

- Ancient biblical Middle East Nations are ancestors of modern inhabitants of the land.
- Ancient family feud continues to drive Middle East passion and politics.
- The parallel rise of Jewish and Islamic civilizations is a modern miracle.

### **The Arabs - Then and Now (Part One)**

It is difficult for those of the present generation, without a sense of history, to appreciate the phenomenal change that has come over the Arab world in the course of the last seventy years.

There was a time when a glorious highly-cultured Arab empire stretched 3,000 miles from the Persian Gulf to the Pyrenees. But, by the beginning of this century, and for a long time before that, there was only decadence and obscurity. The Arab races were reduced to poverty-stricken ignorant peoples, inhabiting large areas which were mostly desert, and which had gone back irrecoverably from the fine provinces which they had been in the time of the Roman Empire. When World War I began they were mostly unproductive territories which no one noticed. Turks and Arabs had let the desert in.

#### **Their Origins**

It is useful to look back and consider the origins and early history of these Arab peoples. For this purpose the Bible is an invaluable text-book.

The Jews are, of course, descended from Jacob (Israel) the son of Isaac son of Abraham. Arabs have always claimed descent from Abraham. They are the offspring of his two concubines. Concerning Ishmael, Abraham's son by Hagar, God said, "I will make of him a great nation." (Genesis 21:18). But he also said: "He will be a wild man: his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him: and he shall dwell to the east of all his brethren." (Genesis 16:12. RV. mg.).

This has proved to be a pretty accurate picture of Arab character. They can hardly help their intransigence. It is in their genes and in all their history. From the beginning the true home of the Arab peoples was marked out for them: "to the east of all their brethren," that is, east of the Jews who also are descended from Abraham and to

whom the Land of Israel was promised – on both sides of the River.

#### **The Land is Israel's**

Israel's title-deed to the land is contained in the promise God gave to Abraham: "Lift up now your eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward and eastward, and westward: for all the land that you see to you will I give it, and to your seed forever. (Genesis 13:14.15). The status of other Arab peoples, also descended from Abraham, is likewise plainly indicated in another Genesis passage: "And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac. But unto the sons of the concubines which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts and sent them away from Isaac his son while they yet lived eastward unto the east country'. (Genesis 25:5.6).

#### **Moab and Ammon**

But then, there are more peoples in the families. Abraham had a nephew. His name was Lot. After the Biblical destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Lot had two sons through an incestuous relationship with his two daughters. The two children were named Moab and Ammon. The text records that Moab became the ancestor of the Moabites - who took up residence to the immediate east of the Land of Israel. Ammon became the ancestor of the Ammonites, who took up residence and built a civilization east of the River Jordan. These two ancient territories are mostly within the modern territory of the Kingdom of Jordan.

#### **Edomites**

Then there is the family of Esau - the brother of Jacob. While Jacob was the grandson of Abraham and the youngest son of his father Isaac, the eternal blessings were determined by God to go to Jacob (whose name was changed by the angel of God to Israel). Esau, the oldest brother was not included in the eternal inheritance. Esau was the ancestor of the Edomites who built a civilization to the southeast of Israel, and became a constant source of difficulty for the nation of God. We will cover these special people in a future article.

All these families of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are today mostly Jews or Arabs, with most occupying the ancient biblical territories. And, while the people of Israel have suffered exile from the land and have existed in many nations around, the Arabs, have been relatively stable as populations within the Middle East.

Then there are the Philistines. They occupied five cities along the Mediterranean coast. These are mostly cities within the area of the Gaza Strip as it is known today. Also, included in this grouping of nations that surrounded ancient Israel, we will have to name Egypt.

"Arab" means "the mixed or mingled peoples." Over the centuries these various tribes have lost track of their precise ancestry, yet their descent from the sons of Abraham seems unquestioned. And, therefore, their right and proper place is "east" of their brethren, the people of Israel. These Ancient Arab peoples dwelt in a ring round Israel - and they still do.

Cementing this situation in the modern world is the connection with Islam. Whether these ancient nations are all Semitic and therefore directly related to Israel, they are all definitely linked because of their common faith, Islam. They are all certainly linked by an eternal hatred of Israel.

#### **The Rise of the Arabs**

Just as the Bible foretells the re-gathering of Israel in the Last Days, so also it speaks of Arab revival: "Yet will I bring again the captivity of Moab in the latter days, says the Lord" (Jeremiah 48:47). "And afterward I will bring again the captivity of the children of Ammon, says the LORD. (Jeremiah 49:6).

There are also very dramatic prophecies about the Philistines, Edomites and the land of Egypt. It will be necessary to examine some of these in detail later. The fact that the Bible has such prophecies about Edom, Moab and Egypt was a serious headache to students of prophecy in an earlier generation, for these Scriptures speak of Arab powers exercising much power and influence over events in the Last Days. Early in this century such prognostications made no sense at all. How could world affairs be seriously influenced by peoples who were little better than clans of "bedouin" scattered across limitless desert, living in their black tents and concerned only with their camels and goats? They were so far behind the main advances of western culture and scientific civilization as to be almost a joke. Romantic, maybe, but not important enough to be taken seriously.

#### **The Modern Miracle**

The modern miracle of Israel is accompanied by the modern miracle of the Arabs and Islam. These two forces have arisen to dominate international events in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. These ancient biblical peoples are there today in the land to demonstrate the plan of the eternal God of Israel, and His purpose to bring to conclusion His divine

plan to establish an everlasting kingdom in Jerusalem that will bring a thousand years of peace and prosperity to mankind.

Clyde Snobelen (December 2006)  
Adapted from: "Jews, Arabs and Bible Prophecy"  
Harry A. Whittaker

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### **UPDATES and OBSERVATIONS....**

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**Nazareth Muslims:** "Islam will dominate the world...". (January 5, 2007 - [www.gamla.org](http://www.gamla.org))

Recent events in the childhood town of Jesus are a portend of the world of tomorrow - an event that foreshadows the coming main event. Islamic groups held a large militant march down the main streets of Nazareth this past weekend, highlighting for some the plight of Christians in this ancient city - where Muslims have become a majority and members of the dwindling Christian population say they suffer regular intimidation.



While the town of Nazareth has long been considered one of the holiest cities for Christians, it clearly is described in the New Testament as the childhood home of Jesus. The site contains multiple shrines and churches - including the Church of the Basilica of the Annunciation - the site at which many Christians believe the virgin Mary was visited by the Archangel Gabriel.

The Islamic Movement leaders (the main Muslim political party in Nazareth), paraded down the main street brandishing their party's green flag. Young Muslim men in battle gear marched and beat drums as a man on a loudspeaker repeatedly exclaimed in Arabic, "Allah is great." Hundreds of activists strutted screaming Islamist epithets, including "Islam is the only truth" and "Islam shall rule all."

The article goes on to say that while the march was billed as a celebration, it's militant virtues were clearly apparent. "Its part of the methods used by the Muslims in very obvious ways to create an atmosphere where the Christians should know the Muslims are the main power and that they are not welcome anymore," he went on to say.

This is hardly an isolated incident, but is rather a scenario that is being played out all over the world, and is clearly tied to the notion of Islamic domination of the world - in fulfillment of the ancient biblical prophecies.