



Good Shepherd Collective @Shepherds4Good

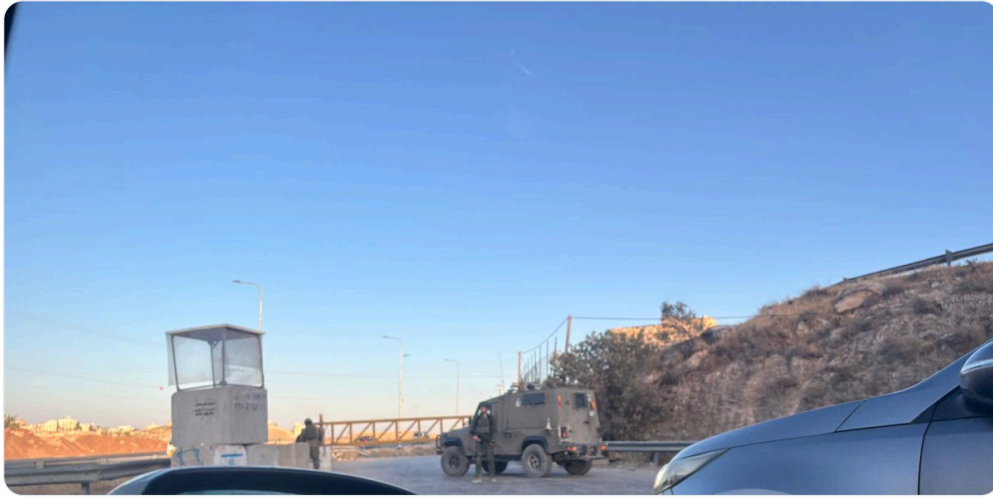
Jul 14, 2025 · 15 tweets · [Shepherds4Good/status/1944712061172191233](https://twitter.com/Shepherds4Good/status/1944712061172191233)

Last week one of our members had to leave Bethlehem to attend a wedding. She spent 2.5 hours searching for an unblocked way out of Beit Sahour, Bethlehem, and Beit Jala. Aside from one path beside a military base, Israeli forces had shut down every road in/out of the area. 🇮🇱



She didn't make it to the wedding in the end, as the line to exit the area stretched from the top of Beit Jala almost to the end of the town.

A couple days later, two of us found Israeli forces closing the entrances to Beit Sahour on our way from Jerusalem.



We made our way back navigating one car-width paths, being patient as we all took turns coming and going. Increasingly, leaving and returning home looks like this—closed main roads, traffic sent to isolated neighborhoods and backroads, sharing tiny roads with trucks and buses.



Long before the last few years, Palestinian communities everywhere have experienced the various forms of mobility restriction Israel imposes upon them: physical violence, land theft disrupting communities' movement and continuity, physical barriers, the permit system, and more.

Since Oct 2023, the Zionist entity has imposed more movement restrictions on Palestinian cities, towns, and villages through the use of gates, dirt mounds, concrete blocks, and other barriers. The number of checkpoints and iron gates in the West Bank alone numbers at least 898.



Meanwhile, main roads traveling north-south in the West Bank include these views: the center banner reads "Am Israel Chai" (no translation needed at this point, I think), while the banners on either side advertise housing in nearby settlements Nokdim and Gush Etzion.



One can only be so surprised that the same people who are engaged in an intentional, enduring genocidal aggression on Gaza—effectively a concentration camp—are willing to lock up entire cities. But it's important not to normalize any aspect of Zionist settler colonialism.

These closures are not "for a reason" in the sense that people who expect policies and laws to have a reasonable logic behind them might guess. It is obscene that a foreign population, whose state is built on the rubble of Palestinian homes, can lock up our communities on a whim.

The policies of road closure and mobility restriction is about collective punishment for Palestinian resistance, yes, but it is also about further isolating communities.

The sense of uncertainty that taints movement discourages people from traveling to offer solidarity to villages at risk of displacement, or for Jerusalemites or Palestinians in 48 lands to travel to West Bank cities for shopping or a casual visit as they once might have.

This feeling of uncertainty, of restricted movement between cities and towns, is felt strongly in Bethlehem, a city whose economy is built on tourism and regular movement to and from Jerusalem.

More and more, Israel moves to isolate Palestinian communities into little islands, forcing rural communities off of their lands where it is possible and gathering Palestinians in the West Bank cities which can be (to a large extent) sealed off from/to vehicular movement.

This isolation fragments communities, weakening them through physical division and attempts at internal divisions between Palestinians as a people. If Palestinian in 48 lands don't feel safe to travel to the West Bank, how can they offer meaningful support to communities there?

This is all in service the primary tenets of settler colonialism: displacement and elimination of the native where possible (in service of replacing them with settlers), and control over resources, particularly land.

An important note: at least in certain areas, the closures can be entirely random. Perhaps for weeks at a time there might be some schedule, but enforcement is according to the whim of Israeli forces. Closures can also happen suddenly and stretch for days or weeks.

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