaceful, moderate' stance of Hamas during this time. When I read, continually and in detail, that the Israelis often shot innocent Palestinians for just being Palestinians but that a Palestinian just went and shot a couple of Israelis and took their guns and then that became a way for them to get arms all in one sentence I begin to suspect that this book, by a Christian convert, is more the wolf wearing the Lamb of Peace's clothing.

A sentence like, "Then Israel decided to secretly deport 415 leaders...". It wasn't very secret then, was it? And, following on from this, "The men were driven to a snow-covered no-man's-land in Southern Lebanon.

Although we were in the middle of a bitter winter, they were dumped there with no shelter or provisions. Neither Israel nor Lebanon would allow relief agencies to deliver food or medicine. Beirut refused to transport the sick and injured to its hospitals."

Then, in the next paragraph, "A couple of weeks later, we finally saw him [his father:] on television for the first time since his deportation. Apparently Hamas members had named him secretary-general of the camp, second only to..." Eventually the father gets a cell phone and communications are normalised.

Doesn't sound a bit like they were dumped in the middle of nowhere without food or shelter.

I hope the book improves, its naively written by the obvious ghost writer and it seems to be all about total emotional manipulation of the all-too-willing to believe the author's intended, pro-Palestinian audience. I want the facts not this soft, biased pap.

There is more to the war between the Palestinians, the Arabs and Israel than meets the eye but its never discussed. Israel is the West's secure base in the Middle East, it is democracy's secure base. It is a total sore for the Arabs who do not practice any kind of democracy, kings, dictators, and the military rule their countries. They do not want women walking the streets in tiny shorts and halter tops and having relationships of their own choosing. They do not even allow women to be educated and live a self-determined life. They do not allow unmarried women to get contraception and screw whomsoever they please after a hot night at the club. They don't have those sort of clubs for local women either.

How many Arab countries do you hear of where a woman (or a man) has risen from a poor background to a high position? It happens in our societies all the time. Everything about Israel, which is a country very similar to the US, the UK, France etc, threatens the Arabs. It doesn't stop me supporting the idea of a Palestinian State, in fact I want one even more because of it. But they see Israel as the hole of the Western decadence we call freedom in the doughnut of Arab and Muslim repression and any kind of land exchange isn't going to make the slightest difference to their collective enmity to that.

I had hoped this book would present a true picture of Hamas from the inside and see that they are just people trying to live in moderate Islamic way who are terribly persecuted and whom we should all support. Yeah well, I got suckered into paying for this piece of crap but I'm not wasting my time reading any more of it. Deep shite for the PC-people to sigh and tut-tut over, more grist for the anti-Israelis/Zionists/Jews, another biased BBC documentary, and still... still no representation for the Palestinians who would like peace, would be happy to see their daughters educated and for all of them to live in the 21st century.

(Do such people exist? Yes, I used to share an apartment in London with some, I worked for a couple in Jerusalem, there are a few on the island, but no one hears their voices and they aren't loud people by nature, and neither would I be if I were them).

Alex says

Son of Hamas is probably the most important book I've read this year. It's an autobiography account Mosab Yousef, eldest son of one of the founders of the terrorist organization Hamas, and an extraordinary insider's view of the infamous organization.

According to Yousef, Hamas didn't begin as a terrorist organization. In fact, his father isn't a terrorist in one

sense (Yousef is at pains to paint his father as a man who doesn't engage in or actively encourage acts of terror), but rather a benign and beloved Muslim leader with a deep concern and love for his family and his people. And yet Yousef comes to see the issue is more complicated as his father while not involved in violence, has passively condoned it and been manipulated by Hamas (and the PLO, it should be said) to serve the ends of those within the organization.

Yousef explains this dichotomy through what he calls 'the ladder of Islam' by which otherwise good people become radicalised over time. It's evident that in the case of Hamas, some of this had to do with Israeli responses to Palestine. However, where as the PLO was essentially a nationalistic organization seeking an independent Palestinian state, Hamas is a religious organization fundamentally opposed to the existence of Israel. And, of course, there is the corruption of men within both organizations who have a vested interest in the violence continuing.

This is one of the great gifts of the Son of Hamas. Yousef says he wrote it, in part, to help outsiders understand the intractability of the Middle East problem. Humanly speaking, there doesn't appear to be a solution. Ultimately, however we are left with hope, not in human success, but that a man like Yousef, who had great influence and was himself a wannabe terrorist, could come to love his enemy, Israel, through kindness displayed by his enemies (and in spite of their cruelty at earlier times), and most importantly, by discovering the love of Christ.

Most of the book is not about his Christianity but his life as a son of Hamas and how came to, in the eyes of those people, betray the organization. His faith is important, but emerges as part of the fabric of his story. He went for years falling in love, first with Christ's teachings, and only later Christ himself. Nevertheless, this had a fundamental affect on his life. After he started working with Shin Bet, the Israeli secret service, he would only pass on information about terrorists if they promised to arrest rather than assassinate their targets.

Yousef gives many insights into the origins not only of Hamas, but of the Palestinian intifadas, the PLO (he has no time for the organisation or the late Arafat, who he claims had a couple of opportunities to broker peace but had a vested interest in violence), and numerous events surrounding the last 30 years of the Palestinian story. One man's perspective, no doubt, but a unique and valuable one. Nevertheless, I highly recommend it.

Michael Gerald says

One of the most moving events in the New Testament is the story of Saul going on his way to Damascus to persecute the infant Catholic Church there. On the way, he was blinded by a light and confronted with a Voice that inquired: "Saul, why do you persecute Me?"

Saul eventually became St.Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles and one of the greatest saints.

"Son of Hamas" is the fascinating and moving memoir of Mosab Hassan Yousef, a Palestinian who is also a son of one of the founding leaders of Hamas, the Palestinian terrorist organization.

Writing with the courage and honesty of one who was privy to the intricacies of the Palestinian situation in general, and the workings of Hamas in particular, Mosab dispels facts from myths about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and helps set the record straight.

Having the knowledge of one of the Palestinian terrorist groups, Mosab recounts who the real founders of Hamas were, and eventually reveals some of the people who really pulled the strings and have blood in their hands. (How did he do it? You must read the book to find out!)

If you have ever wondered why there seems to be no end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the answer is surprisingly simple but complicated at the same time.

The Palestinians' worst enemies are not Israel, nor the United States of America, nor the West.

The Palestinians' worst enemies are themselves. The people who oppress them the most are the very organizations who claim to be fighting for their welfare, but instead are more interested in the violence and the power that they can squeeze from it. Their leaders - Arafat, Meshaal - are only after their vested interest and have no qualms fooling their people to carry arms and don suicide vests and kill other people and themselves while the leaders are schmoozing up with the high life. And they squeeze the most blood from their own people.

I hope there are more Mosabs in the Palestinian territories who recognize this fact.

Addendum: Having said that, Israel also bears the blame for the injustice. A nation created after the Holocaust is behaving like the Nazis themselves.

Douglas Wilson says

Here is a book to break your heart. Mosab Yousef is the son of one of the founders of Hamas, and was intimately involved in its operations. He was also doing intelligence work for the Israelis, all while in the process of becoming a Christian. This one really is a page turner. With regard to the Palestinian situation, this book will really give you a different vantage point from which to look at everything. When you are done, you will ache for everybody over there, and be angry with everybody over there. There is no political solution. The answer is Jesus Christ.

David says

I'm skeptical of many of the author's claims and have a strong feeling that he's telling us what he thinks we want to hear in these troubled times. The book is strongly self-serving and I doubt that his alleged conversion to Christianity is valid.

He lied to the Israelis, he lied to his Hamas compatriots, he lied to his family...and I think he lies to his readers.

Jason says

You don't comprehend the sociopolitical relationship between Israel and Hamas!? Neither do I. Neither do most of us. Neither, still, do people living in Israel and the occupied territories--who have a mortal interest in

their own sociopolitics. Neither do people who work for Israeli Defense Forces (military), Mossad (CIA equivalent), or the Shin Bet (FBI equivalent)--who have a security interest in the sociopolitics. Neither do people in Hamas, Hezbollah, Fatah, or the Palestinian Authority--who have a strategic interest in the sociopolitics.

Before you read any further you have to decide if the sociopolitics in Israel is something that should pique your interest as a citizen of the United States. If not, hit next, and godspeed. If it does concern you, then *Son of Hamas* is a compact little book about Hamas v. Israel. It's a neat little confessional from the son of a sheik that founded Hamas and who became an insider for Shin Bet over the last 10 years. He was probably the most important (spy, traitor, hero) that Israel has turned in the last quarter century. The narrative he unleashes in *Son of Hamas* reveals a chock of classified data and has probably made him a lifelong target for assassination. And yet, there it is--the mechanics of the shadowy Shin Bet, the suicide tactics of Hamas, his contacts, his field operations, his stark betrayals, and some of the cover-ups and clandestine stories he had to tell his friends, family, and countrymen.

The book is simple, direct, and well-paced. If you read USA Today, then you will not be confused by this biography. It reads like investigative journalism and provides information not too much unlike an extended entry in Wikipedia. And yet, there is an emotional journey, a confession, a rebirth of Mossab Hassan Yousef that puts a personal touch on the pages and keeps you rapt to the book. Unlike other 'insider' stories, there is little maudlin reasoning or second-guessing. It seems the novel was cut to its bear minima.

This book will not make you understand the tendrils that grow into and out of Hamas and Israel. But I feel that the Palestinian condition one of the most important Realpolitik crisis in the world today. Sure, there's North/South Korea, India and Pakistan, Turkey and the landless Kurdish people, and of course, the US and everybody else. It's okay to skip the Middle East, but realize: now that the US occupies real estate in Iraq, Qatar, UAE, Afghanistan, and Uzbekistan, it's extremely likely that our military will never vacate those locations (think South Korea and Germany). They are too strategic, and the region is too near a flashpoint for us to realistically leave anytime soon. *Son of Hamas* is a tight little primer that should fold into your other reading about the Middle East.

3.5 stars rounded up. Get it from the library. This isn't an essential read, but it provides a solid, factual perspective about a topic that is usually covered politically. I mean, good gracious, nobody on Goodreads has marked the book 1-star yet!!

Stephen Phillips says

It is important to understand the Arab-Israeli conflict, for it is at the literal and figurative center of religious and political strife today. *Son of Hamas* gives the reader a ground view of this conflict from 1987 to 2007 through the eyes of its author, Mosab Hassan Yousef. His perspective is a unique one, for not only is Yousef the first born son of one of founders of Hamas, he became an intelligence asset of the Shin Bet - Israel's internal security service. Balancing these two whether patrolling the streets of Ramallah or incarcerated in the Israeli prison system was daunting and dangerous. Keeping up his two personas became even more complicated when Yousef was introduced to, and eventually converted to Christianity.

Son of Hamas is an important book for those who are interested in intelligence, particularly human intelligence, and an imperative for any studying international relations or security issues. A well written account with Ron Brackin, it is a quick read and will provide invaluable anecdotes of the human condition

that can be referred to again and again.

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<http://emtiazalnahhal.blogspot.com/20...>

Lisa says

I would never have picked up this book to read on my own. I'm so glad it was a bookclub book. I've always been sort of pro-Israel when hearing about events in the conflict between them and the Palestinians. This is probably due to all the WWII and Holocaust books I've read. Why can't they finally have a country of their own? And what better place than their original spot? Right? Reading this book was such an education. To see things from the point of view of a Palestinian who ended up not hating Jews, and who eventually converts to Christianity, made his side of the story credible and relatable to me. The Jews are sort of treating the Palestinians the way they had been treated for so long - an oversimplification, I understand, but still. I have more love and understanding for both sides of the conflict now.

The fact that the author had come from such a devout Muslim family and discovered more love, tolerance, and peace in the New Testament than he'd ever known in his previous religion strengthens my own desire to follow Jesus Christ. I'm so glad I read this book.

John Gardner says

There's a saying that sometimes truth is stranger than fiction. This book is proof that truth can be more exciting as well.

Mosab Hassan Yousef is the son of Sheikh Hassan Yousef, one of the founders of Hamas, an Islamic resistance movement which has been classified as a terrorist organization. His father remains one of the organization's most prominent members and spokesmen.

This book, written with help from Ron Brackin, is Mosab's story of growing up in the Gaza Strip, taking part in the Arab resistance, being arrested and tortured by the Israeli Defense Force then recruited into the Shin-Bet (an Israeli intelligence organization), and becoming the agency's most valuable asset in preventing terrorist attacks and bringing terrorist leaders to justice. For ten years, Mosab lived a double life, seen as a leader of Hamas by all but a few, all the while passing information to the Israeli's.

Though the harrowing accounts of near-death experiences and top-secret spycraft are the stuff of blockbuster movies, the real strength of the book is the insight it gives the reader into Mosab's thought processes and inner turmoil. Agreeing to work with his hated enemies against the family and community he loved was no simple choice. His motivation was to help stop the senseless violence, particularly after seeing that what he had believed about Arabs and Jews was not the full truth.

Through Mosab's eyes, we begin to see the complexities of the Middle Eastern situation. Nothing is black-and-white. The fight between Israelis and Palestinians is not the fight of good vs. evil. Some of Israel's soldiers and tactics are as cruel and barbaric as anything their Palestinian counterparts have come up with, while others are sensitive and caring toward their enemies. Many of Hamas' members are otherwise kind and loving men, driven to do unspeakable things by an ideology founded on a grotesque and perverted understanding of who God is. Jewish settlers fight to defend what they see as "their" land, while dispossessed Palestinians — a mixed bag of devout Muslims, Christians, atheists, and the nominally religious, many of whom retain keys to the homes and properties taken from their families in the middle of the last century — are often oppressed by their own leaders even more than by Israel.

Woven throughout the story is the account of Mosab's slow conversion to Christianity. After a chance encounter with a British Christian, he read the Bible for the first time and was struck by Christ's command to "love your enemies", and by how different this was from the Qur'an's portrayal of Allah. For years he struggled to reconcile enemies, even before he came to recognize that Jesus was more than simply a prophet. Eventually he came to believe that Christ was God Himself, and Mosab was secretly baptized.

In the end, Mosab realized that "it no longer mattered who my friends or who my enemies were; I was supposed to love them all." He saw that the true enemy of both Jews and Muslims — and everyone else — is sin. The solution to the conflict in the Middle East is neither religious nor political, and peace will not come through violence. The only way for a true peace in the Holy Land is for there to be a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit over those people, and for Israelis and Arabs alike to come to see the Prince of Peace as Lord and Savior. In the words of the author: "The challenge, especially between Israelis and Palestinians, is not to *find* the solution. The challenge is to be the first courageous enough to *embrace* it."

My hope is that many people will read this book and come to a greater understanding about the Middle Eastern conflict. Mosab Hassan Yousef suffered great personal expense — his family has disowned him and he is marked for death should he ever return home — to share his message. May we all come to share his

heart-brokenness over the spiritual condition of Jews and Muslims, and over the violent effects of sin in his homeland. Even more, may we look forward with eager longing for the consummation of Christ's kingdom, when He will return in power and glory to defeat the power of sin, death, and hell, once and for all!

Tempe Lohmeyer says

This is a fascinating book written by the son of one of the founders of the Hamas, a Palestinian terror organization. It chronicles his youth as the son of a devout Muslim iman, to his years in prison, then follows his years as a spy for Israel.

Mosab's autobiography reads like a spy thriller. He was uniquely positioned to see the inner workings of the Palestinian terror organizations plus the inner world of the Israeli FBI. The book is interesting on two fronts: First, it is an inside view on the founding and politics of the Hamas. Secondly, and to me most importantly, it chronicles how the son of Hamas changes from an angry, hate-filled youth to a young man trying to love his enemy and save untold lives from terrorism because he was introduced to the love, grace, and forgiveness of Jesus.

Jesus changed his life - he gave up his family and his country to live out the life Jesus calls us to live. When he reads in the New Testament, "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5:43-45), he is thunderstruck—it is the message he has been searching for. The more Mosab reads the Bible, the more he sees that loving and forgiving one's enemies is the only way to stop the bloodshed. He puts Christ's words into action as he risks his own life to save lives in the occupied territories. He gathers every scrap of information he can to help the Israeli Shin Bet (Intelligence Service) stop the blood bath.

Mohammad AbuZer says

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Mike (the Paladin) says

There is little I could say that would do justice to this book. If there are criticisms that could be made, I won't make them. This is a deeply felt story of a life. So far it's still a somewhat young life and I pray the best for the writer.

Is this book inspiring? In some ways. Is the book frightening? Yes in other ways. Are there lessons to be learned? Undoubtedly. Is there Hope in this story? Yes.

I'm not here to lecture, I'm not here to give a synopsis. I'll avoid that as anything I might say that would pique the interest of some might put someone else off and I wouldn't want to do that. We live in a world rife with violence and strife that can and does touch people around the world. Much of it springs from deeply held beliefs and long clung to hatreds. The writer here saw and experienced these firsthand. His father is a Muslim who seems to exemplify the best in that belief system. He has first hand experience of the best and the worst of humanity. This is an insightful memoir full of pain and hope.

I salute the author and as said will pray for him and his.

In case I need to say it, recommended.

Megan Larson says

It's hard to know where to start in reviewing this controversial book about a controversial part of the world and a controversial choice made by its author, but the number of stars should be a hint. I came to this book with little other than a cursory knowledge of the tenets of Islam and the intricate workings of the Middle East conflict, and eager to learn. I was most interested, as a Christian, to read how a son of Hamas came to a place where he was willing to renounce not only terrorism but Islam in order to become a follower of Christ. I have read reviews criticizing one aspect or another of this memoir--either feeling he left out important information or questioning his motives for writing. I feel that's to be expected with a book like this, and would encourage prospective readers to read it and decide on their own. This is Mosab's story, and I think it is a good one, but I also see it as an amazing story of sovereign God gathering His people from every tribe, tongue, and nation. As Mosab said in an interview I watched, "[Jesus] didn't come to take sides--He came to take OVER." I pray for Mosab's continued safety and growth in grace.
