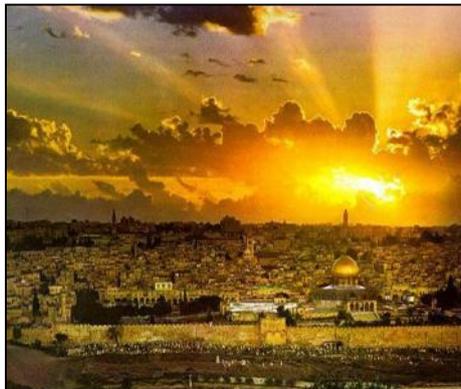


Introduction

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Jerusalem is situated in the Judean Hills. Most of the buildings are made of the local pink/yellow stone and, with the Middle Eastern sun shining on it, it looks as if the city is made of gold.



Professor Marcel Dubois, a Dominican priest said in 2000:

“Jerusalem is the only place we are sure God touched”.

There is a Jewish saying:

“When God created the world, he gave it seven portions of beauty, six of which were for Jerusalem”.

Jerusalem is the third holiest city in the world for Muslims, after Mecca and Medina, holy for Christians because so much of the life of Jesus was bound up with the city, and the holiest city in the world for Jews.

All three faiths have many holy historical sites there.

The skyline of Jerusalem/the ‘Old City’ is dominated by the Temple Mount/Haram al Sharif and the Dome of the Rock with its iconic golden dome, built on what many historians say is the site of the destroyed Jewish temples.

Its legal, political and historical status are much discussed, and what was said in the past and what is said today vary greatly.

2. Holy City

For Muslims, Jerusalem is the third holiest city after Mecca and Medina.

Many Muslims now make pilgrimage to the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock.

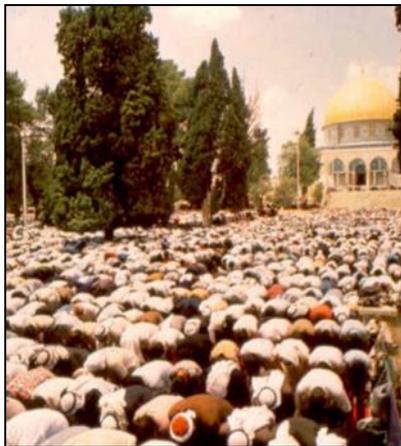


Al-Aqsa Mosque



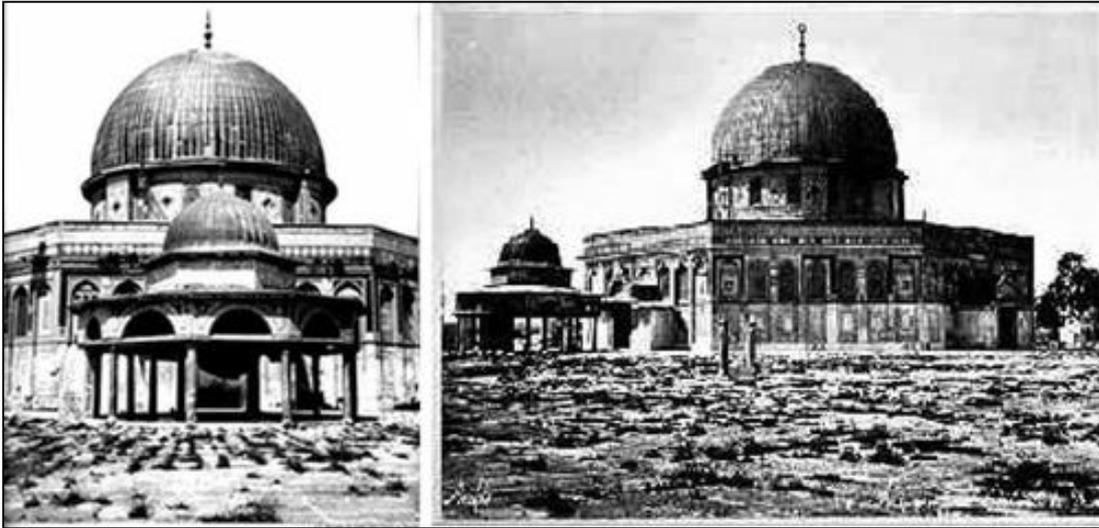
Dome of the Rock

Wherever they are in the world they face Mecca when they pray, including when in Jerusalem, even though this means turning their backs on the Al-Asa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock.



Then

When under the control of the Turks and later the Jordanians, these were very neglected.



For Christians

There are many sites in Jerusalem holy to Christians. For example, Gethsemane, Via Dolorosa, and the Holy Sepulchre.

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre is identified by some Christians as the place of the crucifixion, and of the tomb of Jesus of Nazareth.

It is a place of pilgrimage for Christians of many denominations.



Church of the Holy Sepulchre

Jerusalem is mentioned 141 times in the Christian New Testament.

For Jews

For Jews, Jerusalem is the holiest place in the world.

They face it when they pray.

It is mentioned repeatedly in their daily prayers.

It is mentioned 626 times in the Old Testament.

Their holiest sites are

The Temple Mount, believed to be the site of the two Jewish Temples, the last destroyed by the Romans in 72 CE. According to Islamic scholars and historians, the Muslim Al-Aqsa mosque and the Dome of the Rock were subsequently built on the site.



Then

Islamic Scholars

“The Prophet Muhammad said: Verily Solomon son of David raised Bayt al-Maqdis [i.e., Beth ha-Mikdash, the First Temple] with gold and silver, with rubies and emeralds, and Allah caused human beings and spirits to work under his command, until the raising of the House was completed”.

Imam Abu Abdullah al-Qurtubi, 1214 to 1273, one of the most authoritative medieval Quranic annotators, in his Al-Jami’ li Ahkam il-Qur’an, or Encyclopedia of Quranic Rules.

“In Jerusalem on a huge Rock, Solomon son of David built a beautiful Temple to expand the worship of God. Today on the base of that Temple stands the Dome of the Rock”.

Quranic exegete and jurist, Imam Muhammad ibn Jarir at-Tabari, 838 to 923, in his Tarikh al-Rusul wa al-Muluk, or History of Prophets and Kings”

Guide books

“This site is one of the oldest in the world. Its sanctity dates from the earliest times. Its identity with the site of Solomon’s Temple is beyond dispute.”

Brief Guide to Haram as-Sharif for Muslim pilgrims, written in English, published by the Supreme Muslim Council of Jerusalem, 1932.

Jordan forbade not only Israelis but any Jew from entering their annexed part of Jerusalem.

"Person professing the Jewish faith are not admitted into Jordan".
The Jordanian Tourist Department, 1956

Western Wall



1885



1910

Ever since their second temple was destroyed by the Romans in 72 CE, Jews have prayed at the Western Wall which they say archaeology shows is built on the remains of the original surrounding wall of the second temple.

Now



2016

Jews still pray at the Western Wall

The Palestinians claim that the Jews never had any connection with the wall

Then

The Roman historian Josephus detailed the Roman conquest of Jerusalem in his book 'The Jewish Wars';

A bas-relief on the arch of Titus in Rome depicts the triumphant Roman general Titus leading his Jewish slaves from Jerusalem. They are carrying a seven-headed candlestick, which no-one other than the Jews ever used at that time.



Titus Arch

Now

Palestinians and most of the international community say that the archaeology is illegal and must stop.

The Palestinians claim that the Jews never had any connection with the site or with Jerusalem.

In November 2016 UNESCO recognised the sites which the Jews regard as being their historical holy sites, as being Muslim holy sites, thus erasing both Christian and Jewish claims to what were till then universally recognised historical ties.

On December 23rd 2016, the UN Security council passed a resolution (2334) designating eastern Jerusalem including the Jews' holiest sites as being "illegally occupied Palestinian territory".

The Palestinians say that the wall never had any connection to the Jews and is the Al-Burka wall which once surrounded the Al-Aqsa mosque.

Today Jerusalem is a multi-religious, multi-cultural city, with Jewish, Muslim, Christian, Armenian and peoples of many more different religions and ethnic backgrounds.



A shopping mall in Jerusalem

3. Capital City

"The seat of government of a country or other political unit".

Collins English Dictionary

Jerusalem was the capital city of the Jewish state of Judah, and is the capital of today's re-established Israel.

Now

The Knesset (parliament) and most government offices are in Jerusalem.



Most of the international community do not recognise Jerusalem, west or east, as Israel's capital, and almost all have their embassies in other parts of the country rather than in Jerusalem.

The Palestinians do not recognise Jerusalem as being a Jewish city.

"Antonio Guterres [Secretary of the United Nations] clearly and explicitly sinned against peace and the Palestinian-Israeli political agreement when he claimed..that he believes in the connection between Jerusalem and the Jews".

Official PA daily Al-Hayat Al-

Jadida, 30/1/2017

"Jerusalem and all of Palestine - from the [Jordan] river to the [Mediterranean] Sea - are the land of the Palestinian people, and their history is its history.... Jerusalem is Palestinian Arab. It belongs only to the followers of Islam and Christianity, and not Judaism".

Official PA daily Al-Hayat Al-

Jadida, 30/1/2017

"Jerusalem is a completely Islamic city".

Sheikh Muhammed Jihad al Kilani, Director of religious Affairs dept (Al-Hayat al-Jadida 14/7/2010

"It is not possible for us to relinquish even a single grain of the land of Jerusalem. There is no peace without Jerusalem".

al-Jadida

Al-Habbash, PA Minister (Al-Hayat 11/7/2010

“Jerusalem and its environs are a trust that Allah entrusted to us”.

**Mahmoud Abbas, PA President at Arab summit
27/3/2010**

In contrast

*“After reviewing the relevant Qur’anic passages concerning this matter, I conclude that, as no one denies Muslims complete sovereignty over Mecca, from an Islamic point of view - despite opposing, groundless claims - there is no reason for Muslims to deny the State of Israel - which is a JEWISH state - **complete sovereignty over Jerusalem”.***

Sheikh Palazzi

Then

Other than during the time of Judah and Israel, Jerusalem has never been the capital of any state or occupier until the re-establishment of the Jewish state.

The area was invaded and occupied many times throughout history, but none of the occupiers ever made Jerusalem their capital.

As Islam spread in the 7th century from the area now known as Saudi Arabia, Jerusalem was never the capital;

The capital of the Crusaders’ ‘Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem’ was Acre;

The Ottoman Turks retained their capital in Constantinople, and neglected Jerusalem;

The British had their capital, London, in the UK;

The Jordanians, who conquered part of the city in 1947 and annexed it for 19 years in 1950, retained their capital, Amman, in Jordan, and neglected Jerusalem and its Muslim holy sites.

Now

Jerusalem was liberated/conquered/united by Israel in 1967;

Electricity was all put on one grid;

The water supply was centralised;

A Light Rail line was built uniting the whole city;

All citizens may live or go anywhere they want in Jerusalem.



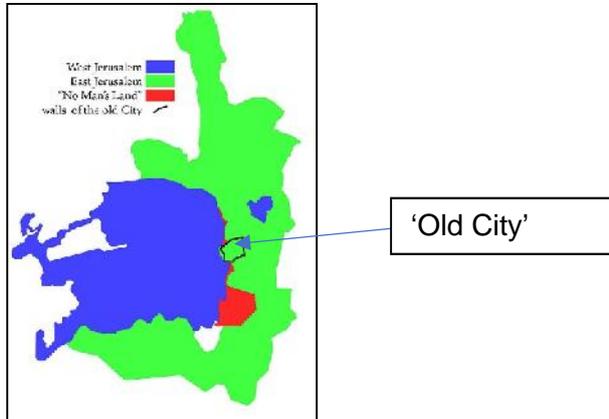
A shopping mall in Jerusalem

The Palestinians are demanding Jerusalem as the capital of their to-be-created State of Palestine.

4. Areas of Jerusalem

As in any city, there are many areas in Jerusalem. Some of them are listed below.

'Old City'



In eastern Jerusalem is an area known as the 'Old City'. It is surrounded by a wall which was built in mediaeval times on what the Jews claim are the ruins of the surrounding wall of the ancient Jewish city. There were eight gates, seven of which are still used.

Then

For centuries, this was the City of Jerusalem, and it was not until the mid-19th century that the Jewish population grew so large that the Jews started living outside the city walls on vacant barren land.

In spite of several expulsions, Jews have had a continuous presence in Jerusalem. The first Turkish census in about the mid-19th century showed that there were many Arabs, Muslims, Christians, Armenians, and numerous other inhabitants of Jerusalem, the majority of whom were Jews. There were many riots and massacres and the Jewish population was subsequently reduced.

They all lived together all over the city, though most tended to live among their own people. This resulted in the areas where they lived eventually being called the Jewish, Muslim, Christian and Armenian Quarters. These are shown clearly in the map below, published by the British Mandate.

Now

Although the Jewish quarter is smaller than the Muslim Quarter, the majority of Jerusalem's inhabitants from at least before the first Turkish census in the mid-19th century, were Jews.



Now



Street in Jewish Quarter



Market in Muslim Quarter



Street in Armenian Quarter



Christian Quarter

Then

In 1948 the Jordanian Legion conquered parts of Jerusalem, including the Old City, annexing it in 1950. They:

- expelled all the Jews living there;



- destroyed 52 (all) synagogues;
- did not allow Jews from anywhere in the world access to their holy sites or university or hospital, in spite of UN instructions to do so;
- prevented Christians from maintaining their holy sites and places of worship;
- Christian schools were forced to teach the Quran;
- Half of the 25,000 Christian population of the Old city fled during the 17 years of annexation.
- Jordan forbade not only Israelis, but all Jews from entering their annexed part of Jerusalem:

“Persons professing the Jewish faith are not admitted to Jordan”.

The Jordan Tourist Department, 1956

Now

Jerusalem is inhabited by Jews, Muslims, Christians, Armenians and many other ethnic and religious groups.

The Jewish Quarter is deemed to be

“Occupied Palestinian land”. **UNSC Resolution 2334**

Jews still form the majority of Jerusalem's inhabitants, although in the 'Old City' the numbers are about even.

Mount of Olives

This is a major site of Christian worship as it is believed that it is from here that Jesus ascended to heaven. It is a major site of pilgrimage for Catholics, Eastern Orthodox Christians and Protestants.

It is the site of a Jewish cemetery holding 150,000 Jewish graves, some dating back 3000 years.

Then

During the Jordanian annexation, 38,000 graves were destroyed, grave stones were used as latrines for the Jordanian army, and a parking lot, a hotel and a filling station were built over the graves.

Now

Israel has restored as many of the graves as possible. However, vandalization continues.

Mount Scopus

This area is a mountain in northeast Jerusalem. After the 1948 Arab–Israeli War, Mount Scopus became a UN-protected Israeli exclave within Jordanian-administered territory until the Six-Day War in 1967. Since then it has been part of Jerusalem.

Hospital

Then

The Jews established a hospital on Mount Scopus in 1934.

Now



It now employs mixed medical teams of Israeli Jews and Israeli Arabs, and serves Israeli Jews and Arabs as well as Palestinians.

University

Then

The university, first discussed in 1882, was established in 1925.

The first Board of Governors included Albert Einstein.



Opening Ceremony

Now



Mount Scopus and the University

The students at the university reflect the population of Jerusalem: there are roughly equal numbers of Israeli Jews and Israeli Arabs.



There is also a residential area on Mount Scopus.

On Mount Scopus, 4.5 km from the walled city, on a neck of land at the north end of the Mount of Olives lies the British Military Cemetery. It contains the graves of 3,300 Commonwealth servicemen who died during WWI fighting the Ottoman Empire.



Silwan

Silwan is situated just south of the 'Old City',

Then

In 1882 a group of Yemenite Jews moved to an empty area which had been inhabited by Jews in Biblical times. Many of them lived in Jewish burial caves dating from the 10th to 8th centuries BCE.



Ancient Jewish Tombs
in caves

Yemenite village



1862

Palestinian village
today



Then

Jews say that during the British Mandate, they were attacked by local Arabs and removed by the British for their own safety.

Palestinians say that the Yemenite Jews were persecuted by ultra-Orthodox Jews in the Old City and that the Arabs helped the Yemenite Jews.

It was conquered and annexed by Jordan from 1949 - 1967.

Now

Between 20,00 – 50,000 Arabs live there. They claim that their ancestors have always done so.



Silwan is situated next to the area known as David's City.

David's City (Ir David)

Then

David's City is situated' on land which was annexed by Jordan from 1950 – 1967.

When David came to the throne, Jerusalem was a non-Jewish Canaanite city-state in the centre of a Jewish country. King David conquered it and made it his capital, from where he reigned for forty years, dying in 837 BCE.

Now

Archaeologists have discovered carbon-dated remains which they claim are those of King David's palace, just outside the city walls, as well as other evidence of the existence of Jewish habitation.



Palestinian leaders say that the land has always belonged to them and should not be excavated.

In 1974 UNESCO declared archaeology in Jerusalem to be illegal.

5. Jerusalem Timeline

Then

586/597 Destruction of Solomon's temple

Expulsion of Jews by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon/Chaldeans to Babylon.

"If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget *her cunning*".

Psalm 137 v15, King James Bible

538 BCE Start of rebuilding of Temple

512 BCE completion or rebuilding of Temple

63 BCE Romans invaded Jerusalem 72 CE.

Expulsion by Romans of most Jews from Jerusalem. Some remained. Many returned

33 CE Birth of Christianity

325 Roman Emperor Constantine built the first church in Jerusalem, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre

7th century. Islam spread from what is now Saudi Arabia.

5 consecutive Caliphates

1095 First crusade to liberate Christian holy sites.

1099 The Crusader state, the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem

1187 Saladin besieged Jerusalem.

Ended the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem

1517-1917 Turkish Ottoman Empire

1917 During First World War, the British General Allenby defeated the Turkish Ottoman occupiers, driving them from Jerusalem, and from the whole country.

1917 Balfour Declaration

"His Majesty's government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may 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".

1920 League of Nations and

1922 San Remo Declaration

"Whereas recognition has been given to the historical connection of the Jewish people with Palestine and to the grounds for reconstituting their national home in that country."

1920-1948 British Mandate for Palestine

"The Administration of Palestine, while ensuring that the rights and position of other sections of the population are not prejudiced, shall facilitate Jewish immigration under suitable conditions and shall encourage, in co-operation with the Jewish agency referred to in Article 4, close settlement by Jews on the land, including State lands and waste lands not required for public purposes."

- 1947 Re-establishment of Israel
1947 UN Resolution 181 laid down the establishment of two states in Palestine, one for the Jews and one for the Arabs of Palestine. Jerusalem was to be a *"Corpus Separatum"*.
That is, under international control for 10 years, followed by a referendum by Jerusalem's inhabitants. This never took place as 5 Arab armies attacked the newly re-established state of Israel. Had there been a referendum, the Jews would have regained control of their ancient capital, as they were the majority in Jerusalem at that time and have been ever since.
- 1948 Jordan occupied and annexed land east of Jerusalem, surrounding Jerusalem on three sides for 19 years. This included the Jewish Quarter of the 'Old City'. Neglect, destruction of all 52 synagogues. All Jews expelled. Christians forbidden to maintain their holy places. Forced to teach the Quran in their schools. Half of the 25,000 Arab Christians abandoned the city between 1949 and June 1967.

Now

- 1967 Israel re-united Jerusalem.
Freedom of worship for all faiths.
All inhabitants of Jerusalem receive state benefits.
All inhabitants can travel anywhere in the city.
- 2016 Mahmoud Abbas, a member of Fatah, elected President of the Palestinian Authority on West Bank as President for a 4-year term, demanded eastern Jerusalem as the capital of the to-be-established Palestinian state.

"Anyone who gives up Jerusalem is a traitor and there will be no Palestinian state without Jerusalem as its capital".

Khaled Abu Toameh (24/1/2016)

- 2007 Hamas elected in Gaza for a 4-year term.

Friction in some areas of eastern Jerusalem as Palestinians from the West Bank claim it is their land (see Jerusalem districts).

Palestinians accuse Israelis of wanting to destroy the Al-Aqsa mosque. Israel accused by most of the international community of illegally occupying eastern Jerusalem and their holy sites and homes in the Jewish Quarter.

UNESCO Oct 2016

Declaration ascribed Jewish Holy sites, including those in Jerusalem as being Muslim, including the tomb of Rachel, who was Jewish with no connection to Islam.

UNSC 2334 Dec 2016

Declared Jewish holy sites in Jerusalem to be *"illegally occupied Palestinian territory"*.