

Jerusalem: City at the Crossroads of History

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Doug Wakefield with Ben Hill

Jerusalem: a city whose history spans more than 3,000 years that still finds itself in today's world news more than any other. This city is spiritually significant to more individuals on earth today than any city in the world; not only does it stir the most deep-seated emotions and beliefs of Middle Eastern Jews and Arabs, but it also has an effect on hundreds of millions who hold to the teachings of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

Still, with the strife, pain, and fear that have accompanied wars and discussions of "peace" in this area of the world, it has been easier to ignore the issue. In a world that moves ever faster to react to the news of the day, that spends increasingly less time trying to understand various strands of history that brought us to today's headlines, it is easy to see why many have dismissed such subjects out of hand. In these uncertain times, if a topic doesn't increase our sense of peace and stability, it is often seen as having no practical value and can even be seen as a hindrance to what we could otherwise achieve. And, with the complexity of the world in which we live, rather than examining a variety of opinions on a wide range of topics in order to establish our own, it has simply become easier to defer to the "expert." And in so doing, we outsource our critical thinking and the important decisions which are based upon our conclusions.

With such strong emotions and beliefs, it is easy to get into an "us versus them" mentality. We accept comments that align with "our" views and to criticize those of "others." Some go to the opposite extreme and avoid any topic that could create friction within themselves or with others.

Over the last five years I have spent thousands of hours reading and writing about the world of money and markets, synthesizing a wide range of diverse historical accounts. My journey has caused me to cross paths with many individuals whose backgrounds are quite different from my own. They come from a wide variety of academic disciplines, nationalities, religious beliefs, and experience levels in the world of money. We draw ideas from a diverse group of individuals and sources; as such, we do not agree with *all of* any one person's conclusions, nor would we expect any one individual to agree with all of ours.

Still, as we look through the lens of history, three commonalities emerge. Many agree that:

- money has brought us to a point where we are more globally connected than at any other time in human history;
- morality, especially at the foundational level of our financial system, continues to erode; and
- power continues to shift into fewer hands.

As we begin this missive, I would like to share why I believe this topic is one of the most pertinent in the world today.

History, if examined through a selection of individuals who passionately document their findings, is of enormous value to our thinking. Since this is the case, we should examine the history surrounding events or places we want to better understand. So, regardless of your religious beliefs, the lessons from this historical account of Jerusalem – which does not even scratch the surface of all that is written on this city – should prove pertinent to the events surrounding Israeli-Palestinian peace talks in 2009, which involve many of today’s world leaders. In the end, I hope this presentation will increase your understanding of our world – today and in the years to come.

In Ancient Days

We will start over 4,000 years ago, with Abraham, a name revered by followers of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. According to Genesis, the first book of the Bible and the Torah, one learns that Abraham went to Mount Moriah with his son Isaac.

Now it came about after these things, that God tested Abraham, and said to him, “Abraham,” and he said, “Here I am.” He said, “Take now you son, your only son whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I tell you.”¹

As the Genesis account reveals, this was only a test of Abraham’s faithfulness, and Isaac was never sacrificed.² But, where is Mount Moriah?

According to the Jewish Virtual Library, Mount Moriah is “the name of the elongated north-south stretch of land lying between Kidron Valley and ‘Hagai’ Valley, between Mount Zion to the west and the Mount of Olives to the east.” The “best-known tradition related to Mount Moriah is the binding of Isaac for sacrifice by his father Abraham, related in Genesis 22.” Jews refer to this area as the Temple Mount. Additional material from the Jewish Virtual Library shows how the Jews connect the importance of the physical place of [Mount Moriah](#) to Solomon’s temple.

At the summit of Mount Moriah, traditionally, is the "Foundation Stone," the symbolic fundament of the world's creation, and reputedly the site of the Temple's Holy of Holies, the supreme embodiment of the relationship between God and the people of Israel.

Today, many individuals do not understand where the term Israel originated. If we look at records found in Genesis, we learn of Abraham’s grandson, Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel. This event took place more than 400 years ³ before the “sons of Israel”⁴ left the land of Egypt:

He said, "Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel; for you have striven with God and with men and have prevailed.” ⁵

If we begin with Moses, the author of the Torah, and conclude with John’s writing of Revelation, the collection of books known as the Bible took more than 1,500 years to write. Its assembly spanned the decline of the Egyptian Empire and the rise and fall of the Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, and Greek Empires. At the time of Christ and the writings of the New Testament, the Roman Empire ruled. And of the 66 books that comprise the Bible, all but two – Luke and Acts – were written by people of Jewish lineage.

The vast majority of people today have little to no understanding of the Bible’s uniqueness as a historical document. Since there is an enormous amount of information found within its pages, we will use it as a historical source as we approximate the timing and dominant empire of the occurrences we note in the history of Jerusalem. We will also use a litany of other sources. History helps us understand, not only the religious significance of the city of Jerusalem, but its political significance as well.

Israel Conquers Jerusalem

Joshua 10: 1, 3-4, states:

Now it came about when Adoni-zedek, king of Jerusalem, heard that Joshua had captured Ai, and had utterly destroyed it (just as he had done to Jericho and its king, so he had done to Ai and its king), and that the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel and were within their land.....Therefore, Adoni-zedek, king of Jerusalem, sent word to Hoham, king of Hebron, and to Piram, king of Jarmuth, and to Japhia, king of Lachish, and to Debir, king of Eglon, saying, “Come up to me and help me, and let us attack Gibeon, for it has made peace with Joshua and with the sons of Israel.

Here we see that Jerusalem was a city-state. Around 1400 BC, after the “sons of Israel” had wandered in the Sinai Peninsula for forty years, ⁶ Joshua led this newly formed nation on several campaigns. The leading political and military power at that time was Egypt. And, according to Old Testament scholar Gleason Archer’s, A Survey of Old Testament Introduction, the zenith of the Egyptian empire occurred around the same time that Moses led the exodus out of Egypt:

Rameses II was on the throne long enough (fifty-four years, including the twenty-one years of Hatshepsut’s regency) to have been reigning at the time of Moses’ flight from Egypt and to pass away not long before Moses’ call by the burning bush, thirty or forty years later. In character he was ambitious and energetic, launching no less than seventeen military campaigns in nineteen years, and engaging in numerous building projects for which he used a large slave-labor task force. His son, Amenhotep II, who doubtless hoped to equal his father’s military prowess, seems to have suffered some serious reversal in his military resources, for he was unable to carry out any invasions or extensive military operations after his fifth year (1445 BC) until the modest campaign of his ninth year. ⁷

So, over 3,400 years ago, a city-state known as Jerusalem was conquered by a people group, known as “sons of Israel,” who had migrated from the leading empire of the world at the time – Egypt.

At the height of Israel's greatest political and military might, David chose Jerusalem as the seat of the monarchy.

David was thirty years old when he became king, and he reigned forty years. At Hebron, he reigned over Judah seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem, he reigned thirty-three years, over all Israel and Judah. Now the king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the people of the land, and they said to David, "You shall not come in here, but the blind and the lame will turn you away," thinking, "David cannot enter here." Nevertheless, David captured the stronghold of Zion, that is the city of David. ⁸

In his work, [A Survey of Israel's History](#), Professor Leon Wood speaks of David's decision to establish Jerusalem as the capital:

David's choice fell on Jerusalem, a city still held by Jebusites. It lay exactly on the border between Judah and Israel, and had a good water supply in the Spring of Gihon, and its position was readily defensible. To occupy it would also eliminate a Canaanite stronghold within the country; so David captured it, apparently without difficulty, and fortified it. There is no indication that he destroyed the former inhabitants, which means that a majority of the city's population may have been foreign for some time. ⁹

Under David's son, [Solomon, who reigned from 971 to 931 BC](#) and was the wealthiest of all of Israel's kings, Jerusalem became the spiritual and financial center for the nation of Israel.

David's son, Solomon, extended his sway until he put under tribute most of the area originally mentioned to Abraham, from the river of Egypt to the River Euphrates. ¹⁰

And under Solomon, the wealthiest of all Israel's kings, Jerusalem experienced its greatest period of prosperity.

Solomon amassed chariots and horsemen. He had 1,400 chariots and 12,000 horsemen, and he stationed them in the chariot cities and with the king at Jerusalem. The king made silver and gold as plentiful in Jerusalem as stones, and he made cedars as plentiful as sycamores in the lowland. Solomon's horses were imported from Egypt and from Kue: the king's

traders procured them from Kue for a price. They imported chariots from Egypt for 600 shekels of silver apiece and horses for 150 apiece, and by the same means they exported them to all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Aram.

Now Solomon decided to build a house for the name of the Lord and a royal palace for himself. So Solomon assigned 70,000 men to carry loads and 80,000 men to quarry stone in the mountains and 3,600 to supervise them. ¹¹

As the second of the [five pillars of Islam](#) requires Muslims to pray five times a day toward [Mecca](#), so also Solomon proclaimed the importance of praying toward the Temple in Jerusalem.

Listen to the supplications of your servant and of your people Israel when they pray toward this place; hear from your dwelling place, from heaven: hear and forgive. Also concerning the foreigner who is not from your people Israel, when he comes from a far country for your great name's sake and your mighty hand and your outstretched arm, when they come and pray toward this house, then hear from heaven, from your dwelling, and do according to all for which the foreigner calls to you, in order that all the people of the earth may know your name, and fear you as do your people Israel, and that they may know that this house which I have built is called by your name. ¹²

We find the same teachings from the Talmud in the [Mishnah Berakhot](#):

If one is riding a donkey, he should dismount from it [while he prays]. If he is unable to dismount, he should turn his face [toward Jerusalem]. And if he is unable to turn his face, he should focus his heart toward the Holy of Holies [in the Temple in Jerusalem].

So as we study ancient history, it is clear that the city of Jerusalem played a critical role in the nation Israel and the religious life of the Israelites.

Two World Empires and the Nation of Israel

While Israel was united under the kingships of Saul, David, and Solomon, thereafter the kingdom split. I Kings 12:20-25 notes that Solomon's son,

Rehoboam stayed in Jerusalem, overseeing two of the twelve tribes – Judah and Benjamin. The remaining ten tribes rebelled against Rehoboam, and instead followed Jeroboam, a political leader, who built a new capital in Shechem.

As an aside, consider the great lessons –between seeking counsel from those who have years of experience versus peers who endorse your own ideas – surrounding Rehoboam’s loss of the ten tribes. It’s also a great example of how people under extreme levels of taxation rebel, whether it’s the Boston Tea Party or the recent [Tea Party USA](#) protests. Government spending produces higher taxes – through a depreciation of the dollar, caused by a rapid expansion of their supply (a hidden tax) or an increase in various taxes. And, people who are being unfairly taxed react the same way they did at the time of Rehoboam.

And, by the way, while most American’s think of income or sales taxes, carbon taxes are not even considered today. While I could certainly expound on [Carbon Tax Center](#) issues, having done so several times over the last four years of my public and private writings, we’ll return to the topic at hand – the history of Jerusalem.

After Israel suffered years of ups and downs, in 722 BC, the Assyrians, under King [Shalmaneser V](#), defeated the Northern Kingdom (capital in Shechem, Samaria), and in 586 BC, the Babylonians, under King [Nebuchadnezzar II](#), defeated the Southern Kingdom (capital in Jerusalem, Judea).

In the twelfth year of Ahaz, king of Judah, Hoshea, the son of Elah, became king over Israel in Samaria, and reigned nine years. He did evil in the sight of the LORD, only not as the kings of Israel who were before him. Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against him, and Hoshea became his servant and paid him tribute. But the king of Assyria found conspiracy in Hoshea, who had sent messengers to So, king of Egypt, and had offered no tribute to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year; so the king of Assyria shut him up and bound him in prison. Then the king of Assyria invaded the whole land and went up to Samaria and besieged it three years. In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria captured Samaria and carried Israel away into exile to Assyria. ¹³

So, the Assyrian Empire had its impact on the Israelites.

The [Neo-Assyrian Empire](#) was a period of Mesopotamian history which began in 934 BC and ended in 609 BC. During this period, Assyria assumed a position as a great regional power, vying with Babylonia and other lesser powers for dominance of the region, though not until the reforms of Tiglath-Pileser III ([II Kings 16:7](#)) in the 8th century BC, did it become a powerful and vast empire. In the Late Bronze Age, Assyria had been a minor kingdom of northern Mesopotamia (modern-day northern Iraq), competing for dominance with its southern Mesopotamian rival Babylonia. Beginning with the campaign of Adad-nirari II, it became a great regional power, growing to be a serious threat to 25th dynasty Egypt.

Tiglath-Pileser III (745-727 BC) was the father of [Shalmaneser V](#) (727-722).



(Pictures of old city walls of Nineveh taken by an Iraqi-born American)

As the pictures above attest, Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian Empire, and the modern-day city of Mosul, Iraq, retains remnants of its ancient past. While the Gulf Wars of the last twenty years have made Iraq a common name, Iraq has a much older past. The December 23, 2008, Assyrian International News Agency article, [Overview of Assyrian Slates Running in the 2009 Iraqi Provincial Council Elections](#), shows the same names as we see in antiquity:

The Iraqi Provincial Councils elections will take place at the end of January, 2009. 440 seats in 14 Iraqi governorates are up for grabs. There will be no elections in the three Kurdish dominated governorates of Arbil, Dohuk (Nohadra), and Sulaimaniya at this time...There is a considerable concentration of Assyrians (also known as Chaldean and Syriac) in Dohuk, Arbil, and Kirkuk who will not vote. The Assyrians will concentrate on the elections in the governorates of Baghdad and Nineveh and to a lesser extent in Basra. There are 57 seats to compete for in Baghdad and 37 in Nineveh.

[In 612](#) the Babylonians crushed the Assyrian Empire, and [Nabopolassar](#), the Babylonian king and military leader, captured Nineveh. The final days of the Assyrian Empire had a major effect on the history of Egypt and Israel, bringing the city of Jerusalem into the center of world history once again:

Though Egypt had always feared a powerful Assyria, she now feared the prospect for a powerful Babylon even more. So Egypt entered the conflict between Assyria and Babylon on Assyria's side. In 609 Pharaoh Neco II marched with a large Egyptian army toward Haran to support the remaining Assyrian forces in a last attempt to retake their lost territory. King Josiah knew what the consequences would be for Judah if Egypt were successful. He did not want Egypt to replace Assyria as Judah's taskmaster. So Josiah mobilized his army to stop the Egyptian advance. A battle took place on the plain of Megiddo – and Judah lost. Josiah was killed in battle and the Egyptian army continued on toward Haran (II Chronicles 35:20-24).¹⁴

Nabopolassar's son, Nebuchadnezzar defeated the Egyptian forces in Carchemish and Israel's King Jehoiakim – Josiah's son – agreed to serve as a vassal king for the Babylonian Empire.¹⁵ While Daniel was taken away in the first diaspora and

Ezekiel in the second, Jeremiah saw the final days of Jerusalem, the capital of the Southern Kingdom.

So in the ninth year of Zedekiah's reign, on the tenth day of the tenth month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon marched against Jerusalem with his whole army. He encamped outside the city and built siege works all around it. The city was kept under siege until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah. By the ninth day of the fourth month the famine in the city had become so severe that there was no food for the people to eat. Then the city wall was broken through, and the whole army fled at night through the gate between the two walls near the king's garden, though the Babylonians were surrounding the city. They fled toward Arabah, but the Babylonian army pursued the king and overtook him in the plains of Jericho. All his soldiers were separated from him and scattered, and he was captured. He was taken to the king of Babylon at Riblah, where sentence was pronounced on him. They killed the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes. Then they put out his eyes, bound him with bronze shackles and took him to Babylon.

On the seventh day of the fifth month, in the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, Nebuzaradan commander of the imperial guard, an official of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem. *He set fire to the temple* of the LORD, the royal palace and all the houses of Jerusalem. Every important building he burned down. The whole Babylonian army, under the commander of the imperial guard, broke down the walls around Jerusalem. ¹⁶ (Italics mine)

Approximately 430 years earlier, after David ([1010-970 BC](#)) and his men attacked the Jebusites in Jerusalem, the city became known as “[the City of David](#).”¹⁷ David brought the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem,¹⁸ and his son, Solomon, built Israel’s first temple in this city.¹⁹ With Jerusalem and the temple in ruins, this was one of the most devastating times in the history of the Jews.

As a side note, there is no mention of “Jew-s” in the Bible until [after the nation of Israel](#) was destroyed in 586 BC by Nebuchadnezzar.²⁰ After the Babylonians defeated the Southern Kingdom (Judah), since it was no longer a sovereign nation, the people were no longer referred to by their national name, the

“Israelites,” but by their racial designation, as Jews. So, it was their race, not their nationality that would now define them.

Prior to the destruction of the Northern and Southern Kingdoms, and after their return from Babylonian exile, the prophets wrote of promises to the people of Israel regarding the land and Jerusalem. All told, from Joshua’s military defeat of the kings of Jericho, Hebron, and Jerusalem, during the 14th century BC, until the last of the descendents of Jacob were taken into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 BC, this people spent 800 years in the land and 400 years in the city of Jerusalem.

And just to remind us of the historicity of these events, consider archaeologists’ discovery of Nebuchadnezzar’s palace. ²¹



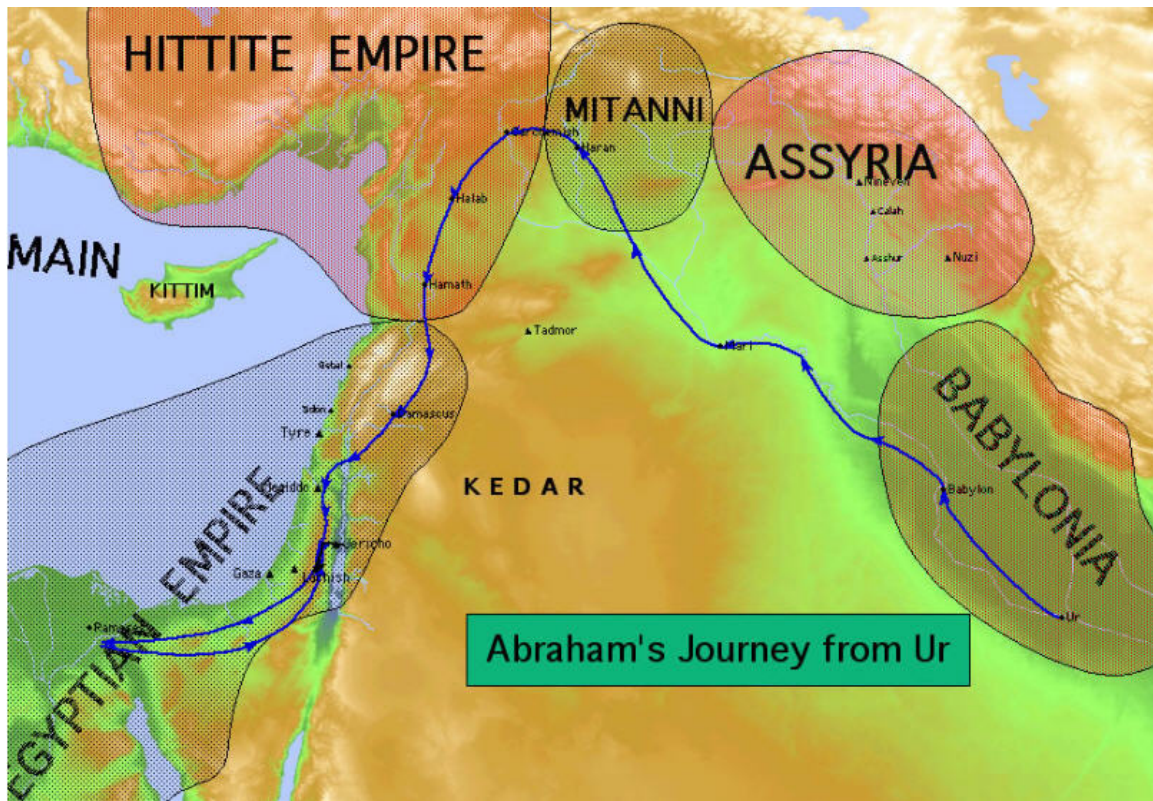
(The pictures shown above, of Nebuchadnezzar’s palace, were taken by a friend who grew up in Iraq. The one below was found on [Atlas Tours travel](#) website.)



As hundreds of thousands of people have had their homes foreclosed over the last 2 years, I wonder what it would have felt like for Jews, like Daniel, to have been removed from their homes, not because of their individual financial situation, but due to the invasion of what was the leading Empire in the world at the time.

In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim [605 BC], king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem and besieged it. ²²

As we watch the events surrounding the Iraq war, since Operation Desert Storm in 1991, you will recall that [Baghdad lies 90 kilometers north of the ancient city of Babylon](#), where Daniel and his peers were taken in 605 BC. Also, before making his long journey to the land of Canaan, ²³ Israel today, Abraham, the father of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, came from the ancient city of Ur, near the modern city of [Nasiriyah, Iraq](#).



(Picture from [Austin Graduate School of Theology](#))

The Persians

Moving forward, we learn of the Babylonian Empire's decline at the hands of Cyrus the Great, ruler of the Achaemenid Persian Empire from 550 BC through 330 BC. According to the [British Museum, Cyrus](#) founded the Achaemenid Empire by conquering the Median Empire, bringing together the Medes and the Persians, and capturing Babylon in 539 BC.

When Cyrus defeated the Babylonians in 539 BC, the captive Jews would have been encourage by the writings of Jeremiah – during the last four kings of the Southern kingdom ²⁴ from the 7th century until 586 BC – and Isaiah – from king Uzziah through Hezekiah, ²⁵ from 790 through 686 BC. For, based on the words written earlier in these books, the Jews were to look for the timing of the invasion and the name of the invader:

This is what the Lord says: “You will be in Babylon for seventy years. But then I will come and do for you all the good things I have promised, and I will bring you home again. ²⁶

When I say of Cyrus, ‘He is my shepherd,’ he will certainly do as I say. He will command, ‘Rebuild Jerusalem’; he will say, ‘Restore the Temple.’ This is what the Lord says to Cyrus, his anointed one, whose right hand he will empower. Before him, mighty kings will be paralyzed with fear. Their fortress gates will be opened, never to shut again. ²⁷

So that we can more fully appreciate the person of Cyrus and the relevance of the “seventy years,” as found in the writings of Jeremiah, let’s retrace our steps for a second. Remember, Pharaoh Neco II marched a large Egyptian Army to support the Assyrians against the rising Babylonian Empire.

In 605 BC, at the [Battle of Carchemish](#), the Babylonian Empire became the predominant power and the Assyrian Empire ceased to be. In the year 538BC, Cyrus issued a decree. Ezra 1:1-2 states:

Now in the first year of Cyrus, king of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, king of Persia, so that he sent a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and also put it in writing, saying, Thus says Cyrus, king of Persia, “the LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and He has appointed me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah.”

Now consider the following comments from Ezra 3:8:

Now in the second year of their coming to the house of God at Jerusalem in the second month, Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jozadak and the rest of their brothers the priests and the Levites, and all who came from the captivity to Jerusalem, began the work and appointed the Levites from twenty years and older to oversee the work of the house of the LORD.

So when was the “second year...in the second month?” The [Bible Knowledge Commentary](#) places this date in May to June of 536 BC, ²⁸ exactly 70 years (the Jewish calendar is based on 360 days a year, versus the Gregorian at 365 days a year) after the first deportation to Babylon, in 605 BC.

In Ezra 6:15, we learn that “this temple was completed on the third day of the month Adar; it was the sixth year of the reign of King Darius.” According to the [Bible Knowledge Commentary](#), “the temple was completed in Adar (Feb-Mar) of 515 – 21 years after the work started, in 536, and 4 1/2 years after Haggai began his prophesying. This was 70 1/2 years after the temple had been destroyed on August 12, 586 BC.”²⁹ The British Museum attests, “Darius was declared king. He was arguably the greatest of the Persian Rulers. Darius’ first capital was Susa.”³⁰ This same city is mentioned in the account of Esther,³¹ a Jewish woman who lived during the [reign of Xerxes](#), Darius’ successor to the Persian Empire:

These events happened in the days of King Xerxes, who reigned over 127 provinces stretching from India to Ethiopia. At that time Xerxes ruled his empire from his royal throne at the fortress of Susa.³²

In our January 2007 newsletter, “Persia: Fuel for the Fire,” we note:

Iran was indeed Islamized, but it was not Arabized. Persians remained Persians. And after the interval of silence, Iran reemerged as a separate, different and distinctive element within Islam, eventually adding a new element even to Islam itself. Culturally, politically, and most remarkable of all even religiously, the Iranian contribution to this new Islamic civilization is of immense importance.

By the time of the great Mongol invasions of the thirteenth century, Iranian Islam had become not only an important component; it had become a dominant element in Islam itself, and for several centuries the main centers of Islamic power and civilization were in countries that were, if not Iranian, at least marked by Iranian civilization.³³

As one can see from the map below, the [Persian Empire](#) encompassed a huge portion of the Middle East. In fact, up until 1935, the area the world refers to as Iran, was called Persia.



Professor Ehsan Yarshater published a series of articles, titled “Persia or Iran” in Volume XXII, no. 1 of the 1989 edition of *Iranian Studies*, to help the West better understand the connection between Persia and Iran.

In 1935 the Iranian government requested those countries which it had diplomatic relations with, to call Persia “Iran,” which is the name of the country in Persian.

At first “Iran” sounded alien (for non-Iranians), and many failed to recognize its connection with Persia. As time passed and as a number of events – like the Allied invasion of Iran in 1941 and the nationalization of the oil industry under Prime Minister Dr Mohammad Mosaddeq – put the country in the headlines, the name “Iran” became generally accepted, and “Persia” fell into comparative disuse, though more slowly in Britain than in the United States.

Before we move away from the subject of Persia, it is worth noting that an Australian geologist named William Knox d’Arcy established the first oil contract in this area with the Persian Monarch Shah Muzaffar al-din. The price paid in 1901, just a few years prior to oil powered ships, airplanes and trucks, of WWI, the Shah granted d’Arcy a 16% royalty. For the enormous sum, at the time, of \$20,000, d’Arcy and his heirs were granted:

...full powers and unlimited liberty, for a period of sixty years to probe, pierce, and drill at their will the depths of Persian soil; in consequence of which all the sub-soil products sought by him without exception will remain his inalienable property. ³⁴

As oil became one of the most valuable commodities of the 20th century, d’Arcy’s contract ended up in the hands of one of history’s most famous oil companies.

In the days of his autocratic power, before 1914, the Shah sought to raise funds for his personal use by selling concessions and monopolies to foreign groups. Of these concessions the most significant was one granted in 1901 to William Knox D’Arcy for the exclusive right to exploit all stages of the petroleum business in all Iran except the five provinces bordering Russia. The control of this concession shuffled from one corporate entity to another until, in 1909, it came into possession of the new Anglo-Persian Oil Company. This company established the world’s largest refinery at Abadan on the Persian Gulf and, by 1914, signed an agreement with the British government which made it the chief source of fuel for the British Navy. It generally extended its activities, through a myriad of subsidiary corporations, throughout the world and simultaneously came to be controlled through secret stock ownership by the British government. ³⁵

As the old saying goes, “the more things change, the more they stay the same.”

Jerusalem under the Roman Empire

In Edward Gibbon’s, The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, we learn that Augustus Caesar’s (27 BC to 14 AD) unique role in history was transitioning the Roman Empire from continued military conquest to a “spirit of moderation:”

It was reserved for Augustus to relinquish the ambitious design of subduing the whole earth, and to introduce a spirit of moderation into the public council. ³⁶

At his death, he bequeathed to his successors “the advice of confining the empire within those limits which nature seems to have placed as its permanent bulwarks and boundaries: on the west the Atlantic Ocean, the Rhine and Danube on the

north, the Euphrates on the east, and towards the south the sandy deserts of Arabia and Africa.”³⁷

In the New Testament, Luke’s writings note Augustus as the ruling emperor of Rome at the time of Christ birth.

Now in those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus, that a census be taken of all the inhabited earth.³⁸

After going to Bethlehem, the census required each person to return to their own city, based on lineage. Accordingly, eight days after the birth of Jesus, Joseph and Mary went to Jerusalem and had Jesus circumcised in the Temple.



And when eight days had passed, before His circumcision, His name was then called Jesus, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb. And when the days for their purification according to the Law of Moses were completed, they brought Him up to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord.³⁹

In seeking to understand the centrality of the Temple to Jewish life, let us recall that Solomon completed his Temple in 960 BC. Religious belief was as the center of Jewish life and the Temple was at the center of their religious beliefs, until the Babylonians, under Nebuchadnezzar, destroyed this structure in 586 BC.

Under Persian rule, Cyrus decreed that the Jews could return to Jerusalem to build a second temple,⁴⁰ which was completed in 515 BC. When Alexander the Great captured Jerusalem from the Persians, in 332 BC, this structure was still in place. And a century and a half later, the Greek ruler, Antiochus IV Epiphanes, desecrated the same by “stripping it of its treasures, sacrificing a pig on the altar, installing a statute of himself in the Temple courtyard and transforming the building into a temple for Zeus.”⁴¹

Judah Maccabeus led a Jewish revolt against the Seleucid Empire and purified the temple in 165 BC, an event commemorated by the Jews at the festival of

Hanukkah. Eventually Mattathias's (Maccabeus father) sons established the Hasmonean Dynasty, in which Israel was independent for the first time in more than 450 years. ⁴² A century later the dynasty fell when a struggle for the control led to a fight between Hycannus II and Aristobulus II, the former opening the Jerusalem's gates to the Roman Emperor Pompey, whose help he enlisted to gain power over his brother. ⁴³

In 40 BC, the Roman Senate appointed Herod as King of Judea. Herod peacefully took down the second temple, which had been in place since 515 BC, and replaced it with a greater structure. ⁴⁴ This was the Temple to which Joseph and Mary took Jesus when he was eight days old.

When Jesus started his ministry, Jerusalem was often the place from which he taught. Of course, some welcomed him and loved his teachings, hanging on his every word, and others hated him and sought to destroy him:

On the next day the large crowd who had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of the palm trees and went out to meet Him, and began to shout, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel." ⁴⁵

When He approached Jerusalem, He saw the city and wept over it. And He was teaching daily in the temple; but the chief priests and the scribes and the leading men among the people were trying to destroy Him, and they could not find anything that they might do, for all the people were hanging on to every word He said. ⁴⁶

And, indeed, Jerusalem was the city in which Jesus was crucified:

"We are going up to Jerusalem," he said, "and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will hand him over to the Gentiles, who will mock him and spit on him, flog him and kill him. Three days later he will rise." ⁴⁷

And, as his death, so also Jesus' resurrection occurred in Jerusalem.

As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; but they were kept from recognizing him.

He asked them, "What are you discussing together as you walk along?"

They stood still, their faces downcast. One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, "Are you only a visitor to Jerusalem and do not know the things that have happened there in these days?" ⁴⁸

When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. ⁴⁹

They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the eleven and those with them, assembled together and saying, "It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon." Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread.

While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, "Do you have anything here to eat?" They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate it in their presence.

He said to them, 'This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.' Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, "This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at *Jerusalem*. You are witnesses of these things. I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.' ⁵⁰

And in the beginning of this new era, Jerusalem took on a key role as the followers of Christ met in groups within that city. In the book of Acts, Luke – the only Gentile author of all the Old and New Testament – writes:

To these He also presented Himself alive after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God. Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, “Which,” He said, “you heard of from Me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now...” but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.”⁵¹



(Picture from the [Encyclopedia Britannica](#) website)

And, Jesus followers had special ties to Jerusalem.

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place... Now there were Jews living in Jerusalem, devout men from every nation under heaven. And when this sound occurred, the crowd came together, and was bewildered because each one of them was hearing them speak in his own language.⁵²

Before his death, Jesus made an interesting statement regarding Herod's Temple, which came to pass within a few decades after his time on the earth.

As he was going out of the temple, one of His disciples said to Him, "Teacher, behold what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings." And Jesus said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left upon another which will not be torn down." ⁵³

And in 67 AD, the Roman General Titus laid siege to the Temple. Josephus composed his work, The Jewish War, just ten years after the First Jewish Revolt of 70 AD. As a defender of the city and the temple during this revolt, Josephus laments the destruction of Herod's Temple:

Anyone would justly lament the destruction of such a work as this was, since it was the most admirable of all the works that we have seen or heard of, both its curious structure and its magnitude, and also for the vast wealth bestowed upon it, as well as for the glorious reputation it had for its holiness. ⁵⁴

In his film series, The Age of Terror, Zola Levitt helps us understand the extent of the destruction of human life at that time:

The conqueror, the Roman General, Titus completely wrecked the place. They got rid of the Jewish presence on the mount. In Titus's invasion, 1.1 million Jewish people were killed. After 70 AD, a number of years passed without much Jewish activity here.

In A.D. 70, after a tremendous insurrection, the Romans imitated Nebuchadnezzar in his devastations 650 years before, and again Jerusalem was left a howling waste. For fifty years it disappeared from history. ⁵⁵

The Jewish fast Tisha B'av mourns this event annually. The details carved in the Roman Arch of Titus, commemorating victory over the Jews, shows the spoils taken from Jerusalem in 70 AD.



([Siege of Jerusalem, 70AD](#), Wikipedia.org)

After the fifty year period Zola Levitt referenced, a second Jewish revolt, the Bar-Kokhba Revolt, took place between 132 and 135 AD. This time, under Emperor Hadrian, the Romans crushed the Jews, killing over 580,000. ⁵⁶ Dio Cassius, a Roman historian, reports the Romans burning 985 Jewish villages to the ground. When Hadrian rebuilt Jerusalem after the revolt, he named the city Aelia Capitolina. ⁵⁷ And, here in 135 AD, the Roman Emperor Hadrian first uses the term Palestine:

From the fifth century BC, following the historian Herodotus, Greeks called the eastern coast of the Mediterranean “the Philistine Syria” using the Greek language form of the name. In AD 135, after putting down the Bar Kokhba revolt, the second major Jewish revolt against Rome, the Emperor Hadrian wanted to blot out the name of the Roman “Provincia Judaea” and so renamed it “Provincia Syria Palaestina,” the Latin version of the Greek name and the first use of the name as an administrative unit. The name “Provincia Syria Palaestina” was later shortened to Palaestina, from which the modern, anglicized “Palestine” is derived. ⁵⁸

Before we examine the 7th century transition to Muslim and Persian control of Jerusalem, consider the following question: As we are reminded of the plight of the Palestinian people and their desire to have their own nation, was there ever a race or national group of individuals known as the Palestinians? If not, what is the purpose of political and academic leaders continuing to support this theory?

Having begun teaching Islamic history at the University of London in 1938, [Dr. Bernard Lewis](#) – author of a recent film on the rise of radical Islam, [The Third Jihad](#) – is one of the world’s most prolific Middle East history scholars. In the 1970s, Dr. Lewis stated something even more pertinent to world events today:

The official adoption of the name Palestine in Roman usage to designate the territories of the former Jewish principality of Judea seems to date from after the suppression of the great Jewish revolt of Bar-Kokhba in the year 135 B.C. ...it would seem that the name Judea was abolished...and the country renamed Palestine or Syria Palestina, with the intention of obliterating its historic Jewish identity. The earlier name did not entirely disappear, and as late as the 4th century CE, we still find a Christian author, Epiphanius, referring to “Palestine, that is, Judea.”⁵⁹

Though the conflict and the plight of the “Palestinian refugees” continues to capture headlines, we must concede that the historical record shows the Jewish people had a temple, and later, ruins, near the Al-Aqsa Mosque. Or, are we to believe that there was no Jewish influence on Jerusalem prior to the Muslim invasion in the 7th century?

The Dome of the Rock

After the Second Revolt of 135 AD ended, many Jews left the land, and those proclaiming to follow Christ, whether Jew or Gentile, began entering. In the beginning of the 4th century, Emperor Constantine moved the capital of the Roman Empire to Constantinople, and though it still took over a thousand years for historians to refer to the Eastern Roman Empire as the Byzantine Empire, the East Empire was begun.

Having existed under the name of Aelia Capitolina, as Emperor Hadrian name it in 135 AD, Jerusalem recovered its ancient name when Constantine was emperor, from 312 to 337 AD. Once Constantine declared Christianity a lawful religion,⁶⁰ Jerusalem was adorned with costly and magnificent Christian edifices,⁶¹ and Christians held the predominant role in Jerusalem until the 7th century.⁶²

According to Hershel Shanks’ Jerusalem: An Archaeological Biography (1995), during the seventh century, Jerusalem was controlled by three different groups:

In 614, the Persians captured Jerusalem. They did not manage to hold it for long, but long enough to destroy most of the churches.

The next victory belonged to the Byzantine [East Roman] Christians. On March 21, 629, the Byzantine emperor Heraclius entered Jerusalem in splendid procession at the head of his army. He entered through the

Golden Gate, the same gate through which tradition tells us that Jesus entered the city. Jerusalem was once again a Christian city.

Despite the ostensible victory, the Byzantine hold of Palestine was severely weakened. This left the country open to relatively easy conquest by a third force – the Muslim Arabs. In 634, Arab forces attacked Gaza. Four years later, Jerusalem was in their hands. The local patriarch Sophronius surrendered the city peaceably in the spring of 638.

The Muslim caliph Omar, Commander of the Faithful, entered the city on foot. The Byzantine period in the east had ended. The Arab period, which determined the dominant character of the region for the next 1,300 years, had begun. Jerusalem now became a Muslim city. The Temple Mount, desolate during the Byzantine period, became the focus of the city once again. ⁶³

[Professor Rashid Khalidi, the Edward Said Professor of Arab Studies](#) of Columbia University corroborates Shanks research:

The Muslim conquerors understood that this entire site had been the location of the temple first built by Solomon whose repeated destruction is described in the Qur'an, and what they found on their entry into the city was in fact the deserted platform on which the Herodian temple described by Josephus had stood until its demolition by Titus in 70 A.D.

Though Sophronius ultimately surrendered the city peacefully, it was under siege four months before he offered to do so. And, the terms of surrender provide us with a connection from the past to the present. One of the conditions for the [surrender](#) pertained to a tax, or tribute, known as jizyah. In Caliph Umar's covenant with Sophronius, the city's Christian population was guaranteed civil and religious liberty if they would pay the Islamic tax known as the jizya. This tax is still apart of countries in the world whose government is founded on Shariah Law, and the teachings of the Quran. According to the website, [Islamtoday.com](#), "This is the verse (Surah al-Tawbah: 29) that establishes the jizyah – a tax that is paid by non-Muslims who live as citizens in the Muslim state."

Fight those who believe not in Allah nor the Last Day, nor hold that forbidden which hath been forbidden by Allah and His Messenger, nor

acknowledge the Religion of Truth from among the People of the Book, until they pay the Jizyah with willing submission and feel themselves subdued. ⁶⁴

In his work, [The Dome of the Rock](#), Princeton professor of Advance Studies, Oleg Grabar, states that under the Byzantine Christians, Jews were not permitted to live in the city. ⁶⁵ But, according to [The Jewish Virtual Library](#), “the Jews in Palestine assisted the Muslim forces in defeating the Persians who had reneged on an agreement to protect them and allow them to resettle in Jerusalem. As a reward for their assistance, the Muslims permitted the Jews to return to Jerusalem and to guard the Temple Mount.”

After the Muslims took control of [Jerusalem in 637-638 AD](#), caliph Umar gave the command to prepare the ground on the Temple Mount for a Masjid Al-Aqsa. After 660 AD, Mu’awiya, the first caliph of the Omayyad Dynasty (661-750AD), built a house of prayer on the Temple Mount, an adequate structure until Abd al-Malik built the Dome of the Rock in 692. ⁶⁶

The eastern part of Jerusalem contains the Temple Mount. So, as the Palestinians vie for Muslim control of this city, we need to understand how Muslims came to see the Dome of the Rock as sacred to their faith.

According to [Sacred Destinations](#), Abd al-Malik “wished to erect a beautiful Muslim building that could compete with the majestic churches of Christendom and would be a symbolic statement to both Jews and Christians of the superiority of the new faith of Islam.” Shanks’ research supports this view:

As one scholar has stated, the Muslim program of building on the Haram was an attack in what amounted to an “ideological cold war” between the Christian and Muslim empires at the time. ⁶⁷

As [Muhammad](#) did not have an influence on the Arab world until 613 AD, the younger Islamic religion sought to shift the city’s focus away from Christian shrines to newer Muslim shrines.

In the words of the Arab historian Muqaddasi (985 AD), “Is it not evident that ‘Abd al-Malik [builder of the Dome of the Rock], seeing the greatness of the martyrism of the Holy Sepulchre and its magnificence was moved lest it should dazzle the minds of the Muslims and hence erected above the

Dome of the Rock which is now seen there?” The inner measurements of the domes on the Dome of the Rock and over the Holy Sepulchre are virtually identical: a little more than 65 feet. ⁶⁸

One of the reasons the location of the Dome of the Rock was seen as sacred by followers of Muhammad is found in Surah 17:1, stating:

Glory to (Allah) Who did take His Servant for Journey by night from the Sacred Mosque to the Farthest Mosque whose precincts We did bless— in order that We might show him some of Our Signs: for He is the one Who heareth and seeth (all things). ⁶⁹

Though this verse does not specifically mention Jerusalem, the Al-Aqsa Mosque or the Dome of the Rock, it is believed to refer to Muhammad’s night journey and ascent into heaven.

One popular tradition suggests that the building commemorates Muhammed’s flight to heaven. According to this later Muslim tradition, while Muhammad was sleeping in Mecca near the sacred Ka’aba, the angel Gabriel came to Muhammed and took him away, mounted on a winged steed with a human face name Buraq. After a night journey to Jerusalem, they ascended to heaven from the rock (al-Sakhra) at the center of the Dome of the Rock. ⁷⁰

There is also confusion today as to whether the Dome of the Rock or the Dome of the Ascension, another structure on the Temple Mount, should be recognized as the place where Muhammad ascended. Oleg Grabar notes, “Had the first and largest of all buildings on the Haram been built as a *martyrium* to the Ascension of Muhammad, there could certainly not have been any need for a second *martyrium*.” ⁷¹

Both the Jewish and Muslim faiths have specific ties to the actual rock found inside of the Dome of the Rock. To Jews, it represents the place of Abraham’s near-sacrifice of Isaac, while to Muslims, it represents place of Abraham’s near-sacrifice of Ishmael:

The Temple Mount is also the site where the Hebrew king Solomon constructed his famous temple, which was later destroyed by the Babylonians...Muslims later built the Dome of the Rock, a shrine at the

center of the Temple Mount, to mark the location from which Muhammad ascended to heaven, as well as the site of Abraham's sacrifice and Solomon's temple. ⁷²

The Jewish texts, Genesis 22:2, 14 and II Chronicles 3:1, were both written centuries before Herod's Temple and Christ. They state:

Then God said, "Take your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains I will tell you about....So Abraham called that place The Lord Will Provide. And to this day it is said, "On the mountain of the Lord it will be provided." ⁷³

Then Solomon began to build the temple of the Lord in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the Lord had appeared to his father David. It was on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite, the place provided by David.⁷⁴

From the Jewish account of Abraham and Ishmael in the book of Genesis, former terrorist Tass Saada brought out the following point regarding Ishmael:

The angel of the Lord also said to her [Hagar], "You are now with child and you will have a son. You shall name him Ishmael, for the Lord has heard of your misery. ⁷⁵

And as for Ishmael, I have heard you: I will surely bless him; I will make him fruitful and will greatly increase his numbers. He will be the father of twelve rulers, and I will make him into a great nation. ⁷⁶

I knew that the Arabic word *ishma* even today means "to hear"... When I read those words, I just about came out of my chair. So we Arabs were not cursed by God after all! ⁷⁷

How I wish the Jews and Arabs had openly discussed these verses for centuries. While the Jew's wrote about a God who blessed both Ishmael and Isaac, in the Quran, Allah repeatedly views the Jews in an extremely negative light:

And the Jews say: Ezra is the son of Allah, and the Christians say: The Messiah is the son of Allah. That is their saying with their mouths. They

imitate the saying of those who disbelieved of old. Allah (Himself) fighteth against them. How perverse are they! ⁷⁸

Shall I inform you of something worse than that, regarding the recompense from Allah: those (Jews) who incurred the Curse of Allah and His Wrath, and those of whom (some) He transformed into monkeys and swines... ⁷⁹

Before we leave the 7th century, [Dr Oleg Grabar](#), a historian and archeologist at Harvard specializing in Islamic art and architecture, comments on [eschatology](#) (the doctrine of the last things) as it relates to Jerusalem.

Whatever specifics of decorative rhetoric were introduced over the centuries by Jews, Christians, or Muslims, Jerusalem in the seventh century was the site prepared and groomed to hail the end of the time and to proclaim a reward for the just and punishment for the wicked. Regardless of the idiosyncrasies of each religion, all of them looked forward to the moment when, within the walled city and its eastern extension, directly, or through signs, God would return to earth and release the children of Adam from original sin, bringing peace, justice, and happiness to those who were found to be deserving. That spirit of expectation was part of the city's inheritance. It could and still can be found wherever there are Jews, Christians, and Muslims. Because this hope was focused on a time to come and events that had not yet happened, it lent itself to endless growth and to unusual manifestations, even in our own time.

...all three monotheistic faiths were ripe with announcements of the end of time, the coming of the Messiah, and the beginning of divine judgment. ⁸⁰

From his decades of research on the Dome of the Rock, Oleg expounds on its role in Islamic eschatology:

He [Allah] would appear at the place from which He left the earth at the time of creation, the Rock over which the Dome was built. His messenger on earth and the intercessor for the faithful was the Prophet Muhammad, who was honored and praised in the inscriptions of the building and who

was the last of a prophetic tradition that included Abraham and especially Jesus. ⁸¹

When we consider the history of the city of Jerusalem, and specifically the area known to Jews and Christians as the [Temple Mount](#) or to Muslims as the [Al-Haram al- Sharif](#), the Noble Sanctuary, and its eschatological role in all three faiths, is it any wonder that in 1989, Time would call this area, “potentially the most volatile 35 acres on earth?”⁸² As we discuss the next turning point in the control of Jerusalem, I refer to C.G. Addison’s work, [The Knights Templar History](#):

Omar, the Moslem Caliph, took the city in A.D. 637; and from that period to 1099, it was held by one or the other nationalities professing the religion of Mohammed. Then it took its present (1866) name – El Khads. ⁸³

The Crusades

An Iraqi friend of mine sent me an electronic copy of a book written in 1845. I always find it fascinating to read books written long before anyone alive today walked the earth. And as eschatology played into the 7th century construction of the Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem was impacted by the 11th century eschatological teachings of the Christians in Europe.

The object of these holy wars, which occupy so conspicuous a figure in history of which the period [the Crusades] of which we are now treating, was the recovery of the city of Jerusalem, and the Holy Sepulchre, from the hands of the Turkish infidels, by whom it had been taken in the year 1065, for centuries past, the practice had prevailed of making pilgrims to Jerusalem. In the tenth century this custom had much increased, and had become almost universal, from a general belief of the near approach of the end of the world, arising from a misinterpretation of Revelation chapter 20, 2-5. Toward the conclusion of the century, crowds of men and women flocked from all over Europe, to Jerusalem, in the frantic hope of expiating their sins by the long and painful journey to the Holy land. When the dreaded epoch assigned by those misguided individuals, for the end of the world, had passed by, the current pilgrimages still continued to flow on in the direction it had taken, and that too in spite of the heavy tax of a piece of gold laid upon the head of the pilgrims, and the brutal cruelties and

indignities to which they were often exposed from the barbarians and infidel conquerors of the Holy city. Thus it appears that among the causes which eventually gave birth to the Crusades, was the wide-spread delusion of the immediate conflagration of the world, in the year one thousand of the Christian era. ⁸⁴

Between the 7th and late 11th centuries, the armies of the Muslims and the Eastern Orthodox Byzantine Empire fought against each other in many battles. As the 11th century began, Caliph al-Hakim bi-Amr Allah ordered the destruction of Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which the Byzantines held to be Christ's burial place. In 1039, after requiring large sums to be paid for the right, his successor permitted the Byzantine Empire to rebuild it. While pilgrimages to the Holy Land were common during this period, there were times when pilgrims were captured and some of the clergy were killed. ⁸⁵

According the C.G. Addison, a group of Crusaders at Emmaus ⁸⁶ met up with another group from Bethlehem to protect the venerable Church of the Nativity. On June 10, 1099, the "Army of the Lord" ascended the mountains of Benjamin which stood at 2,600 feet above sea level.

[Then on] July 15, 1099 the Holy City was taken by assault by the Army of the Crusade, under Godfrey. ⁸⁷

According to Wikipedia, the Crusaders began the siege of Jerusalem on June 7th, which [continued until July 15, 1099](#).

Iftikhar ad-Daula, the Fatimid governor of Jerusalem, was aware of the Crusaders' intentions. Therefore, he expelled all of Jerusalem's Christian inhabitants. He also poisoned most of the wells in the area. On June 7 the crusaders reached Jerusalem itself. Many cried upon seeing the city they had journeyed so long to reach.

The [1099 Siege of Jerusalem](#) left no group unscathed:

As with Antioch the crusaders put the city to a siege, in which the crusaders themselves probably suffered more than the citizens of the city, due to the lack of food and water around Jerusalem. Of the estimated 5,000 knights who took part in the Princes' Crusade, only about 1,500 remained, along with another 12,000 healthy foot-soldiers (out of perhaps

as many as 30,000). Godfrey, Robert of Flanders, and Robert of Normandy (who had now also left Raymond to join Godfrey) besieged the north walls as far south as the Tower of David, while Raymond set up his camp on the western side, from the Tower of David to Mount Zion. A direct assault on the walls on June 13 was a failure. Without water or food, both men and animals were quickly dying of thirst and starvation and the crusaders knew time was not on their side.

In his 2005 film series, the Age of Terror, Zola Levitt states:

The Crusaders rode in killing Jews and Arabs alike. It was a terrible time. At one point they herded 1,100 Jewish people into a synagogue and burned it to the ground.

Again the Wikipedia account of the 1099 Siege addresses the condition of the Muslims and Jews:

Many Muslims sought shelter in the Al-Aqsa Mosque, the Dome of the Rock, and the Temple Mount area generally. According to the Gesta Francorum, speaking only of the Temple Mount area, "... [Our men] were killing and slaying even *to the Temple of Solomon*, where the slaughter was so great that our men waded in blood up to their ankles..." According to Raymond of Aguilers, also writing solely of the Temple Mount area, "*in the Temple and porch of Solomon* men rode in blood up to their knees and bridle reins." However, this imagery should not be taken literally; it was taken directly from biblical passage Apocalypse [Revelations] 14:20. There is no eyewitness evidence for such a wholesale slaughter outside the Temple Mount area.

In summary, although the Crusaders killed many of the Muslim and Jewish residents, eyewitness accounts (Gesta Francorum, Raymond of Aguilers, and the Cairo Geniza documents) demonstrate that some Muslim and Jewish residents were allowed to live, as long as they left Jerusalem. All modern estimates of the numbers actually killed in Jerusalem after the Crusader siege are entirely speculative; the primary sources from the period simply do not allow a reliable estimate to be made.

Almost twenty years later, a group of Crusader's, known as the Knights Templar today, were founded and given the responsibility of protecting the Holy Lands and Jerusalem:

The Order of the Poor Knights of Christ and the Temple of Solomon was founded by de Payen, a knight who had fought in the First Crusade and participated in the capture of Jerusalem. On a date lost to history in the year 1118 AD, de Payen and eight comrades, unsolicited, presented themselves at the palace of Baldwin I, the King of Jerusalem. Baldwin's late brother, Godfrey of Bouillon had taken the city from the Saracens nineteen years earlier. The Patriarch of Jerusalem was also present at the meeting. ⁸⁸

From the beginning of the Order of the Poor Knights of Christ and the Temple of Solomon, in 1118 AD, until 1312, when Pope Clement IV abolished the Order of the Temple, this group of Knights was seen as the guardians of the Holy Land for Christendom and, more accurately, Europe. As Europe operated under the feudal system at the time, the Catholic Church had close ties with many kings in Europe. And since the Knights Templar, as the Order came to be known, influenced their world politically, monetarily, militarily, and religiously, some elements of the city and the Holy Land are best seen through the history of the Knights Templar.

After the Crusaders took Jerusalem, Patriarch Dagobert, the first Archbishop of Pisa, crowned [Baldwin I as its king](#). Baldwin I converted the Al-Aqsa mosque into his palace and gave an entire wing of it to the Knights Templars. ⁸⁹ Some contend that the Crusaders believed this was the original site of the Temple of Solomon, but others have argued that both Solomon's and Herod's Temples rest under what is today the Dome of the Rock. ⁹⁰

The Templars provided safety to the pilgrims from Europe as they journeyed to Jerusalem. C.G. Addison states, "The infidels had indeed been driven out of Jerusalem, but not out of Palestine."

To this end, the Templars received papal approval at the council of Troves in Champagne, France, in 1129, and in 1139, Pope Innocent II issued a papal bull, *Omne datum optimum*, giving the Templars religious, military and financial privileges. ⁹¹ When the Templars journeyed to France, St. Bernard, the abbot of

Clairvaux, was one of their most vocal supporters. In his pamphlet, *De Laude Novae Militiae* (In Praise of the New Knighthood), Clairvaux gave the knights their call to arms.

But the soldiers of Christ indeed securely fight the battles of their Lord, in no wise fearing sin either from the slaughter of the enemy, or danger from their own death. When indeed death is given or received for Christ, it has nothing of crime in it, but much glory. ⁹²

Bernard also declared “Ye ought to have lands,” and the Templars became some of Europe’s largest landholders. Indeed, their land holdings eventually stretched from Scotland to the castles of Palestine. ⁹³ So how did a religious order, known as “the Poor Knights of Christ,” gain so much financial power? In his work, [The Knights Templar: God’s Warriors, the Devil’s Bankers](#), Frank Sanello noted some convenient ways to maneuver around the church’s vow of poverty:

As for the vow of poverty, the Church at this time conveniently recognized three forms of poverty: the first and strictest forbade the possession of all goods and property; the second prohibited the individual from owning property but allowed wealth to be shared by the group to which the individual belonged; the third accepted individual possession of food and clothing, with all other goods shared in common. The Templars adopted the second form, which would allow them to become enormously wealthy despite their vow of poverty, which was elastic. ⁹⁴

Upon Pope Innocent II’s issuance of his Papal Bull, the Templars only answered to the Pope himself. They were independent of all kings, princes, and bishops. ⁹⁵ As time went on this produced jealousy and animosity between the Templars and local ruling powers. At the height of their wealth, the Templars are estimated to have owned 9,000 castles and manor houses. Their income rose to an annual income, in Europe alone, of six million pounds sterling. And despite their vow of poverty, the order forbade sharing donations with other charities. ⁹⁶

The fighting between the Muslims and the Crusaders continued throughout the 12th century. In 1187, at the [Battle of Hattin](#) , near Jerusalem, the Templars were defeated by Saladin, the founder of the Ayyubids, an Islamic Dynasty of Egypt

and Syria that originated from the Kurds in Armenia. ⁹⁷ Even as chronicled by an Arab eyewitness, the battle provides insight into the bravery of the Crusaders:

Never have I seen a bolder or more powerful army, nor one more to be feared by believers in the true faith. ⁹⁸

Due to their refusal to convert to Islam, Saladin ordered the execution of all captured Templars.

One Muslim chronicler at the time, Ibn al-Athir, famously stated in his account that the Templars (Dawiyya) and the Hospitallers (Isbaitariyya) were specifically singled out for ill treatment by Saladin amongst all the prisoners only because they had fought more fiercely than all the other Franks. As not a single Knight Templar was willing to convert on a number of occasion, preferring instead to face martyrdom, this undoubtedly only served to further strengthen Saladin's resolve. ⁹⁹

Two days after the Battle in 1187, Saladin assembled his entire army to witness the fate of the Templars. The knights were given the same offer their leaders had been given: renounce Christ, embrace Islam, accept Mohammed as their prophet, and their lives would be spared. According to an Arab account, to a man every knight refused. Saladin's secretary Omad'eddin, having praised the Knights valor two days earlier, described the slaughter as follows:

Oh, how beautiful an ornament is the blood of the infidels sprinkled over the followers of the faith and the true religion! ¹⁰⁰

The Master of the Temple in London later wrote that 230 Templars were left to rot for three days where they were slain. ¹⁰¹ Jerusalem was once again under Muslim control.

Ironically, when King Richard the Lion Hearted brought a military campaign against Saladin in 1192, which ended with Saladin still in power, Saladin agreed to allow the Christian pilgrims access to Jerusalem and its holy sites, such as the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. ¹⁰²

As the 13th century unfolded, the political and financial power of the European Templars continued to grow, while the financial resources of those in Palestine

continued to diminish. Frank Sanello describes this growing power in the hands of the European Knights Templar as follows:

While they continued to defend the Holy Land, the Templar's operation in Europe expanded as they performed an impressive variety of tasks – hosting kings, serving as their bankers, mediating for the Pope, and acting as bill collectors. ¹⁰³

In her work, Knights Templar Encyclopedia, Dr. Karen Ralls corroborates the Templar's enormous financial gains during this era:

What had started out as basic financial services provided to pilgrims – a sideline to crusading – had in due course developed into a full-scale financial empire spanning many countries, akin to a modern day multinational corporation. A number of experts believe that some of the Templar business methods may well have been prototypes for some of our modern-day banking practices. ¹⁰⁴

Sanello illustrates their new role, noting Amalric de St. Maur's, Master of the Temple of London, signature on a deed executed by King John in 1203. "The Templars were so trusted that John deposited his entire fortune at the Temple of London. King Phillip Augustus of France stored vast amounts of gold and silver in the order's Paris branch."¹⁰⁵ The Templars introduced branch banking to medieval Europe:

Henry III did all his banking at the Temple. During his reign, the Royal Treasury was deposited at the Templars' London headquarters. The King repaid a loan to the Count of Flanders in annual installments drawn from Henry's funds on deposit at the Templars branch in Flanders. The immense wealth of the order was demonstrated by another payment that Henry made – 10,000 marks – to the Byzantine Emperor, using the King's account at the Templar branch in Constantinople. ¹⁰⁶

And the branch banking allowed "travelers' checks:"

The Templars also became an indispensable part of the 'business' of travel to and from the Holy Land. Their innovative branch banking was not reserved for heads. A pilgrim or Crusader was able to deposit money at a

Templar monastery/bank in a European city, then redeem these medieval travelers' checks upon arrival in the Holy Land. The Templars became Europe's primary moneychangers. ¹⁰⁷

And yet, during the 13th century, the fiscal resources that arrived in the hands of the Templars *in the Holy Lands* were meager. Palestinian Templar Grand Master De Montaignu's letter to Bishop Ely of England reflects the relative poverty of those Templars who were left to fight for the Holy Land:

We ourselves ...are so impoverished by the heavy expenses we have incurred in prosecuting the affairs of Jesus Christ, that we shall be unable to contribute the necessary funds, unless we speedily receive succour and subsidies from the faithful. ¹⁰⁸

But while the monetary systems and wealth of the Templars grew across Europe, during the 13th century the Crusades were primarily lost causes in the Holy Land. The only major victory for the Crusaders was lead by Frederick II, ruler of the Holy Roman Empire, in his campaign of 1228 - 1229. As this time, Jerusalem, but not the Temple Mount, was won back by a treaty. ¹⁰⁹ But, the truce between the Crusaders and the Muslims ended in 1244, when the Khwarezmian Turks swept into Palestine and sacked Jerusalem, slaughtering the entire city, including those who sought sanctuary in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. ¹¹⁰

The Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem ended in 1291, when the city of Acre was captured by al-Ashraf Khali. ¹¹¹ As the 14th century began, the Catholic Church and the Kings of England and France aligned against the Templars. Though the Templars had managed to amass great fortunes under the protection of the papal bull issued by Pope Innocent II in 1139, having lost control of Palestine and Jerusalem, they fell out of favor. This led to the end of the Order of the Templars, but its end did not come without extreme pain.

The lead character in the demise of the Knights Templar was Philip IV, known as Philip the Fair, of France. In 1307 he sent out secret instructions to the bailiffs in France telling them to seize every member of the order. In his letter he wrote:

Philip, by the grace of God, King of the French, to his beloved and faithful knights... A deplorable and most lamentable matter, full of bitterness and grief, a monstrous business, a thing that one can hear without horror,

transgressions unheard of, enormities and atrocities, contrary to every sentiment of humanity...have reached our ears. ¹¹²

Philip's letter and swift arrest all Templars across France would make one think the Templars were France's and the Catholic Church's worst enemies, rather than their defenders in the Holy Lands for the past two centuries.

It is far more likely that Philip's conflict with the Templars was motivated by his jealousy over their power and finances. A few short years prior, Philip had a run in with Pope Boniface, each seeing himself as the ultimate figure in Christendom. Philip accused Boniface of a number of crimes including heresy and Black Magic, accusations he also laid against the Templars. ¹¹³ Due to his war with England, which was ruled at the time by his brother in law, Edward I, Philip saw his debts increase dramatically. ¹¹⁴ In his Divine Comedy, Dante accused the French King, rather than the Templars, of greed.

To support his views that the Templars had committed immoral and heretical acts, Philip sought the approval of the papacy. One account states that after 12 days of torture, not one member of the Order confessed to the accusations. For this reason, Dominican monks, known as "the most refined and expert torturers of the day," were brought in. Their torture of 140 Templars was so ruthless that thirty-six of them died within a few weeks. ¹¹⁵ To continue the torture and trials of the Templars, Philip needed the assistance of Pope Clement V.

On November 22, 1307, Clement issued a papal bull, *Pastoralis Praeeminentiae*, ordering all Christian monarchs to arrest the Knights Templars and seize their assets. ¹¹⁶ And though Edward II would not go along with torture, he was quite willing to arrest and confiscate the property of the Templars in England. ¹¹⁷ After a ruinous war with Wales, ¹¹⁸ Edward II's father, Edward I, raided the London Temple's treasury in 1302. By the time Edward II took the throne the portable cash wealth stood at 150,000 gold florins, an amount equal to half of Edward II's annual expenses. ¹¹⁹

The Templars' trials and imprisonment occurred in England and France from Philip's first decree, in October 1307, until the last Templar Grand Master, Jacques de Meloy, was burned at the stake in March 1314 in Paris. And while Edward II forbade the use of torture, Philip seemed to relish it. ¹²⁰ At the height

of the inquisition, the Archbishop of Sens ruled that 54 Templars should be turned over the secular authorities, at which time bailiffs escorted them to a field in a Parisian suburb where they were all burned at the stake. ¹²¹

In 1311, Clement issued the papal bull, *Vox in excelso*, which officially abolished the Order of the Temple. In it, he stated that after several years of hearings, the Order had been so badly defamed in the minds of the public and other monarchs, that it could no longer properly defend Christendom or hope to gain good recruits in the future. ¹²² Clement issued this papal bull after he presided over the Council of Vienne, where he declared that since the charges of the Templars had not been proven, the Order was found not guilty. ¹²³ Clement issued another papal bull, *Ad providam*, in 1312, stating that the Order of the Temple's properties, assets, and archives were to be transferred to the Order of the Hospitallers of Jerusalem. ¹²⁴ And a decade later, Clement's successor, Pope John XXII was still embroiled in a property dispute.

In order to prod the monarchs, primarily French and English, to turn over this property to the church, John XXII threatened to condemn them to hell for their disobedience if they did not comply. Since Pope Innocent II had issued a papal bull, whereby the Templars only answered to the pope, Pope John XXII saw the property of the Templars as a subset of the Catholic Church's larger pool of assets. ¹²⁵ Still, John's warning did not move all parties – whether the clergy in England or powerful magnates in Parliament – to turn over their assets to the Order of the Hospitallers. ¹²⁶ Eventually King Philip sued the Hospitallers for £ 200,000, the amount he claimed it had cost him to persecute and imprison the Templars. ¹²⁷

Sadly, even after Clement's two papal bulls of 1311 and 1312, two of the Templars' leading officers were burned at the stake in 1314. ¹²⁸ As he was burned at the stake, James de Molay's final words haunted his executioners:

I do confess my guilt... which consists of having, to my shame and dishonour, suffered myself, through the pain of torture and the fear of death, to give utterance to falsehoods, imputing scandalous sins and iniquities to an illustrious order, which hath nobly served the cause of Christianity. I disdain to seek a wretched and disgraceful existence by engrafting another lie upon the original falsehood. ¹²⁹

In the end, the 11th and 12th century Crusades brought a great deal of death to Arab and Turkish Muslims as well as the European Christians. While this bit of history may sound as though it has little to do with our modern world today, a document known as the “[Chinon Parchment](#)” was found in the Vatican’s secret archives in 2001. This parchment, misfiled and unseen since 1628, records the Templar trials, showing that Clement absolved the Templars of all heresies in 1308.

The Roman Catholic Church’s current position on the Templars is that there was nothing inherently wrong with the Order or its Rule and that the persecution was unjust. The current position is that Clement was pressured into his actions by the magnitude of the scandal and the influence of King Philip of France. ¹³⁰ In a final twist of irony, within a year of Templar Jacques de Molay being burned at the stake, both King Philip and Pope Clement had died.

Aliyah: Return to the Land

Aliyah is a Hebrew word that means “ascent” in English. For many, it signifies the immigration of Jews to Israel. If we are to understand this term, we need to go back to the time of Abraham and consider what is written in the Torah or “the Law.” The Jews find their earliest promise of land in Bereishith, or Genesis:

On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram [later changed to Abraham], saying, “To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates.” ¹³¹

Some 400 years later, Moses discusses the terms of a conditional covenant between the sons of Israel and their God:

If you fully obey the LORD your God and carefully follow all his commands I give you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all nations on earth. All these blessings will come upon you and accompany you if you obey the LORD your God. ¹³²

But, if the sons of Israel did not obey their LORD:

The LORD will drive you and the king you set over you to a nation unknown to you and your fathers....The LORD will bring a nation against you from far away, from the ends of the earth, like an eagle swooping

down, a nation whose language your will not understand, a fierce-looking nation without respect for the old or pity for the young. ¹³³

We must understand that the Jews take the book of Devarim, or Deuteronomy, quite literally. And, though they would violate the terms of this covenant, their God foresaw this and made an additional promise to return them to the land.

So it shall be when all of these things have come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call them to mind in all nations where the LORD your God has banished you, and you return to the LORD your God and obey Him with all your heart and soul according to all that I command you today, you and your sons, then the LORD your God will restore you from captivity, and have compassion on you, and will gather you again from all the peoples where the LORD your God has scattered you.

If your outcasts are at the ends of the earth, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you back. The LORD your God will bring you into the land, which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it; and He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers. ¹³⁴

We have already seen that [Jerusalem has been besieged](#) many times, and that the city was contested and/or controlled by the Assyrian, Babylonian, and Roman Empires before it came to be dominated by the Muslims from the early seventh to the early twentieth centuries, notwithstanding a brief period under the control of the Crusaders.

And while some suggest that Arabs and Jews lived in harmony before the 20th century establishment of the state of Israel, the historical record does not support this theory. If we want to understand the origins of this centuries old conflict, we must return to the early days of Islam.

As an American journalist who covered the civil rights movement in the 1960s, Joan Peters went to the Israel to get the true story of the plight of the Palestinian refugees. After seven years of extensive research and interviews, she released her work, [From Time Immemorial: The Origins of the Arab-Jewish Conflict over Palestine](#). In it, Peters states:

Before the seventh-century advent of the Prophet Muhammad and Islam, Jews and Arabs did have harmonious relations, and words of praise regarding the noble virtues of the Jews may be found in ancient Arab literature. ¹³⁵

Dr. Bernard Lewis is known as one of the leading scholars of Islamic history. Lewis taught at the University of London and Princeton, where he is now serving as an emeritus professor. Again, Peters states:

According to historian Bernard Lewis, the Prophet Muhammad's original plan had to induce the Jews to adopt Islam; when Muhammad began his rule at Medina in 622 AD, he counted few supporters, so he adopted several Jewish practices – including daily prayer facing Jerusalem and the fast of Yom Kippur – in the hope of wooing the Jews. But the Jewish community rejected the Prophet Muhammad's religion, preferring to adhere to its own beliefs, whereupon Muhammad subsequently substituted Mecca for Jerusalem, and dropped many of the Jewish practices. Three years later, Arab hostility against the Jews commenced, when the Meccan Army exterminated the Jewish tribe at Quariza. ¹³⁶

Since some might say, “Well, of course, that's Dr. Lewis' view, since he's a Jew,” let us consider the words of Dr. Mark Gabriel. Since Islam's advocacy of honor killing – seeking to kill those who leave the Islamic faith – almost cost Dr. Gabriel his life on three separate occasions when he was in Egypt, “Mark Gabriel” is a pseudonym used to protect this man from further harm, even in the West. Dr. Gabriel achieved his doctorate in Islamic history – not from an American or European university, but – from Al-Azhar University in Cairo, the oldest and most prestigious Islamic university in the world. Here, Dr. Gabriel comments on Muhammad's reaction to the Jews' rejection of his message:

As Muhammad's frustration grew with the rejection from the Jews of Medina, he received a revelation that warned Muslims not to be friends with Jews.

O you who believe! Take not as friends the people who incurred the Wrath of Allah (i.e.the Jews). Surely, they have despaired of (receiving any good in) the Hereafter. (Surah 60:13, Noble Quran)

Finally, Muhammad declared he had received new revelations that showed the final picture of the relationship between Islam and those who do not accept Islam, especially Jews and the Christians. At that time, the world started to hear a revelation called *the verse of the sword*.

Kill the Mushrikun [unbelievers' wherever you find them, and capture them and besiege them, and lie in wait for them in each and every ambush. But if they repent and perform As-Salat (Iqamat-as-Salat) [the five ritual prayers per day], and give Zakat [alms], then leave their way free. Verily, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. – Surah 9:5 ¹³⁷

So, the conflict between Arab-Muslims and Jews did not start in the 20th century, with the founding of the Jewish state, but in the seventh century, with the origins of Islam. And with this hostility, came the Islamic concept of dhimmitude, which the West might call slavery. Consider Bat Ye'or's explanation of this term in her work, Eurabia: The Euro-Arab Axis:

Dhimmitude studies and Eurabian conceptions of history and present day relations between Muslims and non-Muslims, of course, present two diametrically opposite historical and philosophical visions. Dhimmitude studies, for their part, examine the laws, practices and history of *jihad*, which culminates in the Muslim conquest and domination of huge territories populated by non-Muslim populations of various faiths, ethnicities, and cultures. Muslims jurisprudence prescribes specific laws to govern the vanquished populations who refused to convert. As we have seen, this discrimination determined a specific status for the subjected native peoples. Jews and Christians considered jointly as belonging to the People of the Book, were placed in the same legal category, while other faiths suffer harsher treatment.

Dhimmis' lives and property were protected as long as they remained within the framework of their debased conditions; hence, they were called 'protected people', *dhimmis*, a word derived from the 'pact of protection' or *dhimma*. ¹³⁸

When the Muslims took Jerusalem in 637 AD, Caliph Omar outlined some of the basic laws that governed dhimmis.

Omar, the caliph, who succeeded Muhammad, delineated in his Charter of Omar the twelve laws under which a *dhimmi*, or non-Muslim, was allowed to exist as a “non-believer” among “believers.” The Charter codified the conditions of life for Jews under Islam – a life which was forfeited if the *dhimmi* broke this law. Among the restrictions of the Charter; Jews were forbidden to touch the Koran; forced to wear distinctive (sometimes dark blue or black) habit with sash; compelled to wear a yellow piece of cloth as a badge (blue for Christians); not allowed to perform their religious practices in public; not allowed to own a horse, because horses were deemed noble; not permitted to drink wine in public; and required to bury their dead without letting their grief be heard by the Muslims.

As a grateful payment for being allowed so to live and be “protected,” a *dhimmi* paid a special head tax and a special property tax, and edict for which came directly from the Koran: “Fight against those [Jews and Christians] who believe not in Allah...until they pay the tribute readily, being brought low.”¹³⁹

And while many are familiar with the more recent plight of the Jews, under Russia and Germany, they are less familiar with the prior pogroms the Jews suffered under Islamic rule. In our January 2008 newsletter, we touched on the long and substantial history of Islamic hatred of the Jews:

In Egypt, in 1012, “One caliph, al-Hakim of the Fatimids, devised particularly insidious humiliations for the Jews... But the Jews refused to convert [to Islam]. In fury at his failure, the caliph had the Cairo Jewish Quarter destroyed, along with its Jewish residents.”¹⁴⁰

In Morocco, “In 1146, [the town of] Fez was attacked by the [Almohads](#), leaving ‘one hundred thousands persons killed.’ Marrakesh suffered similarly, when an unbelievable ‘one hundred twenty thousand’ were slaughtered. According to an account of ‘eye-witness’ reports, ‘On entering... the Almohads tried to convert the Jews to Islam by debate and persuasion...’ until ‘a new commander...solved the problem by a more efficient method. On hundred and fifty were killed...the remainder converted...’”¹⁴¹

In a Libyan pogrom on November 4, 1945, “According to the *New York Times*’ Clifton Daniel, many of the attacks were premeditated and coldly murderous in

intent. Babies were beaten to death with iron bars. Old men were hacked to pieces where they fell. Expectant mothers were disemboweled. Whole families were burned alive in their houses. Two brothers lost 27 relatives in one attack.”¹⁴²

The Islamic hatred of the Jews is exemplified by these words, penned in 1973, by of Anis Mansour, a prominent Egyptian writer:

People all over the world have come to realize that Hitler was right, since Jews...are bloodsuckers...interested in destroying the whole world which has...expelled and despised them for centuries...and burnt them in Hitler’s crematoria...one million...six million. Would that he had finished! ¹⁴³

As to the Islamic treatment of Jews in the 20th century, in his book, Why I left Jihad, speaker, scholar, and Palestinian Arab, Walid Shoebat discusses his upbringing:

I was born and raised in Beit Sahour, Bethlehem, in the West Bank. Hatred of Jews was my education, what I was taught each day by teachers and parents and the entire community. I knew nothing else, so I believed it was a righteous thing to grow up and kill Jews. ¹⁴⁴

Shoebat’s research illustrates the plight of the Jewish refugees, who fled other Arab countries, en masse, to come to Israel:

[Morocco] – In June 1948, bloody riots in Oujda and Djerada killed 44 Jews and wounded scores more. That same year, an unofficial economic boycott was instigated against Moroccan Jews. Morocco declared its independence in 1956, and Jewish emigration to Israel was suspended. In 1963, emigration resumed, allowing more than 100,000 Moroccan Jews to reach Israel. ¹⁴⁵

[Libya] – A savage pogrom in Tripoli on November 5, 1945 left 140 Jews massacred and almost every synagogue looted. In June 1948, rioters murdered another 12 Jews and destroyed 280 Jewish homes. Thousands of Jews fled the country after Libya was granted independence and membership in the Arab League in 1951. After the Six-Day War [1967], the Jewish population of 7,000 was again subjected to pogroms in which 18 were killed, and many more injured, sparking a near-total exodus that left

fewer than 100 Jews in Libya. When Col. Qaddafi came to power in 1969, all Jewish property was confiscated and all debts to Jews cancelled. It is believed that no Jews live in Libya today. ¹⁴⁶

[Iran] – The Jewish community of Persia, modern-day Iran, is one of the oldest in the Diaspora, and its historical roots reach back to the 6th century BC, the time of the Second Temple...The books of Esther, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Daniel give a favorable description of the relationship of the Jews to the court of Achaemids at Susa. Under the Sassanid dynasty (226 – 642 AD), the Jewish population in Persia grew considerable and spread throughout the region, yet Jews nevertheless suffered intermittent oppression and persecution. The invasion of Arab Muslims in 642 AD terminated the independence of Persia, installed Islam as the state religion, and made a deep impact on the Jews by changing their sociopolitical status... On the eve of the Islamic Revolution in 1979, there were 80,000 Jews in Iran, [with] 60,000 concentrated in Teheran. In the wake of the upheaval, tens of thousands of Jews, especially the wealthy, left the county, leaving behind vast amounts of property. ¹⁴⁷

Likewise, we've excerpted a few samples of Peters' research, released in 1980:

In 1948, more than 850,000 Jews lived in the Arab world. Today there are fewer than 29,000, a shadow of the former ancient community... Contrary to the myth that Jews lived in harmony with the Arabs before the Zionist state, innumerable authoritative works document decisively the subjugation, oppression, and spasmodic anti-Jewish eruptions of violence that darkened the existence of the Jews in Muslim Arab countries. ¹⁴⁸

[Yemen] – Persecution was constant and extreme – stoning Jews, an “age old” custom according to “an old doctor of Muslim law,” was still common tradition at the time of the 1948 exodus...¹⁴⁹ Nearly 50,000 traditionally religious Yemenites, who had never seen a plane, were airlifted in 1949 and 1950. ¹⁵⁰

[Iraq] – The Jews of Iraq, too, flew to Israel – between 1949 and 1952 alone, more than 123,000 Iraqi Jews escaped or were forced to flee to Israel and to leave their assets and communal holdings behind. ¹⁵¹

[Egypt] – With the outbreak of the 1948 war, Egyptian Jews were barred from leaving Egypt, whether for Israel or elsewhere. Then, early in August 1949, the ban was abruptly lifted and much sequestered Jewish property was returned. From August until November of 1949, more than 20,000 of Egypt’s 75,000 Jews fled, many to Israel. There was a brief and surprising period under the more tolerant leadership of General Muhammad Naguib, but he was overthrown by General Abdel Nasser, who authorized mass arrests and property confiscation. ¹⁵²

Now I ask you, after living as a persecuted and lower class citizen under Shariah law for centuries, if you were given the chance to flee, would you?

Shoebat lists the demographic changes that have occurred in Jerusalem from 1844 to 1983. If we look at the period of time leading up to the 1917 Balfour Declaration, the beginning of the political process that established the British Mandate of Palestine in 1922, we see large numbers of Jews seeking refuge in the only area of the world where they had historical ties. Similarly, during the time leading up to Hitler’s invasion of Poland in 1939, a large number of Jews returned to Israel.

Date	Jews	Muslims	Christians
1844	7,120	5,000	3,300
1896	28,112	8,560	8,748
1922	33,971	13,413	14,609
1948	100,000	40,000	25,000
1967	195,700	54,963	12,640
1983	300,000	105,000	15,000
<i>Shoebat, Why I left Jihad, pg 159</i>			

Aliyot from 1882- 1939			
Period	Primary Countries of Flight	App. Number of Jews Returning	Name of Area/ Governing Body
1882-1903	Russia, Yemen	35,000	Palestine/ Ottoman Empire
1904-1914	Russia	40,000	Palestine/ Ottoman Empire
1919-1923	Russia	40,000	Palestine/ Britain
1924-1929	Poland and Hungary	82,000	Palestine/ Britain
1929-1939	Germany & Eastern Europe	250,000	Palestine/ Britain

Around the time Israel became a nation, in 1948, Jews once again left various Middle Eastern and African countries in droves. When we consider Dr. Bernard Lewis' and Dr. Mark Gabriel's information about the early days of Islam and the recent conditions of the Arab-Israeli conflict, a pattern emerges. The historical record is compelling. Does history reveal any other mass migration of a race of people from so many nations to one?

If your outcasts are at the ends of the earth, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you back. The LORD your God will bring you into the land, which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it; and He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers. ¹⁵³

If this information is new to us, we must ask ourselves, "How could such a broad persecution of the Jews, in the Arab world, have taken place? Why is the issue of "settlements," suburbs in the West, which more specifically speaks to the right to own private property, whether Arab and Jew, always a part of the world leaders' discussions?" Clearly, the story of the Arab-Israeli conflict is poorly understood at best. Of course, the same could be said regarding the history of money or central banking, since central banks are private corporations, outside of the control of the nation-states they are supposed to be serving.

Of course, we would be remiss if we concluded this section without addressing the, "Palestinian refugee problem." As we again consider the origins of the term "Palestine," at the time that the British government and the League of Nations made "Palestine" a term the public would recognize.

Palestinian Refugees

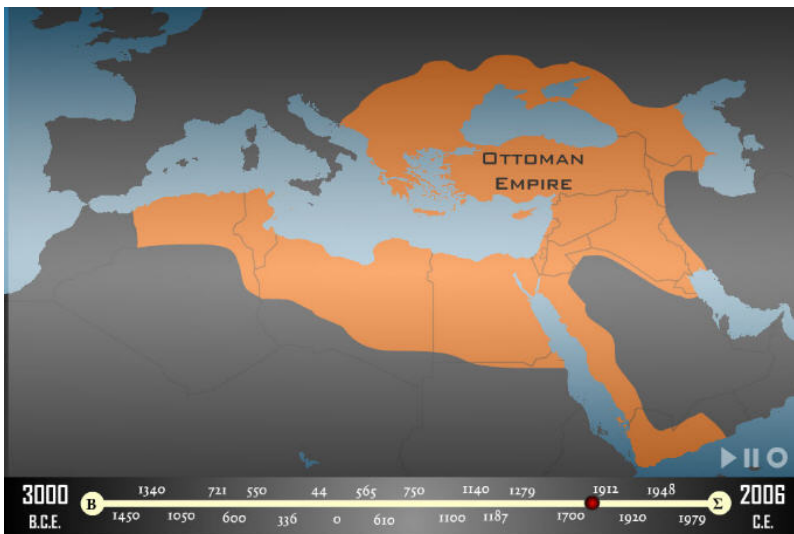
In his work From Babel to Dragomans, Middle Eastern scholar Dr. Bernard Lewis notes particular British influences that have been "of crucial importance:"

One of them is the notion of Palestine. Obviously, there have been states in the region before the [British] Mandate [of 1922], but they were not called Palestine; there were places called Palestine before that, but they were not states. The authorized version of the Old Testament names Palestine three times. All three were removed in the revised version because they were

mis-translations of the word Philistia – Hebrew *Peleshet* – the Land of the Philistines; not Palestine but Philistia. The word does not occur in all the New Testament. It appears in late Roman times as the name of a province, then of two provinces, then of three provinces in the late Roman Empire. The name survived briefly in the early Arab Empire, and then disappeared.

Even the adjective Palestinian is comparatively new. This, I need hardly remind you, is a region of ancient civilization and of deep-rooted and often complex identities. But Palestine was not one of them.

The constitution or the formation of a political entity called Palestine which eventually gave rise to a nationality called Palestinian and the reconstitution of Jerusalem as the capital were, it seems to me, very important, and as it turns out, lasting innovations of the British Mandate. (Brackets and Italics mine) ¹⁵⁴



A hundred years ago Middle Eastern maps referred to the “land of Palestine” only as a part of the Ottoman Empire. In fact, the short presentation at [this web address](#) reinforces the history that has already been presented in this piece.

So, how did the Muslims of the Ottoman Empire treat this “cherished” area known as Palestine?

In 1863, some 60 years prior to the establishment of the British Mandate of Palestine, American writer Mark Twain traveled through the area, describing it as, “a desolated country whose soil is rich enough, but given over wholly to weeds – a silent mournful expanse... Desolation is here that not even imagination can grace with the pomp of life and action... We never saw a human being on the whole route.” ¹⁵⁵

Historian and writer Carl Hermann Voss's experience echoes that of Twain:

In the twelve and a half centuries between the Arab conquest in the seventh century and the beginning of the Jewish return in the 1880's, Palestine was laid waste...Under the Ottoman Empire of the Turks, the policy of (de)foliation continued; the hillsides were denuded of trees and the valleys robbed of their topsoil. ¹⁵⁶

And Georgetown history professor Carroll Quigley, known for his tome, Tragedy and Hope, suggests that not only Palestine, but the whole of the Ottoman Empire, was in decline prior to WWI:

The fact that the sultan was also caliph (and thus religious successor to Muhammad), and the religious belief that the government was under divine guidance and should be obeyed, however unjust and tyrannical, made all religious thinking on political or social questions take the form of justification of the *status quo*, and made any kind of reform almost impossible. Reform could come only from the Sultan, but his ignorance and isolation from society made reform unlikely. In consequence, the whole system became increasingly weak and corrupt. The administration was chaotic, inefficient, and arbitrary. Almost nothing could be done without gifts and bribes to officials, and it was not always possible to know what official or series of officials were correct ones to reward. ¹⁵⁷

Next, in order to understand the term "Palestinian refugee" one would need to study the international pacts, many of which contain conflicting promises and information, to see which lands are in violation of which treaties. For example, are we talking about the UN developed agreement, in 1949, or the one developed by the League of Nations in 1922? And though we will not delve into the minutiae of the various accords, in a September 12, 2009 New York Times piece, "[Land First, Then Peace](#)," the Saudis seem to capture the consensus of the mainstream media's view, calling the contested territories illegally occupied lands.

It [Saudi Arabia] must therefore refuse to engage Israel until it ends its illegal occupation of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights as well as Shabaa Farms in Lebanon. For Saudis to take steps toward diplomatic normalization before this land is returned to its rightful owners would undermine international law and turn a blind eye to immorality.

However, if we compare this statement to one made by the Council on Foreign Relations, a group that has shaped American foreign policy in the 20th century, as they discuss the [Roadmap for Peace](#), they describe the Palestinian *territories*:

Broadly, they are the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem, though exact borders are not identified.

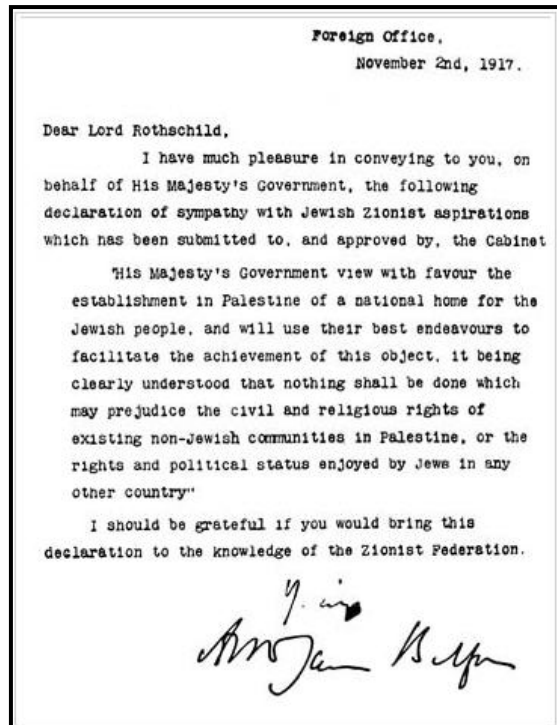
So, what does the historical record show? What can we learn from the [Balfour Declaration](#) and the Palestinian Mandate of 1922?

As Prime Minister of England from 1902 to 1904, and Foreign Secretary of the British government in 1917, Arthur James Balfour very specifically states, “His Majesty’s Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for a Jewish people.”

The [Palestinian Mandate of 1922](#) specifically states:

Whereas the Principal Allied Powers have agreed, for the purpose of giving effect to the provisions of Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, to entrust to a Mandatory selected by the said Powers the administration of the territory of Palestine, which formerly belonged to the Turkish Empire, within such boundaries as may be fixed by them; and

Whereas the Principal Allied Powers have also agreed that *the Mandatory should be responsible for putting into effect the declaration originally made on November 2nd, 1917, by the Government of His Britannic Majesty, and adopted by the said Powers, in favor of the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people*, it being clearly understood that nothing should be done which might prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country; and



Whereas recognition has thereby been given to the *historical connection of the Jewish people with Palestine* and to the grounds for reconstituting their national home in that country... (Italics mine)

But, the area within the British Mandate of Palestine was almost immediately reduced by dividing it into two components – Palestine and Transjordan. For the specifics we return to Joan Peters:



Britain nevertheless quietly gouged out roughly three-fourths of the Palestine territory mandated for the Jewish homeland into an Arab emirate, Transjordan, while the Mandate ostensibly remained in force but in violation of its terms. Historians and official government documents concerned with the area continued to call it “Eastern Palestine,” despite the new appellation. That seventy-five

percent of the Palestine mandate was described by England’s envoy to Eastern Palestine: [as] “a reserve of land for use in the resettlement of Arabs [from Western Palestine], [which] was once the National Home for the Jews in Palestine, [later] to result in the “Jewish independent state.”

The League of Nations Mandate for Palestine remained unchanged even though Britain had unilaterally altered its map and its purpose. The Mandate included Transjordan until 1946, when the land was declared an independent state. Transjordan had finally become the *de jure* Arab state in Palestine *just two years before* Israel gained its Jewish statehood in the remaining one-quarter of Palestine. Transjordan comprised nearly 38,000 square miles; Israel, less than 8,000 square miles. ¹⁵⁸

The fact that the CFR still thinks the way to solve the [Palestinian refugee](#) problem is to remind both sides that, according to international law, “all refugees have a right to return to their place of origin,” makes me think that they have not read the words President Franklin Delano Roosevelt wrote in 1939, “Arab immigration *into* Palestine since 1921 has vastly exceeded the total Jewish immigration during the whole period.” ¹⁵⁹

So in wrapping up this section, let’s do some comparisons. The Arab world has more than 200 million people, millions of miles of land and “Eastern Palestine,” or what is known today as Jordan.

Israel, whose predominant race is Jewish, contains around 7 million individuals, of which about twenty-three percent are Arabs. And now, the 25 percent of the land left to the Jews after the mandate, is to be divided once again in order to “progress toward the goal” of “a [permanent two-state solution](#)” to bring peace?



So we ask, “Why does the ‘Palestinian Arab refugee crisis,’ which the historical records shows were primarily Arabs who immigrated into the area of Palestine prior to 1948, receive constant attention from the US, the EU, the UN, and Russia, when the number of Iraqis or [Afghanis](#) who have fled their nations are far larger and scores of individuals have fled countries like [Sudan](#), [Zimbabwe](#), and [Burma](#)?” Consider the following comments from an October 23, 2007 article, [Iraq: The World’s Fastest Growing Refugee Crisis](#):

Since November 2006, Refugees International has led the call for increased assistance to Iraqi refugees and displaced people. The

displacement of Iraqis from Iraq is now the fastest-growing refugee crisis in the world.

The UN estimates that over 4 million Iraqis have been displaced by violence in their country, the vast majority of which have fled since 2003. Over 2.3 million have vacated their homes for safer areas within Iraq, 1.5 million are now living in Syria, and over 1 million refugees inhabit Jordan, Iran, Egypt, Lebanon, Yemen, and Turkey. With no legal work options in their current host countries, Iraqis are already exploring the use of false documents to migrate to Western nations.”

Once again, Joan Peters’ research lends insight. Far from the images the West has been presented with about the “Palestinian refugee camps,” Peters notes:

Unlike the squalid quarters established for refugees in other parts of the world, many are permanent urban units, far from the wretched image immediately triggered by the term “refugee camp.” Moreover, the United States Committee for Refugees has included in its calculations as “refugees” the Jordanian/Palestinians in Jordan (“733,000”), overlooking the fact that Jordan’s nationality code offered immediate citizenship – a law of return – to “Palestine.” (Quotations and parenthesis hers) ¹⁶⁰

Those who are familiar with economists like John Williams, who have spent years unraveling the manipulated government and agency numbers, realize whether we look at the US, UN, EU, or Arab League, that massive bureaucracies often show patterns of statistical number cooking. But, how can peace be achieved, if it is built on a foundation of manipulated data?

The Final Peace Solution

Needless to say, anyone who has followed the news events surrounding Israel, as well as its relationship with the Arab world and the West, can come to no other conclusion than the fact that, since the world governments first recognized the British Mandate of Palestine in 1922, no real progress has come about for a **permanent** peace.

In many ways, we continue to examine the information we are presented with from our political leaders as a pro-Israeli or pro-Palestinian view, then choosing

the side we wish to blame. For Americans, it would be like arguing a Democratic versus a Republican view, without realizing that both want the government to stop spending our nation into bankruptcy.

In order to have peace between the Jews and the Muslims, peace must be the true objective. In his book, The War of Ideas, Walid Phares sheds a light on a concept that most democratic and socialist countries have missed:

This new jihadist totalitarianism is a reality with dire consequences...for the simple reason that the ideology behind the new wars against the “infidels” does not see peace as most players in world politics do. To the followers of al Qaeda, Islamic jihad, Combat Salafism, Wahabism, and Hezbollah, to name the main players in the field, the concept of peace does not coincide with international standards, let alone democracies’ expectations.

The notion of “peace” in jihadi thought is based on a millennial concept that, 13 centuries ago, was standing policy within the Islamic empire, in much the same way that “godly wars” were legitimate in biblical times and in the Christian medieval era. To democracies and to some extent all members of the international community, world peace is the ultimate objective to reach and one of the highest values to spread. But to jihadists, “peace” is just a state of affairs between one war and another – or, to be more precise, an acceptable condition when it is part of the readjustment of the balance of power in favor of Islam or a path to the surrender of the infidel. For in the eyes of the jihadists, history is nothing but a continuous “clash of civilizations,” which can end only when the one they claim to represent finally triumphs over all others. Thus victory – theirs – is a prerequisite for lasting peace. It is not hard to see why, insofar as there is an “international community” based on democratic standards and the idea of universal human rights, the jihadists lie outside it. The “need” for a final victory by the jihadists is what makes the clash between civilizations in modern times one of their highest objectives. ¹⁶¹

For thirteen centuries under Shariah law the blight of dhimmitude has remained. And lest we think such practices have fallen by the wayside, the world saw its first modern nation establish a government solely under Shariah law in 1980. As we remember from the Iranian revolution of 1979, the leader of this monumental

change was the Ayatollah Khomeini. The following are some of his writings, found in Hamid Algar's work, Islam and Revolution:

The jizya, which is imposed on the ahl ahd-dhimmi, and the kharaj, which is levied on agricultural land, represent two additional sources of considerable income. The establishment of these taxes also proves that the existence of a ruler and a government is necessary.

This enormously influential Muslim leader makes it clear that the idea of taxing (jizya) an individual of a lower caste (dhimmi) is perfectly within bounds. And as you remember, this Islamic principal, a concept fostered by Muhammad, goes all the way back to the 7th century.

In the West, we see "equal rights" for all people and "no taxation without representation" as "unalienable rights." And while some only perceive the threat to Israel, the concept of dhimmitude makes this a global conflict. And though the West may not see this as a religious war, the Ayatollah made it clear that he saw the Jews as "occupiers" of Arab lands, and that it was the god-given duty of every Muslim to purge the land of infidels:

The ordinances pertaining to preservation of the Islamic order and defense of the territorial integrity and independence of the Islamic umma (the collection of all Muslim nations or the entire Arab World) also demanded the formation of a government. An example is the command: "Prepare against them whatever force you can muster and horses tethered." Surah 8:60, which enjoins the preparation of as much armed defensive force as possible, and orders the Muslims to be always on the alert and at the ready, even in time of peace.

If the Muslims had acted in accordance with this command and, after forming a government, made the necessary extensive preparations to be in a state of full readiness for war, a handful of Jews would never have dared to occupy our lands... All this had resulted from the failure of the Muslims to fulfill their duty of executing God's law. ¹⁶²

Now let's jump forward to September 2009, and examine the portions of President Obama's [first speech at the United Nations](#) that relate to the Palestinian-Israeli peace process:

I will also continue to seek a just and lasting peace between Israel, Palestine, and the Arab world. Yesterday, I had a constructive meeting with Prime Minister Netanyahu and President Abbas. We have made some progress... We continue to call on Palestinians to end incitement against Israel, and we continue to emphasize that *America does not accept the legitimacy of continued Israeli settlements.*

The time has come to re-launch negotiations, without preconditions – that address the permanent-status issues: security for Israelis and Palestinians; borders, refugees and *Jerusalem*. The goal is clear: *two states* living side by side in peace and security – a Jewish State of Israel, with true security for all Israelis; and a viable, independent Palestinian state with contiguous territory that *ends the occupation that began in 1967*, and realizes the potential of the Palestinian people. (Italics mine)

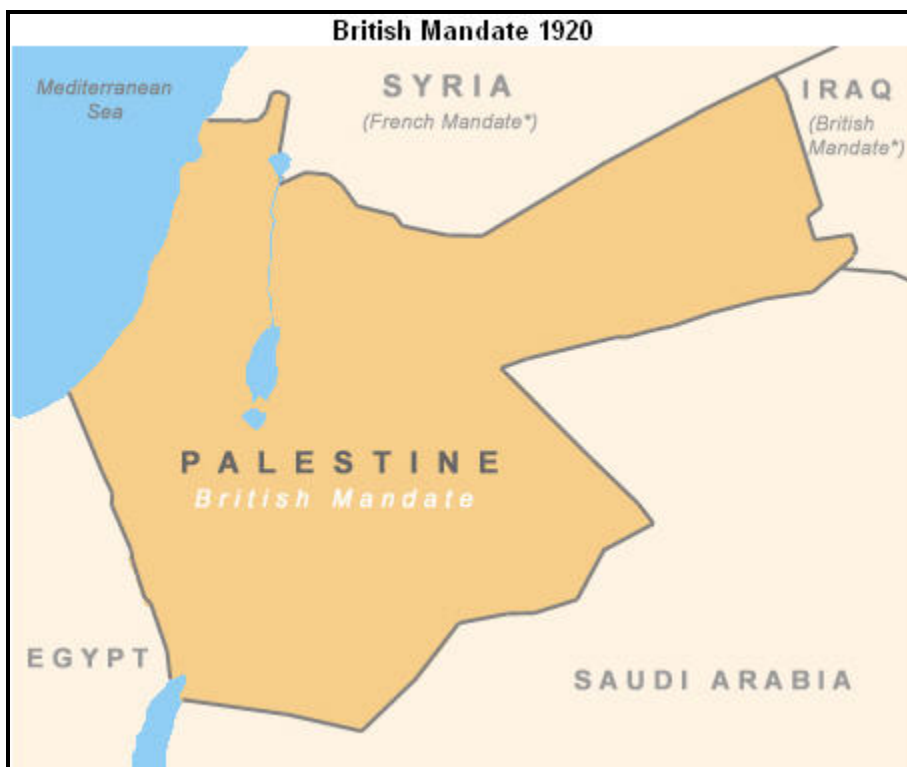
So, let's make sure we get this straight. As translated in [Islam and Revolution](#) (1981), the Ayatollah Khomeini writes, "...a handful of Jews would never had dared to **occupy** our lands," and in a September 23, 2009 speech to the UN General Assembly, President Obama calls on Israel to give up territory that "...ends the **occupation** that began in 1967."

After all the "land for peace" deals, does our current administration really expect us to believe that, this time, taking an area four times the size of Dallas County and dividing it between Jews and Muslims will end in a lasting peace? Such a realization causes me to view Zbigniew Brzezinski's speech on November 17 '08 at [Chatham House](#), home of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, with concern:

I think we have to bite the bullet on the Israeli-Palestinian peace process because we are probably within the last year in which a two-state solution is still feasible. Anybody who looks at the topography of the country, and what has been happening on the West Bank, and looks at demographics,

knows that that opportunity is slipping away. It has been slipping away for 41 years [Six Day War in 1967]. It cannot keep slipping away on this or that excuse because one leadership is divided, because another leadership is weak, or because something happens, painfully on a human scale, but on a minor scale when the numbers are considered. And the only way this conflict will be resolved, is if the parties are held to resolve it, and the only party that can help to resolve it in the first instance, is the United States.¹⁶³

Now, examine the maps below one more time. How can a group of world leaders, from both the West and the Middle East, describe the Jews as “occupiers” today, when just 87 years ago, world leaders from the West and the Middle East agreed to set up the area of Transjordan for the “Palestinian” Arabs and the area of Palestine for the “Palestinian” Jews? Below is a map of the original British mandate.



But, by the time Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations was signed on July 24, 1922, the mandate looked like this.



And, after the Arab-Israeli War, the five Arab nations that had been involved directly in the fighting with the newly formed nation of Israel (Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Iraq) signed the [1949 Armistice agreement](#), which placed the West bank under Jordan's (a member of the newly formed [Arab League-1945](#)) control, and reduced the territory of the "Jewish Homeland" once again.





So, when maps today suggest that Israel “occupied” the land after 1967, even after the Israelis returned Sinai to Egypt – based on the Camp David Accords, shouldn’t it be obvious that map-makers can only use this term if they rely on data that manipulates the historical record prior to 1967?

So where will all of this lead? Could the map below, found in a textbook on geography for Palestinian High School Seniors, i.e., those living inside the West Bank today, give us a

clue? ¹⁶⁴ One wonders how much world and religious history would have to be destroyed in order to believe that the “sons of Israel” had no historical ties to this land.

B. A map of the Arab world includes Israel marked as “Palestine”;| Title of the map: “Map Number 1: Some of the tourist sites in the Arab Homeland”.

[Physical Geography and Human Geography, grade 12, p. 143]

A Time for War...

At this stage, let us stretch our thinking even more. Clearly, no individual on earth wants to contemplate, much less see, the material I am about to present. When we do reflect on such thoughts, we find that – like earthquakes and tsunamis – history does not always come together neatly. At times, historical scenarios lay outside of what the bell curve assumption considers, presenting us with what physicists refer to as “fat tail” events. In his work, Ubiquity: The

Science of History...or Why the World is Simpler than We Think, physicist Mark Buchanan describes why societal changes are often abrupt:

Because of the human craving for stability, especially on the part of those who are in power and who benefit most from the existing order, nothing will give way in the fabric of existing institutions until the strife and discontent build beyond some threshold...

Tension inevitably grows until it passes some threshold – perhaps as the result of some momentary and largely accidental crisis – and something gives way. Usually, the stress finds its release through armed conflict... ¹⁶⁵

While end times are rarely discussed when individuals within a group have different religious views, when we consider the ancient Jewish and Muslim texts alongside global modern day developments, this adds another dimension to our thinking. Fortunately, since all of the information presented herein can be found in the public domain, curious minds can investigate this topic further.

That government will become more global in structure and reach, altering the very lives of the citizens of various nation-states as they exist today, may go without saying.

As a professor at the Religious Learning Center in Qom, Iran, in his book, Al-Imam al-Mahdi: The Just Leader of Humanity, Ayatollah Ibrahim Amini writes of a world ruler without equal.

When the world has become psychologically ready to accept the government of God and when general conditions have become favorable to the idea of the rulership of the truth, God will permit the Mahdi to launch his final revolution...On seeing the fulfillment of many of the signs promised by the traditions, a large number of unbelievers will turn towards Islam. Those who persist in their disbelief and wickedness shall be killed by the soldiers of the Mahdi. The only victorious government in the entire world will be that of Islam and people will devotedly endeavor to protect it. Islam will be the religion of everyone, and will enter all nations of the world...

The Mahdi will offer the religion of Islam to the Jews and the Christians; if they accept it they will be spared, otherwise they will be killed... It seems unlikely that this catastrophe can be avoided... Warfare and bloodshed [are] inevitable. ¹⁶⁶

[Shaykh Muhammad Hisham Kabbani](#) is the chairman of the Islamic Supreme Council of America. He is described as an outspoken critic of extremism and an advocate for peace, tolerance, love and respect. Since stating that extremists are running 80 percent of the mosques in North America, he has come into conflict with other Muslim groups in America. Even still, in his work, [The Approach of Armageddon: An Islamic Perspective](#), Kabbani speaks of Islam as *the only* world religion:

The Mahdi [future world ruler] will establish right and justice in the world and eliminate evil and corruption. He will fight against the enemies of the Muslims who would be victorious. He will reappear on the appointed day, and then he will fight against the forces of evil, lead a world revolution, and set up a new world order based on justice, righteousness, and virtue... ultimately the righteous will take the world administration in their hands and Islam will be victorious over all the religions. ¹⁶⁷

Prior to Obama's inauguration in January 2009, the former Secretary of State and National Security Advisor under President Nixon, and current Council on Foreign Relations member and regular [Bilderberg attendee](#), Henry Kissinger advocates a new world order:

There is a need for a new world order. I think that at the end of this administration, with all its turmoil, and at the beginning of the next, we might actually witness the creation of a new order – because people looking in the abyss...have to conclude that at some point, ordered expectations must return under a different system...The president-elect is coming into office at a moment when there is upheaval in many parts of the world simultaneously...You have India, Pakistan; you have the jihadist movement. So he can't really say there is one problem, that it's the most important one. But he can give new impetus to American foreign policy partly because the reception of him is so extraordinary around the world. His task will be to develop an overall strategy for America in this period when, really, a new world order can be created. It's a great opportunity, it

isn't just a crisis...Within the next four years we will witness the emergence of a "New International Order." ¹⁶⁸

Similarly, in a speech before the U.N. General Assembly on December 7, 1988, Mikhail Gorbachev spoke of a new world order:

Today we have entered an era when progress will be based on the interests of all mankind. And awareness of this requires that the world policy, too, should be determined by placing the values of all mankind first....Further world progress is possible now only through the search for a consensus of all mankind, in movement towards a new world order. ¹⁶⁹

Now, if we go back to the ancient Jewish religious texts, in his oracle, the prophet Daniel writes about a coalition of rulers:

The ten horns are ten kings who will come from this kingdom. After them another king will arise, different from the earlier ones; he will subdue three kings. He will speak against the Most High and oppress his saints and try to change the set times and the laws. The saints will be handed over to him for a time, times and a half time. ¹⁷⁰

To this day, a peace treaty surrounding this tiny portion of land continues to be a part of global government discussions:

On November 27, 2007, the [Annapolis Conference](#) was held in Annapolis, Maryland. It marked the first time the two-state solution was a pre-condition to peace talks. U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice hosted the conference. It was attended by Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, and U.S. President George W. Bush. A partial list of over 40 invitees was released on November 20, 2007, including China, the Arab League, Russia, the European Union and the United Nations. Most accepted the invitation.

But, on September 25, 2009, an Al Jazeera article, [Abbas Insists on Settlement Freeze](#), shows that this peace is as elusive as it has always been:

Mahmoud Abbas, the Palestinian Authority president, has called on Israel to freeze all settlement building in the West Bank and East Jerusalem so stalled peace talks between the two sides can resume. Abbas addressed the

UN body as the head of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), rather than as president of the Palestinian Authority, which rules the West Bank.

His speech came a day after Binyamin Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister, addressed the General Assembly, accusing the world body of bias towards the Palestinians. It also followed a meeting on Wednesday between Barack Obama, the U.S. president, Netanyahu and Abbas, during which the Israeli PM refused to yield to Abbas' demand to halt settlement building as part of the road map for peace. The road map is a 2003 peace plan presented by mediators of *the Quartet – the UN, EU, US, and Russia* – to Palestinian and Israeli leaders. (Italics mine)

Oddly enough, these peace treaties fit within the framework of Islamic eschatology. In his book, [Islam, Jesus, Mahdi, Qadiyanis and Doomsday](#), Professor Rasulullah Muhammad Abdullah addresses Muslims, stating:

There will be four peace agreements between you and the Romans [Christians]. The fourth agreement will be mediated through a person who will be from the progeny of Hadrat Haroon [The Honorable Aaron – Moses' brother] and will be upheld for seven years. ¹⁷¹

[Sunan Abud Dawud](#), regarded as the fourth in strength among the six major hadiths of the Sunnis, states the following in book 36, # 4273:

The Prophet said...He will divide the property, and will govern the people by the Sunnah of their Prophet, and establish Islam on Earth. He will remain for seven years, then die, and the Muslims will pray over him.

The Prophet said: The Mahdi...will fill the earth with equity and justice as it was filled with oppression and tyranny, and he will rule for seven years.¹⁷²

Once again, we return to Daniel, who wrote of what many consider to be a similar timeframe:

And he [Antichrist] will enter into a strong and firm covenant with the many for one week [seven years]. And in the midst of the week he shall

cause the sacrifice and offering to cease [for the remaining three and one-half years]; and upon the wing or pinnacle of abominations [shall come] one who makes desolate; until the full determined end is poured on the desolator. ¹⁷³

So, if there is a “clash of civilizations,” should we expect the conflict to become more global in the years ahead? Could the rise of major, global terrorist attacks over the last few decades be seen as part of this trend? In order to gain a broader perspective, we need to examine how the West has deal with jihadists in Iran.

A September 21, 2009 Jerusalem Post article, [Brzezinski: US Should Down IAF Jets](#), shows the strains in US relations with Israel:

Former national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski has urged US President Barack Obama to make it clear that if the IAF tries to launch an attack on Iran's nuclear facilities via Iraqi airspace, the US Air Force will shoot down the Israeli jets.

"We are not exactly impotent little babies," Brzezinski told *The Daily Beast* in an interview published Sunday. "They have to fly over our airspace in Iraq. Are we just going to sit there and watch? ... We have to be serious about denying them that right. That means a denial where you aren't just saying it. If they fly over, you go up and confront them. They have the choice of turning back or not. No one wishes for this but it could be a 'Liberty' in reverse."

But, a September 25, 2009, Huffington Post article, [Obama: Iran has Secret Nuclear Facility](#), shows the tensions between the US and Iran. At a press briefing after the G20 conference, President Obama told reporters that Iran must come clean about nuclear weapons:

Backed by other world powers, President Barack Obama declared Friday that Iran is speeding down a path to confrontation and demanded that Tehran quickly "come clean" on all nuclear efforts and open a newly revealed *secret site* for close international inspection. He said he would not rule out military action if the Iranians refuse.

“Iran is on notice that when we meet with them on Oct. 1 they are going to have to come clean and they are going to have to make a choice” between international isolation and giving up any aspirations to becoming a nuclear power, he said. If they refuse to give ground, they will stay on “a path that is going to lead to confrontation.” (Italics mine)

So, based on America’s current foreign policy, is the greatest threat to Middle East peace Israel or Iran? Sadly, the development of nuclear weapons capabilities is not a new story for Iranian, European, or Western leaders. We presented the following in the February 2006 issue of our research newsletter, The Investor’s Mind:

Yet, the following description of a February 21 – 23, 2003 visit by General Mohammad El Baradei, head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, a United Nation’s Agency, can be found in Kenneth Timmerman’s book, Countdown to Crisis.

The project manager [Baradei] was visibly nervous when Aghazadeh [chief of Iranian Atomic Energy] ordered him to open the heavy blast doors that lead down the U-shaped tunnel to the cavernous underground halls. As they quickly scanned the vast space, Heinonen’s [Head of the IAEA top-secrets safeguards unit] enrichment experts were stunned by what they saw. They all had read the reports of Iran’s clandestine procurement of centrifuge equipment.

But none had expected to see a well-designed underground production plant, scaled to accommodate fifty thousand enrichment centrifuges and all the fittings: piping, chillers, power inverters – the works. *It was not an industrial facility* like any they had ever seen, *but a hardened military plant, built to withstand a missile strike.*

There were two square production halls, each roughly 320,000 square feet, the project manager said. It was big, impressive, and, *until then, totally secret.* The Iranians always had denied they had built an enrichment plant. Here was incontrovertible proof that they had been lying.

Heinonen's top expert did some quick math. Once all the centrifuges were installed, the facility reasonably would produce around 150,000 separative work units of low enriched uranium (LEU) per year – barely enough to feed the mammoth Busheir plant, if that was indeed Iran's intention. But if they fed the LEU back into the cascade instead of extracting it for reactor fuel, they could produce roughly 500 kilograms per year of bomb-grade material – enough for twenty-five to thirty bombs, even with a lot of waste.
¹⁷⁴ (Italics mine)

The fact that Islamic eschatology is influencing today's Iranian leaders, compounds the problem. An August 17, 2009, World Net Daily article, [Ayatollah Sees Global Islamic 'Mahdi' Army](#), asserts:

Iran's Ayatollah Khamenei yesterday called on Muslim nations around the world to unite militarily in response to the imminent coming of Islam's messianic savior – the Mahdi. Khamenei, through his spokesman Ali Saeedi, specifically beckoned the nations of Turkey, Iraq, Lebanon, Pakistan and Afghanistan to join together with Iran in preparation for the Mahdi's soon coming.

The purpose of uniting now, a report in Al Arabiya explained, is to fight Israel and the U.S. – seen as the two greatest obstacles to the coming of the Mahdi and the age of Islamic “justice” that would ensue.

As much as I would like to dismiss these comments as a fringe view, they are in agreement with some Islamic scholars' religious teachings. In [The Islamic Antichrist](#), Joel Richardson quotes from Sheik Ibrahim Mahdi's recent sermons:

We the Palestinian nation, our fate from Allah is to be the vanguard in the war against the Jews until the resurrection of the dead, as the prophet Muhammad said: “The resurrection of the dead will not arrive until you will fight the Jews and kill them...”

Oh, our Arab brethren...Oh, our Muslim brethren... Don't leave the Palestinians alone in the war against the Jews... Jerusalem, Palestine, and Al Aksa (The Temple Mount), the land that Allah blessed and its surrounding areas will remain at the center of the struggle between Truth and Falsehood, between the Jews and the non-Jews on this sacred land,

regardless of how many agreements are signed, regardless of how many treaties and covenants are ratified. For the Truth is in the Qur'an, as verified by the words of the prophet Muhammad that the decisive battle will be in Jerusalem and its environs: "The resurrection of the dead will not occur until you make war on the Jews..."

The battle with the Jews will surely come...the decisive Muslim victory is coming without a doubt, and the prophet spoke about in more than one *hadith* and the Day of Resurrection will not come without the victory of the believers [the Muslims] over the descendants of the monkeys and pigs [the Jews] and with their annihilation.

Oh, Allah, accept our martyrs in the highest heavens...Oh, Allah, show the Jews a black day...Oh Allah, annihilate the Jews and their supporters... Oh Allah, raise the flag of *jihad* across the land. ¹⁷⁵

So, how does this apocalyptic version of a future religious war compare to the one described in the writings of Ezekiel over 2,500 years ago? Could another failed peace treaty give Israel a false sense of peace only to find out later that a military confrontation awaits it?

Therefore, son of man, prophesy and say to Gog: "This is what the Sovereign LORD says: In that day, when my people Israel are living in safety, will you not take notice of it? You will come from your place in the far north, you and many nations with you, all of them riding on horses, a great horde, a mighty army. You will advance against my people Israel like a cloud that covers the land. In days to come, O Gog, I will bring you against my land, so that the nations may know me when I show myself holy through you before their eyes.

This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Are you not the one I spoke of in former days by my servants the prophets of Israel? At that time they prophesied for years that I would bring you against them. This is what will happen in that day: When Gog attacks the land of Israel, my hot anger will be aroused, declares the Sovereign LORD. In my zeal and fiery wrath I declare that at that time there shall be a great earthquake in the land of Israel... I will summon a sword against Gog on all my mountains, declares the Sovereign LORD. Every man's sword will be against his brother. I will

execute judgment upon him with plague and bloodshed; I will pour down torrents of rain, hailstones and burning sulfur on him and on his troops and on the many nations with him. And so I will show my greatness and my holiness, and I will make myself known in the sight of many nations. Then they will know that I am the LORD. ¹⁷⁶

While I would be extremely surprised if Ezekiel's or John's apocalyptic writings, which appear to be a mixture of symbolism and literal events, were a part of foreign policy discussions at the Council of Foreign Relations or the Royal Institute of International Affairs, could they speak of a future conflict that has been brewing in the Middle East for years?

It said to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates." And the four angels who had been kept ready for this very hour and day and month and year were released to kill a third of mankind. The number of the mounted troops was two hundred million. I heard their number. ¹⁷⁷

The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up to prepare the way for the kings of the East...Then they gathered the kings together to the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon. ¹⁷⁸

Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war against the rider on the horse and his army. But the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who had performed the miraculous signs on his behalf. With these signs he had deluded those who had received the mark of the beast and worshiped his image. The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur. The rest of them were killed with the sword that came out of the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh. ¹⁷⁹

Whatever our view of history or these ancient writings – which no one has ever fully understood – might be, we can see what happened to the world 70 years ago, when Hitler invaded Poland in September 1939.

While my 19th year was spent in college, my father's 19th year was not the same. When his bomber was shot down, he was marched before a firing squad. As the

machine gun was aligned to execute the eight men in his group as they stood outside a small white country church, a German lieutenant came around the corner. Upon seeing what was unfolding, the lieutenant told the sergeant not to kill the group, since they could be used for slave labor.

The next 6 months of his 19th year were spent moving from one German prison camp to the next. At one facility, he and twenty-three other men were held in a sixteen by sixteen foot room, where they received one meal a day, usually bread and potato soup. The bathroom was a corner of the room. Across the hall, Jewish men and women were packed in a room so tightly that there was only room to stand. A daily loaf of bread was thrown to the group. And, as individuals died from exhaustion, their bodies were dragged from the room.

As we all know, World War II left it scars everywhere. Death was common to many households around the globe. The Germans would eventually witness the horrors of the Dresden fires, while the Japanese were the first to experience the awfulness of what a nuclear bomb can do to the human body.

Whether one's religion is Judaism, Christianity, Hinduism, or Buddhism, or one aligns with an atheistic or agnostic view of the world, at the end of the day, I believe most humans do not desire to kill or seek to have others killed. Still, history shows that the teachings of Islam make it unlike any other world religion. Those who are willing to look at the statistics will see that it is clearly the most violent. As evidence, consider the conclusions that were found by the following two men.

First, we return to former Muslim turned human rights activist Joel Richardson, as he writes of Islamic eschatology:

Muslims in the West regularly refer to Islam as the “religion of peace,” yet this so-called “religion of peace” is responsible for over 90 percent of all fighting presently occurring in the world. Think about that fact. Islam motivates the vast majority of world terrorism, violence, and war. There are about four hundred recognized terrorist groups in the world. Over 90 percent of these are radical Islamic terrorist groups. Over 90 percent of the current world fighting involves Islamist terror movements. ¹⁸⁰

Or, consider Samuel Huntington. As a world renowned professor on 20th century geopolitical developments and one of the three persons to develop the Trilateral Commission's seminal (1975) work, The Crisis of Democracy, Huntington's 1996-work, The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order, confirms Muslim violence:

Relations between Muslims and peoples of other civilizations – Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox, Hindu, Chinese, Buddhist, Jewish – have been generally antagonistic; most of these relations have been violent at some point in the past; many have been violent in the 1990s. Wherever one looks along the perimeter of Islam, Muslims have problems living peaceably with their neighbors. The question naturally rises as to whether this pattern of late-twentieth-century conflict between Muslims and non-Muslim groups is equally true of relations between groups from other civilizations. In fact, it is not. Muslims make up about one-fifth of the world's population but in the 1990s they have been far more involved in intergroup violence than the people of any other civilization. The evidence is overwhelming. ¹⁸¹

At this point you are probably saying, "Stop, please stop." You may be asking, "Is there any hope that the world will ever have peace on earth, goodwill toward all?" While I am not Jewish, if their ancient texts prove correct, there is tremendous hope, and the answer will be found in future events surrounding the city of Jerusalem.

... A Time for Peace

While most of us watching the developments surrounding Arab-Israeli conflict would find it difficult to believe there have been times of peace and respect between the Jews and Arabs, Michael Orin, in his book, Six Days of War, reminds us that there are moments when respect of another human life is precious. The following is an account of Jewish General, who, after taking the Eastern part of Jerusalem – the section of the city with the most religious significance – shows mercy to those he has defeated and, yet, must be given assistance by an old Arab man who is familiar with this section of Jerusalem:

Gur received a delegation of Arab notables who proffered him the city's surrender, along with arms that have been stored in the mosques. To their

surprise, the general released them and allowed them to return to their homes. But neither he nor any of his staff knew how to get to the Western Wall, and were forced to ask an old Arab man for directions. He guided Gur through the Mughrabi Gate, exiting just south of the Wall. A retaining structure of giant ashlar erected by King Herod, the wall was the only remnant of the Second Temple destroyed by the Romans in the year 70. Jews had not had access to the shrine, their holiest, for nineteen years.¹⁸²

Having control of the Eastern part of Jerusalem and their nation was a joy that few Jews had ever known. Indeed, it would be hard for any nation on earth to fully comprehend the elation these Jewish individuals felt at that moment. As you recall, the last time Jews simultaneously controlled both Jerusalem and their land, had occurred over 2,500 years earlier, in the final days of Israel's plight as a nation, as Jerusalem lay under siege by Nebuchadnezzar.

This past weekend, a Torah observant Jew and an authentic Zionist (which my Jewish friends tell me should not to be confused with a political Zionist), sent me some material he developed for a book he is completing. As I read through some of his work, I noticed that he had quoted a young religious Jewish man living in Israel who happens to also be autistic. Having a son with Down's syndrome, I was touched by an August 9, 2009 piece, "On the Threshold of Redemption." As you read his final section, "Time is Running Out," I ask you to reflect on the history you have just read in this article:

Because most of the Jews are still living in a fantasy world [Egel Hazahav, {the Golden Calf of} the "American Dream"]. And even though everything is collapsing, they still have the desire and the hope that maybe still the situation will go back to the way it was previously. If I would ask most of the Jews: "Would you prefer to go through some hard times in order to get to the good times – of Moshiach Tzidkenu {The Days of our righteous Messiah} and Beis Hamikdash {return of G-d's Holy Temple} – or rather return to the world the way it was three or four years ago?" I'm afraid that the majority would say that they would prefer to just go back to the past.

I therefore want to make something very clear: this is the end. In the very near future the world will come into the most terrible times, most frightening. Two thirds of the world will be destroyed [Zachariah 13:8], may Hashem {G-d} protect us, and vicious wars will take place. Only those

that are truly close to Hakadosh Baruch Hu {G-d, Blessed is He} will remain [“...and it will be that all who ‘call in the name of Hashem’ will remain” [Yoel 3], as Metzudas {an ancient Torah Sage commentator} explains there: “Only the select few amongst them who call out to Hashem and cry out to Him and put all their trust in Him”].

What more can be said? Read everything we have written until now and better still, read the Prophecies written in the Torah, and you will know what to do and how to do it in order to save yourselves. The world of Moshiach {the Anointed One} will be a world of Emes [Truth] and only people of Emes can exist in a world of Emes. (Brackets his, Curly braces are explanations from my Jewish contact)

And so my friends, I ask you, “Doesn’t it make sense that the only way we will ever find peace on this old earth, is when men seek the truth?”

“And you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free”

John’s written record of the words of Christ, John 8:32

... In Jerusalem and In the World

Isaiah 2:2 (NIV) (written in the 8th century BC, during the Assyrian Empire)

In the last days, the mountain of the LORD’s temple will be established as chief among the mountains; it will be raised above the hills and all nations will stream to it.

Isaiah 40: 2 (NAS)

Speak kindly to Jerusalem; and call out to her, that her warfare has ended.

Isaiah 11:6-9 (NIV)

The wolf will live with the lamb,
the leopard will lie down with the goat,

the calf and the lion and the yearling together;
and a little child will lead them.

Micah 4:3-5 (NIV) (written in the 8th century BC, during the Assyrian Empire)

He will judge between many peoples
and will settle disputes for strong nations far and wide.
They will beat their swords into plowshares
and their spears into pruning hooks.
Nation will not take up sword against nation,
nor will they train for war anymore.

Zechariah 8:4-5 (NAS) (written around 520 BC, during the Persian Empire)

This is what the LORD Almighty says: "Once again men and women of ripe old age will sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each with cane in hand because of his age. The city streets will be filled with boys and girls playing there.

Zechariah 8:22 (NASB) So many peoples and mighty nations will come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem and to entreat the favor of the LORD.

Psalms 128:5-6 (written approximately 1,000 years before Christ)

May the Lord bless you out of Zion [His sanctuary], and may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your life; Yes, may you see your children's children. Peace be upon Israel!

Psalms 122:6-7 (written approximately 1,000 years before Christ)

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem! May they prosper who love you [the Holy City]!
May peace be within your walls and prosperity within your palaces!

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Doug Wakefield

President

[Best Minds Inc.](#), a Registered Investment Advisor

2548 Lillian Miller Parkway

Suite 110

Denton, Texas 76210

www.bestmindsinc.com

doug@bestmindsinc.com

Phone - (940) 591 - 3000

Alt - (800) 488 - 2084

Fax - (940) 591 –3006

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