The United States, Canada and Israel have all withheld funding due to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) after the body formerly approved the admission of the Palestinian Authority as a member despite no decision having been made by the UN Security Council on the official recognition of a Palestinian state. The decision to cut funding to UNESCO has resulted in a drop of around thirty percent of its budget, prompting UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon to declare that PA membership of UN bodies is *"not beneficial for Palestine and not beneficial for anybody"*, and risked affecting *"millions and millions"* of people. The Palestinian Authority had previously announced that they intended to seek membership of a further sixteen UN organizations pending the acceptance of their application for full recognition at the UN General Assembly.

It's not the first time UNESCO has courted controversy. Just a few months ago the orgnization criticized Israel's application for the cave of Machpelah to become a cultural heritage site, the burial place of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, as it is now located in what is considered Palestinian territory. It also rejected out of hand its application for recognition of the burial site of Rachel, Jacob's wife, claiming that the tomb is really an Islamic mosque that belongs to the Palestinian Authority. UNESCO declared that the *"Bilal bin Rabah Mosque/Rachel's Tomb [is] an integral part of the occupied Palestinian territories and that any unilateral action by the Israeli authorities is to be considered a violation of international law*". Of course these are both Jewish heritage sites. Abraham bought the cave of Machpelah from Ephron the Hittite for a burial place for his family (Genesis 23:9). But Ishmael, the ancient ancestor of the Arab people, is not buried there. The Palestinians have no legal, cultural or religious claim to it whatsoever. And why would a Muslim want to worship at the tomb of Rachel, the one who is considered to be the mother of the nation of Israel? It was never known as a mosque before now. And the Palestinian Authority turned Joseph's tomb into a toilet.

The Palestinian Authority has already expressed a desire to have UNESCO recognize Bethlehem, Hebron and the Dead Sea as Palestinian World Heritage sites. But as we have seen with the Rachel's Tomb débâcle, this may be less of an attempt to stamp their authority on the holy places of the Middle East, and more of an effort to erase any trace Jewish or Christian history that is left in 'Palestine'. As chief negotiator Saeb Erakat stated, *"One of the most significant sites of universal importance to humanity is the Old Town of Bethlehem and the birthplace of Jesus. Palestinians long to share our patrimony with the world"*

. You have to remember that Arab Muslims consider Jesus not to be Jewish or even the Son of God, but to be a Palestinian Muslim who fought against the Jews and sought to liberate the land of 'Palestine'. When they talk about their 'patrimony', this is what they are referring to. Who knows what they would do if they got their hands on east Jerusalem? The Palestinian Authority ought to be thrown out of UNESCO. They are destroyers of history. Their culture is one that glorifies death and bloodshed. Not one that preserves life.

So the Palestinians have control over the tombs of the patriarchs. They have turned Rachel's tomb into a mosque. They have desecrated the grave of Joseph. If these graves were all we had to show for our religion, then we wouldn't have very much worth talking about at all. But praise God there is one tomb they can never desecrate, because there is no body there to be desecrated. He is alive! Jesus Christ rose from the dead. He is coming back to rule over His people Israel. Most Palestinians may not recognize Him as Saviour now, but they will in a coming day (Zephaniah 3:12). Is He your Lord and Saviour too? Trust in Him for salvation today.

Revelation 1:18
I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

Source YNet News , YNet News , Arutz 7 , Bloomberg , Arutz 7