



Image from: [The Wailing Wall and the Dome of the Rock in... in *Encyclopedia of Community*](#)

Summary Article: **Jerusalem**
from *The Columbia Encyclopedia*

(jəˈrōʊsəlɪm, -zəlɪm), Heb. *Yerushalayim*, Arab. *Al Quds*, city (1994 pop. 578,800), capital of Israel. East Jerusalem is also claimed by Palestinians as a future capital, and most nations have not formally recognized the city as the capital of Israel in the belief that its status remains to be determined by negotiations. A notable exception is the United States, which during the Trump administration recognized (2017) the city as Israel's capital.

Jerusalem is situated on a ridge 2,500 ft (760 m) high that lies west of the Dead Sea and the Jordan River. It is an administrative, religious, educational, cultural, and market center. Tourism and the construction of houses and hotels are the city's major industries. Manufactures include cut and polished diamonds, plastics, clothing, and shoes, and electronic printing and other high-technology industries have been developed. The city is served by road, rail, and air transport.

Jerusalem is a holy city for Jews, Christians, and Muslims. Often under the name of Zion, it figures prominently in Jewish and Christian literature as a symbol of the capital of the Messiah. Jerusalem's churches and shrines are legion. The traditional identifications vary in reliability from certainty (such as Gethsemane) to pious supposition (such as the Tomb of the Virgin). The most famous and most difficult identification is that of Calvary. Excavations have been made in Jerusalem since 1835, and after 1967, the Israelis increased this activity. Many of Jerusalem's original streets, including the main Cardo, have been excavated and turned into tourist sites.

The Old City

The Old City, a quadrangular area built on two hills and surrounded by a wall completed in 1542 by the Ottoman sultan Sulayman I, is in East Jerusalem. Within the wall are four quarters. The Muslim quarter, in the east, contains a sacred enclosure, the Haram esh-Sherif (known as the Temple Mount to Jews), within which, built on the old Mt. Moriah, are the Dome of the Rock (completed 691), or Mosque of Omar, and the Mosque of al-Aksa. The wall of the Haram incorporates the Western Wall, or Wailing Wall, a remnant of the retaining wall of the Second Temple and a holy place for Jews. Nearby and southwest of the Haram is the Jewish quarter, with several famous old synagogues. Partially destroyed in previous Arab-Israeli fighting, the Old City was captured in 1967 by the Israelis, who began to rebuild and renovate the Jewish quarter. To the west of the Jewish quarter is the Armenian quarter, site of the Gulbenkian Library. The Christian quarter occupies the northern and northwestern parts of the Old City. Its greatest monument is the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. Through the area runs the Via Dolorosa, along which Jesus is said to have carried his cross.

The New City and Other Districts

The New City, extending west and southwest of the Old City, has developed tremendously since the 19th cent. It is the site of several educational institutions, as well as the Knesset (Israeli parliament) and other government buildings (including the striking Supreme Court building, which opened in 1992). Yad Vashem, a memorial to the Holocaust, is also in that section of the city. To the east of the Old City is the Valley of the Kidron, beyond which lie the Garden of Gethsemane and the Mount of Olives. To the north is Mt. Scopus, a Jewish intellectual center that is the site of the Hadassah Medical Center,

Hebrew Univ., and the Jewish National Library. Another campus of Hebrew Univ. is located on the western edge of the city at Ein Karem. From 1948 to 1967, Mt. Scopus was an Israeli exclave in Arab territory. To the west and south of the Old City runs the Valley of Hinnom; this meets the Kidron near the pool of Siloam, which is next to the site of the original city of Jerusalem, now partly excavated and called the City of David; the Acra, a Seleucid (Greek Syrian) fortress, may have been at the northern end of this area. Since the 1967 war, Israel has annexed the Old City and annexed and combined areas in the West Bank neighboring the Old City into Jerusalem, greatly enlarging East Jerusalem.

Cultural and Educational Institutions

Jerusalem has numerous museums; one of the finest is the Israel Museum, in the New City, whose collection ranges from the contemporary to displays of the Dead Sea Scrolls. The city is the seat of Hebrew Univ., the British School of Archaeology, the Dominican Fathers' Convent of St. Étienne, with the attached Bible School and French Archaeological School, the American College, the Greek Catholic Seminary of St. Anne, the Pontifical Biblical Institute, the Swedish Theological Institute, the Near East School of Archaeology, the Rubin Academy of Music, and the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities.

History

Early History to 1900

Despite incomplete archaeological work, it is evident that the Jerusalem area was settled at least as far back as the 5th millennium B.C. In the late Bronze Age (2000–1550 B.C.), it was a Jebusite (Canaanite) stronghold. David captured it (c.1000 B.C.) from the Jebusites and walled the city. After Solomon built the Temple on Mt. Moriah in the 10th cent. B.C., Jerusalem became the spiritual and political capital of the Hebrews. In 586 B.C. it fell to the Babylonians, and the Temple was destroyed.

The city was restored to Hebrew rule later in the 6th cent. B.C. by Cyrus the Great, king of Persia. The Temple was rebuilt (538–515 B.C.; known as the Second Temple) by Zerubbabel, a governor of Jerusalem under the Persians. In the mid-5th cent. B.C., Ezra reinvigorated the Jewish community in Jerusalem. The city was the capital of the Maccabees in the 2d and 1st cent. B.C.

After Jerusalem had been taken for the Romans by Pompey, it became the capital of the Herod dynasty, which ruled under the aegis of Rome. The Roman emperor Titus ruined the city and destroyed the Temple (A.D. 70) in order to punish and discourage the Jews. After the revolt of Bar Kokba (A.D. 132–35), Hadrian rebuilt the city as a pagan shrine called Aelia Capitolina but forbade Jews to live on the site.

With the imperial toleration of Christianity (from 313), Jerusalem underwent a revival, greatly aided by St. Helena, who sponsored much building in the early 4th cent. Since that time Jerusalem has been a world pilgrimage spot. Muslims, who believe that the city was visited by Muhammad, treated Jerusalem favorably after they captured it in 637, making it the chief shrine after Mecca. From 688 to 691 the Dome of the Rock mosque was constructed.

In the 11th cent. the Fatimids began to hinder Christian pilgrims; their destruction of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher helped bring on the Crusades. Jerusalem was conquered by the Crusaders in 1099 and for most of the 12th cent. was the capital of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem. In 1187, Muslims under Saladin recaptured the city. Thereafter, under Mamluk and then Ottoman rule, Jerusalem was rebuilt and restored (especially by Sulayman I); but by the late 16th cent. it was declining as a commercial and

religious center.

In the early 19th cent., Jerusalem began to revive. The flow of Christian pilgrims increased, and churches, hospices, and other institutions were built. Jewish immigration accelerated (especially from the time of the Egyptian occupation of Jerusalem by Muhammad Ali in 1832–41), and by 1900, Jews made up the largest community in the city and expanded settlement outside the Old City walls.

The Twentieth Century

In 1917, during World War I, Jerusalem was captured by British forces under Gen. Edmund Allenby. After the war it was made the capital of the British-held League of Nations Palestine mandate (1922–48). As the end of the mandate approached, Arabs and Jews both sought to hold sole possession of the city. Most Christians favored a free city open to all religions. This view prevailed in the United Nations, which, in partitioning Palestine into Arab and Jewish states, declared that Jerusalem and its environs (including Bethlehem) would be an internationally administered enclave in the projected Arab state. Even before the partition went into effect (May 14, 1948), fighting between Jews and Arabs broke out in the city. On May 28, the Jews in the Old City surrendered. The New City remained in Jewish hands. The Old City and all areas held by the Arab Legion (East Jerusalem) were annexed by Jordan in Apr., 1949. Israel responded by retaining the area it held. On Dec. 14, 1949, the New City of Jerusalem was made the capital of Israel.

In the Arab-Israeli War of 1967, Israeli forces took the Old City. The Israeli government then formally annexed the Old City and placed all of Jerusalem under a unified administration. Arab East Jerusalemites were offered regular Israeli citizenship but chose to maintain their status as Jordanians. Israel transferred many Arabs out of the Old City but promised access to the holy places to people of all religions. In July, 1980, Israel's parliament approved a bill affirming Jerusalem as the nation's capital. With suburbanization and housing developments in formerly Jordanian-held territory, Jerusalem has become Israel's largest city. Strife between Arabs and Jews persists. The issue of the status of East Jerusalem, annexed by Israel but regarded by Palestinians as the eventual capital of their own state, remains difficult. In 1998, Israel announced a controversial plan to expand Jerusalem by annexing nearby towns; it has also has constructed housing for Israelis in East Jerusalem.

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