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## Israel's Adversaries

### Series: The Biblical Roots of the Middle East Crisis

The Village Church at Shell Point

Evening Service

April 28, 2024

#### I. Defining the Relationship

A. Scriptures defining the relationship of Israel to the nations

B. Deuteronomy 28-30

1. Deuteronomy 28:1-9 (ESV) —

- a. 1 **“And if you faithfully obey the voice of the LORD your God, being careful to do all his commandments that I command you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth.**
- b. 2 And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, if you obey the voice of the LORD your God.
- c. 3 Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the field.
- d. 4 Blessed shall be the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground and the fruit of your cattle, the increase of your herds and the young of your flock.
- e. 5 Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl.
- f. 6 Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out.
- g. 7 **“The LORD will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before you. They shall come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways.**
- h. 8 The LORD will command the blessing on you in your barns and in all that you undertake. And he will bless you in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.
- i. 9 The LORD will establish you as a people holy to himself, as he has sworn to you, if you keep the commandments of the LORD your God and walk in his ways.

2. Deuteronomy 28:15-26 (ESV) —

- a. 15 **“But if you will not obey the voice of the LORD your God or be careful to do all his commandments and his statutes that I command you today, then all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you.**
- b. 16 Cursed shall you be in the city, and cursed shall you be in the field.
- c. 17 Cursed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl.

- d. 18 Cursed shall be the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground, the increase of your herds and the young of your flock.
  - e. 19 Cursed shall you be when you come in, and cursed shall you be when you go out.
  - f. 20 “The LORD will send on you curses, confusion, and frustration in all that you undertake to do, until you are destroyed and perish quickly on account of the evil of your deeds, because you have forsaken me.
  - g. 21 The LORD will make the pestilence stick to you until he has consumed you off the land that you are entering to take possession of it.
  - h. 22 The LORD will strike you with wasting disease and with fever, inflammation and fiery heat, and with drought and with blight and with mildew. They shall pursue you until you perish.
  - i. 23 And the heavens over your head shall be bronze, and the earth under you shall be iron.
  - j. 24 The LORD will make the rain of your land powder. From heaven dust shall come down on you until you are destroyed.
  - k. 25 **“The LORD will cause you to be defeated before your enemies. You shall go out one way against them and flee seven ways before them. And you shall be a horror to all the kingdoms of the earth.**
  - l. 26 And your dead body shall be food for all birds of the air and for the beasts of the earth, and there shall be no one to frighten them away.
3. **Deuteronomy 28:49–52 (ESV) —**
- a. 49 **The LORD will bring a nation against you from far away, from the end of the earth, swooping down like the eagle, a nation whose language you do not understand,**
  - b. 50 a hard-faced nation who shall not respect the old or show mercy to the young.
  - c. 51 It shall eat the offspring of your cattle and the fruit of your ground, until you are destroyed; it also shall not leave you grain, wine, or oil, the increase of your herds or the young of your flock, until they have caused you to perish.
  - d. 52 “They shall besiege you in all your towns, until your high and fortified walls, in which you trusted, come down throughout all your land. And they shall besiege you in all your towns throughout all your land, which the LORD your God has given you.
4. **Deuteronomy 28:63–64 (ESV) —**
- a. 63 And as the LORD took delight in doing you good and multiplying you, so **the LORD will take delight in bringing ruin upon you and destroying you. And you shall be plucked off the land that you are entering to take possession of it. 64 “And the LORD will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the**

earth to the other, and there you shall serve other gods of wood and stone, which neither you nor your fathers have known.

5. **Deuteronomy 29:22–28** (ESV) —

- a. **22 And the next generation, your children who rise up after you, and the foreigner who comes from a far land, will say, when they see the afflictions of that land and the sicknesses with which the LORD has made it sick—**
- b. 23 the whole land burned out with brimstone and salt, nothing sown and nothing growing, where no plant can sprout, an overthrow like that of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, which the LORD overthrew in his anger and wrath—
- c. 24 **all the nations will say, ‘Why has the LORD done thus to this land? What caused the heat of this great anger?’**
- d. **25 Then people will say, ‘It is because they abandoned the covenant of the LORD, the God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them out of the land of Egypt,**
- e. **26 and went and served other gods and worshiped them, gods whom they had not known and whom he had not allotted to them.**
- f. 27 Therefore the anger of the LORD was kindled against this land, bringing upon it all the curses written in this book,
- g. 28 and the LORD uprooted them from their land in anger and fury and great wrath, and cast them into another land, as they are this day.’

6. **Deuteronomy 30:1–10** (ESV) —

- a. 1 **“And when all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among all the nations where the LORD your God has driven you,**
- b. **2 and return to the LORD your God, you and your children, and obey his voice in all that I command you today, with all your heart and with all your soul,**
- c. **3 then the LORD your God will restore your fortunes and have mercy on you, and he will gather you again from all the peoples where the LORD your God has scattered you.**
- d. 4 If your outcasts are in the uttermost parts of heaven, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there he will take you.
- e. 5 And the LORD your God will bring you into the land that your fathers possessed, that you may possess it. And he will make you more prosperous and numerous than your fathers.
- f. 6 And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.

- g. 7 And the LORD your God will put all these curses on your foes and enemies who persecuted you.
- h. 8 And you shall again obey the voice of the LORD and keep all his commandments that I command you today.
- i. 9 The LORD your God will make you abundantly prosperous in all the work of your hand, in the fruit of your womb and in the fruit of your cattle and in the fruit of your ground. For the LORD will again take delight in prospering you, as he took delight in your fathers,
- j. 10 when you obey the voice of the LORD your God, to keep his commandments and his statutes that are written in this Book of the Law, when you turn to the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

C. **Joshua**

- 1. **Joshua 21:43–45** (ESV) —
  - a. 43 Thus the LORD gave to Israel all the land that he swore to give to their fathers. And they took possession of it, and they settled there.
  - b. 44 **And the LORD gave them rest on every side just as he had sworn to their fathers. Not one of all their enemies had withstood them, for the LORD had given all their enemies into their hands.**
  - c. 45 **Not one word of all the good promises that the LORD had made to the house of Israel had failed; all came to pass.**

D. **Judges**

- 1. **Judges 2:10–19** (ESV) —
  - a. 10 And all that generation also were gathered to their fathers. And there arose another generation after them who did not know the LORD or the work that he had done for Israel.
  - b. 11 And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and served the Baals.
  - c. 12 **And they abandoned the LORD, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt. They went after other gods, from among the gods of the peoples who were around them, and bowed down to them. And they provoked the LORD to anger.**
  - d. 13 They abandoned the LORD and served the Baals and the Ashteroth.
  - e. 14 **So the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he gave them over to plunderers, who plundered them. And he sold them into the hand of their surrounding enemies, so that they could no longer withstand their enemies.**
  - f. 15 Whenever they marched out, the hand of the LORD was against them for harm, as the LORD had warned, and as the LORD had sworn to them. And they were in terrible distress.

- g. 16 Then the LORD raised up judges, who saved them out of the hand of those who plundered them.
- h. 17 Yet they did not listen to their judges, for they whored after other gods and bowed down to them. They soon turned aside from the way in which their fathers had walked, who had obeyed the commandments of the LORD, and they did not do so.
- i. 18 Whenever the LORD raised up judges for them, the LORD was with the judge, and he saved them from the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge. For the LORD was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who afflicted and oppressed them.
- j. 19 But whenever the judge died, they turned back and were more corrupt than their fathers, going after other gods, serving them and bowing down to them. They did not drop any of their practices or their stubborn ways.

2. **Judges 21:25** (ESV) —

- a. 25 **In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.**

E. **Samuel**

1. **1 Samuel 8:4–9** (ESV) —

- a. 4 Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah
- b. 5 and said to him, “Behold, you are old and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now appoint for us a king to judge us like all the nations.”
- c. 6 But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, “Give us a king to judge us.” And Samuel prayed to the LORD.
- d. 7 And the LORD said to Samuel, “Obey the voice of the people in all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them.
- e. 8 **According to all the deeds that they have done, from the day I brought them up out of Egypt even to this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are also doing to you.**
- f. 9 Now then, obey their voice; only you shall solemnly warn them and show them the ways of the king who shall reign over them.”

F. **The Kings**

1. **Saul – unfaithful**

- a. Disobeyed God
- b. Kingship taken from him

2. **David – faithful**

- a. Consolidated the kingdom after fits and starts
- b. Warrior king

3. **Solomon – wisdom and splendor**

- a. Built temple, palace
- b. Moral failure
  - (1) Polygamy

- (2) Forced labor
- (3) Set stage for collapse of monarchy
- 4. Rehoboam – weak, unprincipled
  - a. Relied on bad advice
  - b. Multiplied the conscription of father
  - c. Led to division
  - d. Jeroboam (north) led rebellion

G. The Divided Kingdom

- 1. Israel
  - a. North
  - b. 10 tribes
  - c. Capital – Samaria
- 2. Judah
  - a. South
  - b. 2 tribes – Benjamin and Judah
  - c. Capital – Jerusalem
- 3. Moral decline
  - a. More quickly in north than south
- 4. Prophets
  - a. Warnings
  - b. Related to Deuteronomy

II. The Exiles

A. Assyria

- 1. Hoshea (Samaria)
  - a. Did evil
- 2. Shalmaneser – King of Assyria
  - a. Forced Hoshea into vassal state
- 3. Hoshea conspired with Egypt
  - a. Shalmaneser discovered the treason
  - b. Imprisoned Hoshea
  - c. Besieged Samaria for 3 years
- 4. Shalmaneser captured Samaria
  - a. Took Israelites to Assyria
  - b. Exiled to the cities of Medes
- 5. Cause
  - a. Sinned against God
  - b. Adopted idolatrous practices of surrounding nations the Lord had driven out before them
- 6. Shalmaneser brought people from Babylon and Assyria
  - a. Settled them in Samaria
- 7. Lord sent lions – killed people
  - a. Brought back priest from exile to teach settlers the God of the land
  - b. Produced syncretistic worship

B. Babylon

1. **605 – First deportation**
    - a. Included Daniel
  2. **597 – Second deportation**
    - a. Included Ezekiel
  3. **586 – Final Deportation**
    - a. Included Jeremiah
  4. 9<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah
    - a. Nebuchadnezzar – set siege wall
  5. **11<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah**
    - a. City broken into
    - b. Zedekiah escaped, but captured near Jericho
    - c. Killed Zedekiah's sons, then put out his eyes
    - d. Brought him to Babylon
    - e. Destroyed Jerusalem
    - f. Burned temple, king's house
    - g. Most of the rest carried into Babylon
    - h. Left behind the most poor
- C. **Medes and Persians**
1. Daniel 5 – Belshazzar, last king of Babylon
    - a. Great party
    - b. Writing on the wall – Daniel interpreted as judgment
    - c. Daniel rewarded
    - d. But that night Belshazzar was killed
  2. **Darius the Mede** took the kingdom

### III. **History of the Civilizations**

- A. **Assyria**
1. **Genesis 10**
    - a. Cush, father of Nimrod
    - b. Nimrod – mighty one, mighty hunter
    - c. Origin of Babel, Erech, Accad, Calneh in Shinar
    - d. Then built Ninevah, Rehoboth-Ir and Calah and Resen in Assyria
  2. Dominated as city-state by Babylon
  3. Maintained its cultural identity
  4. Located on trade route
    - a. Developed its own source of income
  5. **Nineveh** – large city
    - a. 120,000
    - b. Architecture – drab, utilitarian;
  6. Impressive in size
    - a. Walls – wide enough for 12 chariots to race abreast
  7. Literature and arts
  8. Major commercial interests
  9. Paganism, though not as energetic as Babylon
  10. **800 B.C. – poised to emerge from Babylon's shadow**

- a. Enter Jonah
11. **Jonah's revival**
  - a. **King – Adadnirari**
  - b. Transformed culture
  - c. Obedient to the Lord
  - d. Subsequent kings – Asshurdan, Asshurnarari
  - e. Relationship with Israel and Judah (2 Kings 15; 2 Chronicles 28)
  - f. Civilization blossomed
  - g. Economic, political, military prowess
  - h. Artistic, literary, architectural development
  - i. Prosperity and peace
12. Pride – apostasy
  - a. **Tiglath-Pileser synthesized paganism with faith in Yahweh**
  - b. Driven by political ambition
  - c. Sought to divert loyalty from Jerusalem temple back to Nineveh
  - d. **Shalmaneser – wealth and power turned into tyranny**, brutality, aggression
13. **722 B.C. – Israel overrun**
  - a. **Sennacherib** – besieged Jerusalem (unsuccessfully)
  - b. Became object of God's judgment
14. **Nahum**
  - a. Oracle of judgment against Assyria
- B. **Babylon**
  1. Same origin as Assyria
    - a. **Founded by Nimrod**
  2. Biblical characterizations
    - a. **Oppressor** (Isaiah 14.3-4)
  3. Prophecies of judgment
    - a. **Jeremiah**
      - (1) Everlasting desolation
      - (2) Hammer of whole earth
      - (3) Object of horror among nations
    - b. **Psalm 137**
      - (1) Devastated one
    - c. **Revelation** (figurative?)
      - (1) Immorality
      - (2) Mother of harlots
      - (3) Abominations of the earth
      - (4) Wine of His fierce wrath
  4. **597 – Jeremiah 39; Ezekiel**
    - a. **Nebuchadnezzar**
    - b. Captured royal family of **Jehoiachin**, high priest, best citizens
    - c. **Installed Zedekiah**
    - d. Looted royal treasury
    - e. Ransacked temple; looted temple treasury



5. **586**
    - a. **Nebuchadnezzar**
    - b. Massacre of people
    - c. Destruction of temple
    - d. Palace burned
    - e. Jerusalem deported
  6. **Following 586**
    - a. **Babylon declined in fulfillment of prophecies**
    - b. Daniel 5 – Belshazzar killed
    - c. Darius the Mede conquered Babylon
- C. **Persia**
1. **Cyrus, king of Persia**
    - a. Fulfilled Jeremiah’s prophecy of return
  2. **539 B.C.**
    - a. Alliance of Medes and Persians, Mongol and Parthavian peoples of Kurdistan, Farsi and Elamite peoples of Iran
    - b. **Conquered both Babylon and Assyria**
    - c. Ended 2,000 years of Arab hegemony in region
    - d. **Fulfilled prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Habakkuk, Nahum**
  3. **Rulers – Cyrus, Xerxes, Darius, Artaxerxes**
    - a. Refined, benevolent
  4. Civilization – cosmopolitan
  5. Compassionate on captive peoples
    - a. Enabled return of Jews to Judah under Ezra and Nehemiah
  6. Largest empire of the ancient world at peak; wealthiest
    - a. Preserved culture and language (Farsi), even through Middle East

#### IV. **Assyrian, Babylon, and Persia in the Modern Conflict**

- A. **Assyria**
1. Emerges to carry on the legacy in Syria
    - a. Appeals to the glory days of Sennacherib and Shalmaneser
  2. Even though Nineveh lies outside Syria, the Assad rulers invoke the memory of Assyria (Hafez, son Bashar)
  3. 1978 – 2,750<sup>th</sup> anniversary of destruction of Israel
    - a. Hafez al Assad hosted opulent celebration for full week
    - b. Nights in revelry and ribald pleasures
    - c. Solid gold statue of ancient Assyrian deity Ashur – dedicated with Islamic *Shahadas* (“There is no god but God, and his messenger is Mohammed”) and *Rakats* (prescribed movements for Muslims in prayer)
  4. **Hafez al Assad**: We are heirs of Sennacherib and Shalmaneser – the greatest heroes of our nation. We have inherited their glory. We have inherited their wisdom. We have inherited their valor. But most of all, we have inherited their cause. Assyria must once again unite the Arab world

against the imperialism of the *Infidel*, the interloping of the West, and the encroachment of the Jew.

5. Hafez al Assad: Assyria must rise and conquer. Nothing must be able to stand in our path. Indeed nothing can stand in our path. The world is once again divided between *Dar al Islam* – the abode of faith – and *Dar al Harb* – the abode of war. Like Sennacherib, we shall sweep aside every obstacle. Like him, we shall prevail. *Ji'had. Insh'allah* (“God willing”)

B. **Babylon**

1. Following assassination of Hashemite King Faisal (1958), Iraq followed old empire's modus operandus
  - a. **Attacked ancient foe Israel in 1967, 1973**
  - b. **Invaded Kuwait** (heirs of ancient rivals Sumer and Akkad in 1961, 1973, 1990)
  - c. **Attacked ancient Persian enemies** (Iran; 1980-88)
2. **Sadam Hussein** made no secret of his intentions of restoring Babylonian heritage
  - a. Began reconstruction of ancient city 60 miles south of Baghdad
  - b. Extravagant palace; hanging gardens recreated
  - c. Rewrote constitution to mirror Hammurabi
3. Hussein reorganized bureaucracy to simulate Merodachbaladan
  - a. Reconstituted military like that of Nabopolassar
  - b. Revived cult of Ishtar, ancient fertility religion
4. Hussein: Glorious in a glorious time, Babylon is the lady of reviving centuries, rising dignified and holy, showing the great history of Iraq.
5. Hussein: Added to its magnificence and emphasizing its originality, the phoenix of the new time rises alive from the ashes of the past to the face the bright present – thus placing it on a golden throne, bringing back its charm, its charming youth, and unique glory. Babylon is not a city made of rocks and bricks – full of mere human events. It is not a forgotten place of the ancient past. Babylon is something else altogether. Since its birth, Babylon has stretched out its arms to the future – to be the seat of eternal wisdom, to represent the first civilization, and to remain as the glittering lighthouse in the dark night of history. Here is Babylon.

C. **Persia**

1. **Persian Gulf oil** enabled Iran to invoke Persian pride once again
  - a. No more 3<sup>rd</sup> world mediocrity
2. 1967-1971 – **Shah** produced series of celebrations
  - a. 5 year long observance of the 2,500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of reign of Cyrus
  - b. Everything involved conjured the ancient civilization – even to the clothing the Shah wore
  - c. He was paraded around in ebony carriage with royal Persian seal
  - d. Dais was a replica of the peacock throne of Xerxes
  - e. Grand Persian feast unlike anything the nation had seen for centuries

3. Shah: The glory of Persia is merely represented in the embellishments you see about you. In fact, the essence of that glory is yet to be fully realized as our nation only now begins to assume its proper place among the great nations of the earth. Persia shall arise.
4. 1979 – Shah was deposed by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini
  - a. Might have thought the Ayatollah would have rejected such opulent Persian celebration – instead he embraced Persian hegemony under the banner of Islamic universalism
5. Ayatollah: Now in the hands of the Mullahs and Talabehs, these symbols of our great heritage shall give new impetus to the export of our revolution. Soon the spirit of Allah will sweep the faithful *Umma* of the Persian hoards across the earth: first, Jerusalem will be liberated for prayer; then the Great Satan will be humiliated and crushed; and finally, our *Ji'had* will free the oppressed masses on every continent.
6. Ayatollah: Our land has always been the seed-bed of true freedom – even before the Prophet came to correct the errors of time. Once again Persia shall lead the world as before. Conquest through *Ji'had* shall be our deliverance and our glory.

V. Questions Raised

- A. These Middle Eastern societies quite self-consciously look back to the glory days of their civilizations to give impetus for their respective revolutions
- B. Didn't these ancient societies – which play such an important part in biblical history – predate Mohammed and Islam?
  1. Yes – by millennia!
- C. Weren't these civilizations based on polytheistic pagan spiritualities?
  1. How were they incorporated into a rigidly monotheistic Islam, and then still used as a motivating center for expanding their respective hegemony in the region and the world?
- D. Explore those questions – examine the biblical background for the people who make up much of the Islamic world
  1. Begin to see how these people and ideologies merge into a Pan-Arab movement committed to universal hegemony

VI. Canaan's Curse

- A. Genesis 9:18–27 (ESV) —
  1. 18 The sons of Noah who went forth from the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. (Ham was the father of Canaan.)
  2. 19 These three were the sons of Noah, and from these the people of the whole earth were dispersed.
  3. 20 Noah began to be a man of the soil, and he planted a vineyard.
  4. 21 He drank of the wine and became drunk and lay uncovered in his tent.
  5. 22 And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father and told his two brothers outside.

6. 23 Then Shem and Japheth took a garment, laid it on both their shoulders, and walked backward and covered the nakedness of their father. Their faces were turned backward, and they did not see their father's nakedness.
  7. 24 When Noah awoke from his wine and knew what his youngest son had done to him,
  8. 25 he said, "Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be to his brothers."
  9. 26 He also said, "Blessed be the LORD, the God of Shem; and let Canaan be his servant.
  10. 27 May God enlarge Japheth, and let him dwell in the tents of Shem, and let Canaan be his servant."
- B. **Genesis 15:16** (ESV) —
1. 16 And they shall come back here in the fourth generation, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete."
- C. **Leviticus 18**
1. Sexual sins (casuistic law applying law of adultery)
    - a. Fornication, adultery, incest, homosexuality, bestiality
    - b. Referred to as "uncovering the nakedness of ..."
    - c. Consequences referred to as "the land spewing out the inhabitants... nation which has been before you"
- D. Main points
1. **Ham's sin generated familial pattern** of sin through generations
    - a. Sin was serious
    - b. In its heightened form, was basis for their expulsion from the land
  2. Conflict generated between **the descendants of Shem and Canaanites**
    - a. Stage was set for the Palestinian conflict

## VII. **Ishmael and Isaac**

### A. **Genesis 16**

1. **Sarai (Sarah) gave Hagar** (maid) to Abram to have child when she could not bear
  - a. Hagar conceived
  - b. Let to Sarai despising Hagar
2. Abram let Sarai deal with Hagar
  - a. Sarai mistreated Hagar; Hagar fled
3. Angel of the Lord found Hagar
  - a. God gave heed to her affliction
  - b. **Promised Hagar a son – Ishmael**
  - c. Promised he would have many descendants
4. **Genesis 16:12** (ESV) —
  - a. 12 He shall be a wild donkey of a man, his hand against everyone and everyone's hand against him, and he shall dwell over against all his kinsmen."
5. Ishmael born when Abram was 86

### B. **Genesis 21**

1. **Rivalry between Sarah and Hagar** grew
    - a. Sarah saw Ishmael mocking
    - b. Asked Abraham to drive her out
    - c. God told Abraham to do what Sarah wanted
    - d. God promised Abraham He would make a nation of Ishmael also
  2. Abraham gave bread and water to Hagar and sent them away
    - a. When water ran out, Hagar put the boy away to die
    - b. Angel showed up; promised Hagar Ishmael would be a great nation
    - c. Provided a well
    - d. Boy grew
    - e. **Genesis 21:20–21** (ESV) — 20 And God was with the boy, and he grew up. He lived in the wilderness and became an expert with the bow. 21 He lived in the wilderness of Paran, and his mother took a wife for him from the land of Egypt.
- C. **Genesis 25**
1. Generations of Ishmael listed
  2. **Genesis 25:18** (ESV) —
    - a. 18 They settled from Havilah to Shur, which is opposite Egypt in the direction of Assyria. He settled over against all his kinsmen.

## VIII. **The Rise of Mohammed**

- A. **Mecca**
1. Mohammed – 40 year old wealthy merchant from commercial center of Mecca in desert area of Hejaz
  2. Series of visions in nearby cave
  3. As leader of ruling tribe of Koreish, drew dedicated following of local residents
  4. Generated a **simple faith – strong monotheism with vivid promise of afterlife**
  5. Faith captivated some, disturbed key members of commercial elite in Mecca
  6. Mecca – strategic location at crossroads of caravan routes
    - a. Businesses catered to travelers
    - b. Entertainments of the flesh abounded
    - c. Temple was pantheon to gods of East and West – Greek, Roman, Persian – including the Zeus-like god the Arabians called Allah
    - d. Heightened excesses, religious syncretism and confusion
  7. Excessive polytheism disturbed Mohammed’s sense of order
    - a. Devised a simple monotheistic faith, drawing from various heresies with which he had contact – Arianism, Nestorianism, Zoroastrianism
    - b. Most basic, foundation of all religions, including Judaism and Christianity – the oldest of all religions
    - c. Pure genius
  8. Not genius to the Meccan leaders

- a. Mohammed's visions and preaching were bad for business
  - b. Sent him to exile in 622
- B. **Medina**
1. Fled to Yathrib
    - a. Renamed to Medina
    - b. Developed support
  2. Systematized his theological doctrines, social requirements
  3. Institutionalized political vision
  4. Established cultural pattern which he believed was universal
    - a. Believed would sweep the entire world
  5. **Developed followers into an ruthless army**
    - a. Launched assault on Mecca in 630 (first of many revolutionary conquests)
    - b. Many other conquests would follow – Middle East, North Africa, Central Asia, Russian steppes, toward Europe across the Balkans and Pyrenees
  6. No nation has been converted to Islam peacefully
    - a. One reason for success of Islam – successful use of armed conflict
- C. **A Simple Faith**
1. Shared with Judaism and Christianity – **monotheism**
    - a. Sovereign God
    - b. Spiritual afterlife with angels and demons
    - c. Ethical code of conduct
  2. Distinctives – five pillars
    - a. **Pillar 1 – Shahada (profession of faith)**
      - (1) “There is no god but Allah and Muhammed is his prophet”
      - (2) No other creedal statements or complex theology
    - b. **Pillar 2 – Salat (prayer ritual)**
      - (1) At first, twice a day, then three times; finally, five times a day
      - (2) Ritual recited – formula
      - (3) No liturgies, ceremonies, sacraments
    - c. **Pillar 3 – Zakat (alms or tax)**
      - (1) Needs of the poor of the community, support expansion of faith
      - (2) No tithe or amount mandatory – just generous giving
    - d. **Pillar 4 – Haj (pilgrimage)**
      - (1) At least once in life to Mecca
      - (2) Pray at the pantheon
      - (3) Walk where the prophet had walked
    - e. **Pillar 5 – Saum (fasting)**
      - (1) Once a year, month of Ramadan
      - (2) Abstain from food and drink during daylight hours
      - (3) No liturgical calendar or other festivals
  3. Additional mandates

- a. Abstain from alcohol
  - b. Sexual fidelity within polygamous boundaries
  - c. Submission to authority
  - d. Certain dietary restrictions
  - e. (Islam = submission)
- D. **The *Umma*, the *Infidel*, and *Ji'had***
- 1. Simplistic categories of people
    - a. **Umma – faithful, true believer**
    - b. **Kafir – infidel, unbeliever**
  - 2. Submission to Allah was to ultimately be universal
    - a. Any resistance was blasphemous; must be brought into submission by any means possible
  - 3. **Ji'had – war that the Umma would wage against the Kafir (infidel)**
- E. **Simple faith, simple solution**
- 1. Surah 9.5: When Ramadan is over, slay the idolaters wherever you find them. Arrest them, besiege them, and lie in ambush everywhere for them. If they repent and take to prayer and render the alms levy, allow them to go their way. Allah is forgiving and merciful.
  - 2. Surah 8.60: Strike terror into the hearts of the enemies of God, who are also your enemies.
  - 3. Surah 9.14: Kill the infidels, and God will torment them and cover them with shame.
  - 4. Surah 5.33: The punishment of those who wage war against Allah and his Prophet and strive to make mischief in the land is only this, that they should be murdered or crucified or their hands and their feet should be cut off on opposite sides or they should be imprisoned: this shall be as a disgrace for them in this world, and in the hereafter they shall have a grievous chastisement.
  - 5. Surah 8.13: I will instill terror into the hearts of the infidels, smite them above their necks and smite all their finger-tips off them.
  - 6. Surah 5.51: Umma, take neither Jews nor Christians for your friends. They are friends with one another. Whoever of you seeks their friendship will become one of their number. Allah does not guide such infidels.
  - 7. Surah 9.73: Prophet, make war on the infidels and the hypocrites and deal rigorously with them. Hell shall be their home: an evil fate.
  - 8. Surah: 9.26: Fight against such of those to whom the Scriptures were given as believe neither in Allah nor the Last Day, who do not forbid what Allah and his prophet have forbidden and do not embrace the true faith until they pay tribute out of hand and are utterly subdued.
  - 9. Surah 48.29: Muhammad is Allah's prophet. Those who follow him are ruthless to the infidels but merciful to one another.
  - 10. Surah 4.74: Let those who would exchange the life of the is world for the hereafter, fight for the cause of Allah; whether they die or conquer. We shall richly reward them.

11. Surah 2.151: Do not say that those who were slain in the cause of Allah are dead; they are alive, although you are not aware of them.
12. Surah 2.193: Fight them on, until there is no more tumult, seduction, or oppression, and there prevail justice, faith in Allah, and the religion becomes Islam.

IX. **A Clash of Worldviews**

- A. **Worldview – a way of viewing the world**
  1. Frame of reference
  2. Life perspective
- B. **Islam – man centered faith**
  1. Human beings are capable of fulfilling the requirements (the 5 pillars)
- C. **Christianity (OT and NT) – God centered**
  1. Human beings as created in image of God, are capable of remarkable achievement
  2. Due to the fall, the full fledged image of God has been lost – only fragments remain
  3. Only God can redeem a lost humanity
  4. God sent His Son, Messiah to do what we cannot do for ourselves
- D. **Legacy of Judeo-Christian worldview**
  1. **Freedom, prosperity, tolerance**
- E. **Legacy of Islamic worldview**, driven by discipline, conquest
  1. **Poverty, tyranny, terror**

X. **The First Palestinian Conflict**

- A. Irony – Promised land of the Jews has only been inhabited by them rarely
- B. Moses led Israel out of Egypt
  1. **Joshua into promised land**
  2. Inhabitants included Canaanites, Ammonites, Edomites, Moabites, Philistines as well as original inhabitants – Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites, Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaim, Girgashies, Jebusites
- C. Joshua encountered most of the above
  1. **Judges** – record of conflict with many of those peoples – Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah, Gideon, Jephthah, Samson, Samuel, Saul, David
- D. **Sahih Muslim Annals:**
  1. “The criminal Jews brought destruction upon the Umma since the earliest times. Their leaders conspired to send the innocent of Canaan away from their homes. They repulsed the pleas of the Philistine widows and Moabite orphans and washed their fields in the blood of the Ammonite poor. Therefore, they shall not stand in the Day of Judgment, nor shall they prevail against the sure coming of Ji’had. Allah shall pronounce just retribution and the Umma shall observe with joy and gladness.”
- E. **Anwar Sadat** (several years before Camp David accords):



1. “The assassination of Arab brethren, like Goliath, by Jewish shepherders like David, is the sort of shameful ignominy that we must yet set aright in the domain of the occupied Palestinian homeland.”
- F. **Yasser Arafat**
  1. “Be assured that the many indignities heaped upon the Palestinian people since ancient times must and shall be avenged. Israel’s policy in the occupied territories is little more than an extension of the imperialist tactics of the conqueror Joshua. Surely the judgment of Allah is reserved for them until Palestine is transferred from Dar al Harb to Dar al Islam. Ishmael shall have his revenge.”
- G. When Israel was exiled under Assyria and Babylonia in 722 and 586 BC respectively, it appeared that Ishmael had his revenge
  1. **Persians restored Israel to Judah – ancient conflict resumed**
    - a. Tobiah and Sanballat challenged the rebuilding of Ezra and Nehemiah

## XI. **The Second Palestinian Conflict**

- A. **70 AD – largely in Diaspora**
  1. Some Jews continued to maintain living in Palestine
- B. **Roman and Byzantine periods** – largely blighted, impoverished
  1. Palestine neglected
  2. Architecture deteriorated
  3. Jews protected
  4. Arab populations had converted to Christianity
  5. Middle East was largely Christian
  6. Jewish Palestine was small island in its midst
- C. Then **Islam**
  1. Mohammed led attacks on Jewish communities in Hejaz; killed the leaders, distributed women, children and property among followers
  2. Early Islam – Jews were to be annihilated
    - a. Sahih Muslim annals: Allah’s messenger – may peace be upon him – has commanded: Fight against the Jews and kill them. Pursue them until even a stone would say: Come here, Muslim, there is a Jew hiding himself behind me. Kill him. Kill him quickly.
  3. As Mohammed gained more control over the Arabian Peninsula and the Mediterranean world, he moderated his policies
    - a. Jews in the professional classes had skills which were useful to Muslim administration
    - b. Instituted the policy of **Dhimma – subjugation rather than destruction**
    - c. Spared lives in exchange for tithe of half their property
- D. Eventually, Dhimma became more complex and sophisticated
  1. Right to practice religion, travel in return for special taxes
  2. Dhimma merely suspended the Islamic’s right to kill them
- E. **Mohammed died in 632**

1. Successors exerted military control over all Arabia, made advances against Syria (Christian)
2. **Conquered Palestine in 638**
3. Thousands of Jews were killed, as well as some Byzantine Christians
4. Some professional class Jews continued under Dhimma (Baghdad and other locations has significant Jewish communities)
5. Most Jews fled into Europe
6. Mostly, Palestine was emptied of Jewish population
  - a. Isaac v. Ishmael went dormant once again

## XII. **The Third Palestinian Conflict**

- A. **Zionism** – well educated Jewish professionals in Europe
  1. Unable to be absorbed into western culture (prejudice, worldview, etc)
    - a. Anti-Semitism
    - b. Dreams of returning to Zion
  2. Influenced by Moses Hess, Emanuel Deutsch, Benjamin Disraeli, Emma Lazarus, George Eliot
    - a. Impetus for a secular Jewish state
  3. **Theodor Herzl** (1860-1904) – journalist in Vienna – became converted to Zionism
    - a. Passionate, he influenced many others
    - b. Jewish families began to return to Palestine – bought desert lands and abandoned ruins from the Ottoman Empire’s decline
- B. **After WWI – British** took responsibility for administration of the region
  1. Small but steady stream of Jewish settlers returned
- C. **After WWII – horrors of the Holocaust** led to a flood of returnees
  1. Ishmael and Isaac were again living in the same land
  2. British attempted to appease both sides
  3. **Balfour Declaration** (Arthur James Balfour, Foreign Sec. to Baron Rothschild, leader of Jewish community; 1917)
    - a. Declared British obligation to provide Palestine as national home for the Jews without jeopardizing religious or political rights in non-Jewish population
    - b. Later incorporated into peace treaty with Ottoman Empire and included in the Mandate for Palestine
- D. Policy was **opposed by Arab population**
  1. Demonstrations, strikes, riots, terrorism
- E. Out of frustration – **UN partitioned Palestine**
  1. **Western quarter – Jewish Palestinian state**
  2. **Eastern three-fourths as Arab Palestinian state** (Trans-Jordan)
  3. Tried to settle the issue politically once and for all – freedom, security, self-determination for all
- F. **Israel became a state on May 14, 1948**

1. Immediately three Palestinian armies along with national military forces of Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia launched war for control of entire region
  2. Arabs were determined that there be no compromise
    - a. Israelis were as determined to maintain their hold on the new land
- G. War ended in stalemate with Israel slightly expanding territory
1. Successive wars erupted in 56, 67, 73
  2. Terrorist strikes of the PLO sustained the conflict
- H. Israel has responded by authorizing new settlements in areas won from Jordan, Syria and Egypt in 1967 Six Day War
- I. Every conflict in the region is thus seen to be related to the Palestinian question
1. And now we have the latest episode