

GOD, LAND AND BELIEFS

Mideast scholars in genuflection may ask: "why can't Jews and Arabs, both Semitic in origin, overcome their animosity towards each other?" If Jesus was a Jew, and most disciples, Jewish, hence Christians, why such dichotomy between them? If the Jew, Christian and Muslim honor one God one would think a common bond exists for accommodation. History reminds that the Jew and Arab had moments of understanding and affection for each other. Yet when Jesus was charged, crucified by Roman order, Jewish hierarchy acquiesced. One God tends to lead each to their own interpretation and hostility. A schism exists and has widened over time.

Today the Mideast is still a seething cauldron where prospects for peace are dim, Iraq's future still doubtful as the insurgency reveals chaos, a volatile mix: suicide bombers, sectarian battles, and coalition response. Adding to this impalpable brew Hezbollah -a terrorist organization with ties to Iran and Syria- perhaps with assistance from Hamas, new political arm of the Palestinian Authority via incursion and capture and killing of Israeli soldiers -has initiated new strife. Lebanon has acquiesced to presence of Hezbollah terrorists even though long-time occupier, Syria, went home.....Israel has struck back with air and ground forces....and the cry for peace quietens. God, land and beliefs still seem to separate them.

A scholar may ruminate: the benchmarks of the struggle, historically, and see a mosaic of parts:

Abraham's trek to Canaan...scriptures record the seed of the Jew and the Arab..diaspora to Egypt and Moses return to the Promise land...Phillistines(Palestinians) and Jews share the land and fight...golden days of Israel with David and Solomon...wisdom, praises and a hint of a Messiah...prophets and the continuing line of the Messiah, one God...Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks and Romans feast on others and Israel..Jesus of Nazareth, his ministry of love, hope for friend and foe, redemption and one God....Judaism and the birth of Christianity....Constantine and the break with Rome....Byzantium and Constantinople..Mohammed and the birth of Islam....influence of Judaism and Christianity on Mohammed rises and falls...though One God is paramount to each.....the spread of Islam....the Crusaders...Holy Roman Empire and the continuing influence of Jerusalem as crucible....Ottoman(Turkish Islam) spreads its doctrine and militancy in the Mideast and Europe.WWI, the collapse of Germans, Austrians and Ottomans...birth of the League of Nations....and influence of Britain and France in the Mideast..... Balfour and the home of Israel in Palestine not at the expense of the Palestinians...League mandates over Syria, Mesopotamia(Iraq) and Palestine for French and British....a period of volatility in the twenties and thirties.....Arab, Jew, British are in conflict, though the arbiter is Britain....WWII and the Arab sides with the German....end game and the moment of truth.....Soviets and the US push for and recognize Israel' s state as the British leave....UN establishes a portion for Israel and the Palestinians...Israel agrees and the Arab does not..War of independence begins with Israel attacked on all sides..she prevails! 1948 and the story goes on.....

