

Growing Up As A Christian In Jordan

Siham Alfred
Mary Washington ElderStudy
September 6, 2018



Growing Up As A Christian In Jordan

Siham Alfred

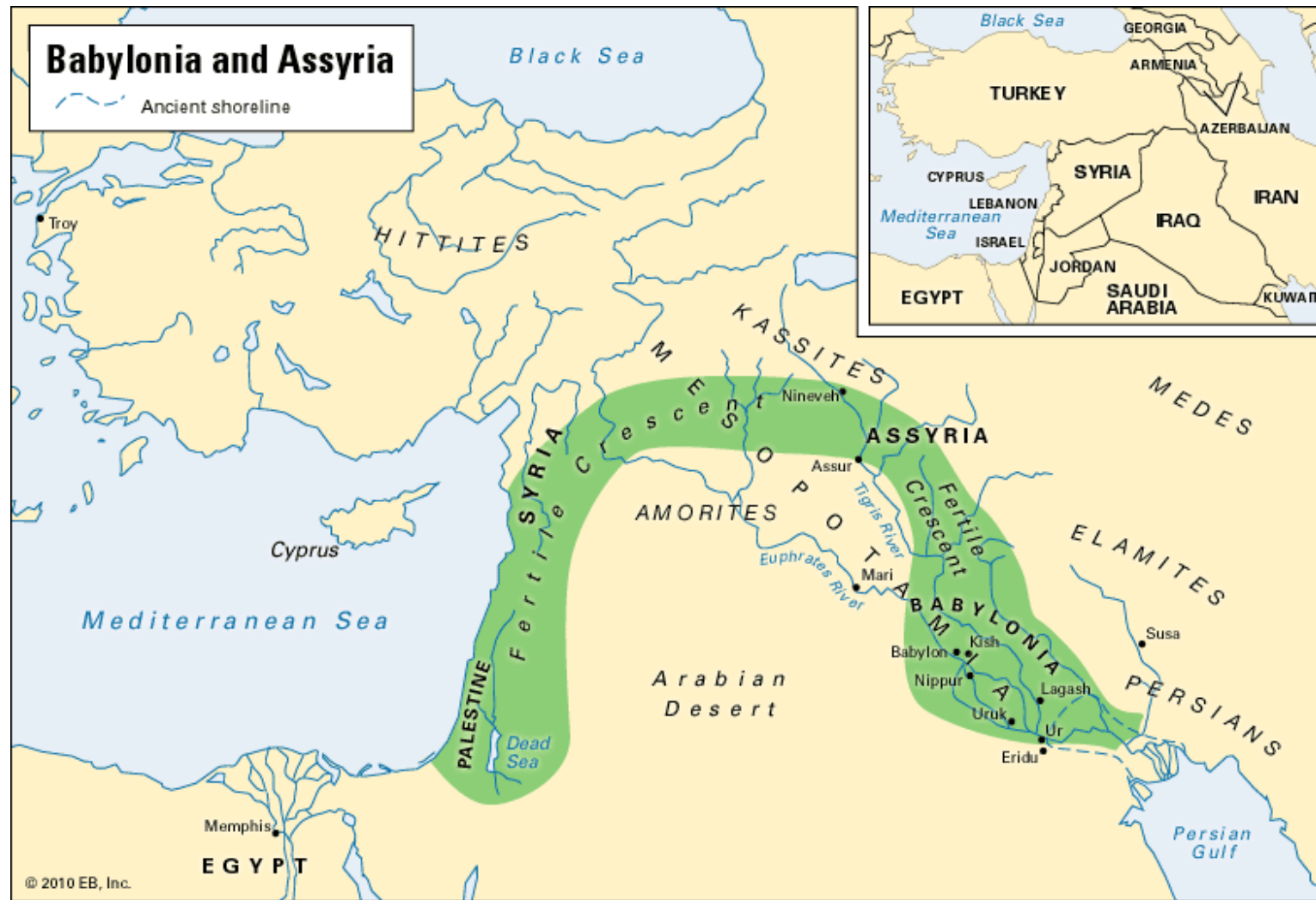
Mary Washington ElderStudy

September 6, 2018

Topic	Slide Numbers
Getting to Know Jordan, pre-History	3 – 8
Jordan History & Jordan Today	9 – 26
Christian Sites in Jordan	27 – 57
My Family's Christian Roots	58 – 76
My Amman Family	77 – 85
Higher Education – Beirut College for Women – American University of Beirut – University of Miami – Rutgers University	86 – 87
Working in Jordan – Royal Scientific Society – The University of Jordan	88 - 89
Challenges to Christianity in Jordan	90 – 91
For Further Reading	92



Written history is at least six thousand years old. During half of this period the center of human affairs, so far as they are known to us, was in the Near East.



By this vague term we shall mean here all southwestern Asia south of Russia and the Black Sea, and west of India and Afghanistan; still more loosely, we shall include within it Egypt, too, as anciently bound up with the Near East in vast web and communicating complex of Oriental civilization.

Will Durant



In this rough theatre of teeming peoples and conflicting cultures were developed the elements of civilization from which our own European and American culture derive by a continuous succession through the mediation of Crete and Greece and Rome.

Elements of Oriental Civilization	
agriculture and commerce	geometry and astronomy
horse and wagon	calendar and clock and zodiac
coinage and letters of credit	alphabet and writing
crafts and industries	paper and ink
law and government	books and libraries and schools
mathematics and medicine	literature and music
enemas and drainage systems	sculpture and architecture
cosmetics and jewelry	checkers and dice
ten-pins and income tax	wet-nurses and beer
monotheism and monogamy	glazed pottery and fine furniture

Will Durant

Lower Paleolithic Era > 1.5 million to 250,000 years ago

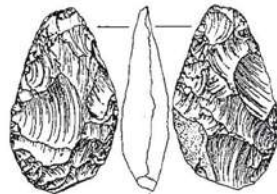
- Homo Erectus carved earliest unequivocal stone artifacts

Middle Paleolithic Era 250,000 to 45,000 years ago

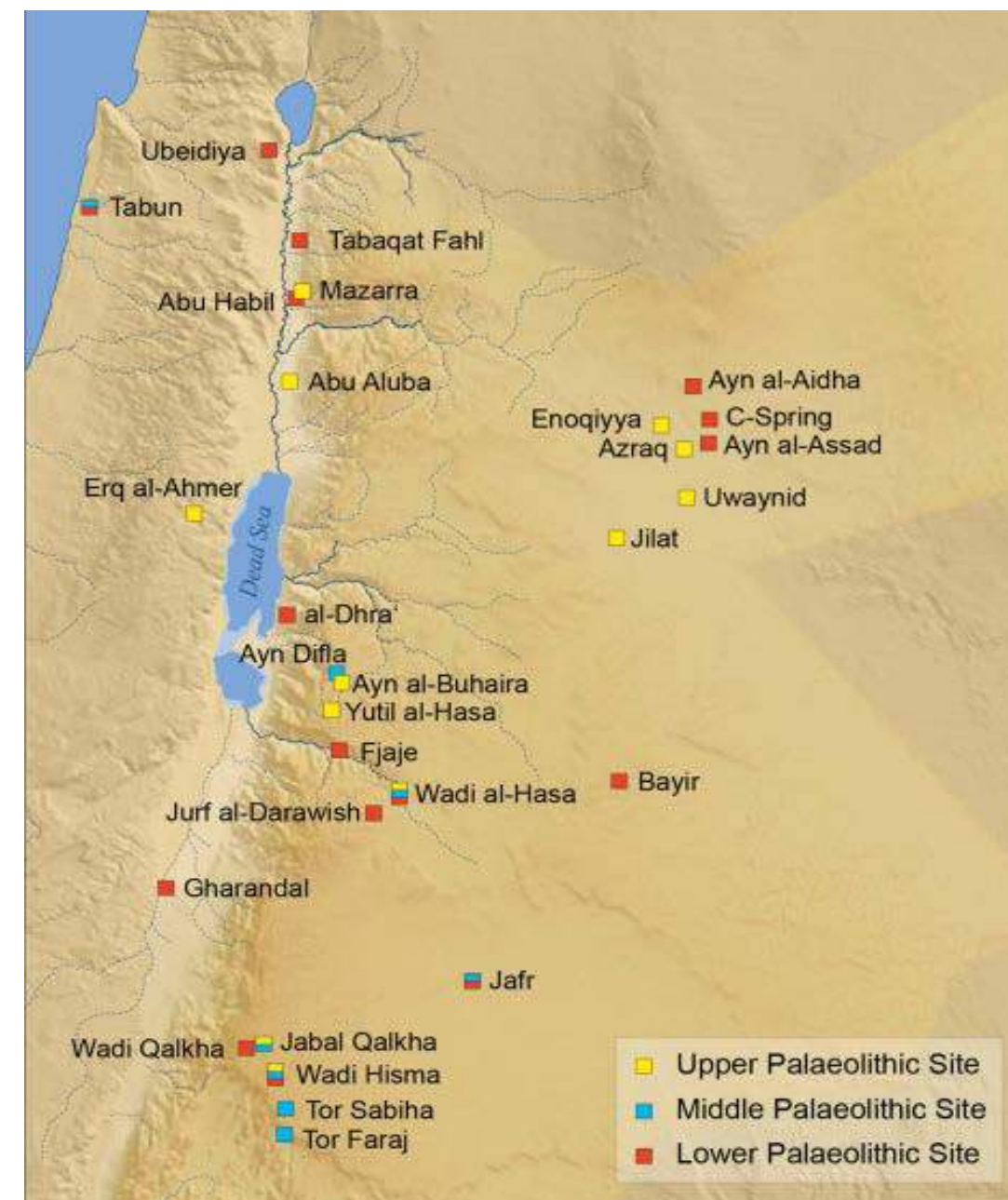
- Neanderthal to Homo Sapiens inhabited lakes, marshes and seasonal ponds with vegetation in the trees and by the rivers
- Cool and dry, although more moist than modern times

Upper Paleolithic Era 45,000 to 20,000 years ago

- Homo Sapiens carved microliths, a small stone tool usually made of flint or chert, a hard, dark, opaque rock composed of silica, and typically a centimeter or so in length and half a centimeter wide



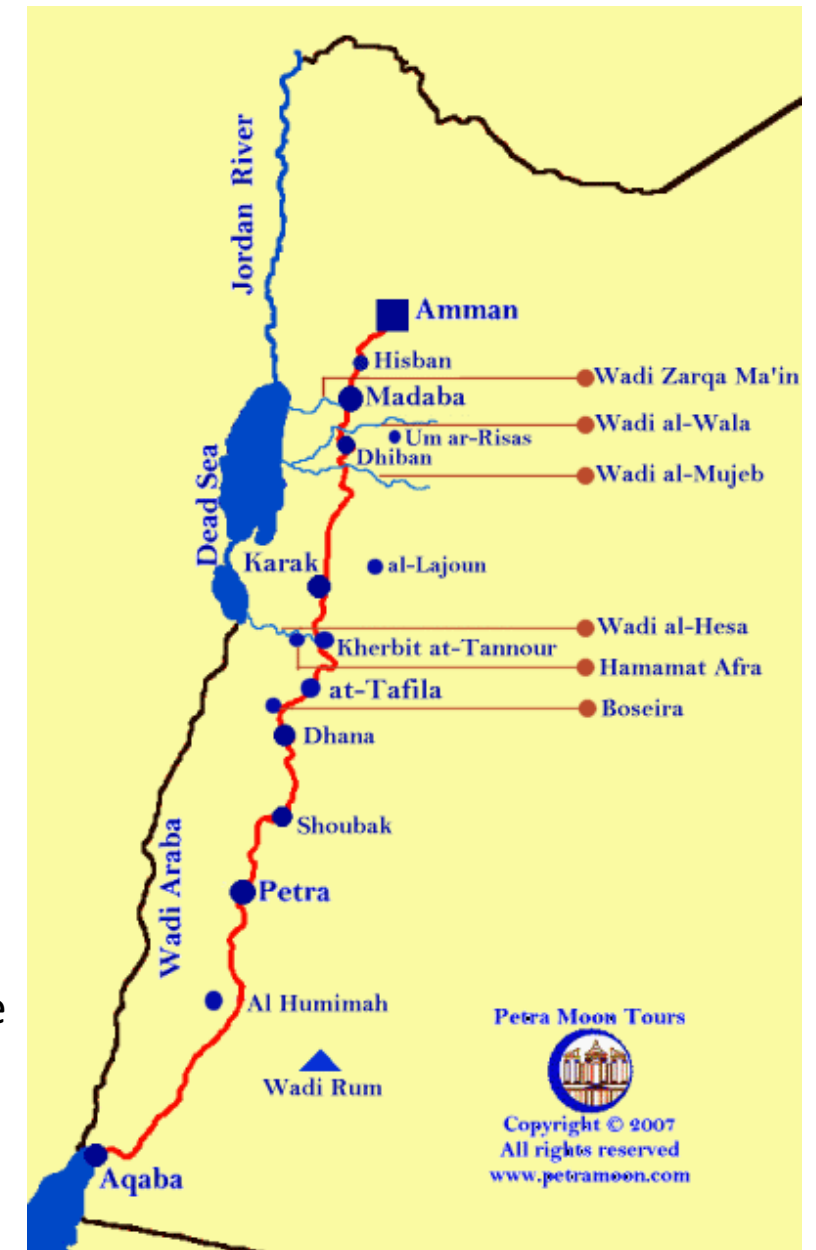
- Drier than Middle Paleolithic, but high water tables in the highlands increased spring flow and fed numerous lakes, marshes and seasonal ponds



Historically, Jordan was the highway

- Between Arabia and Syria
- All the natural highways of the Middle East met and crossed
- Despite its great depth, the rift valley separating Jordan from Palestine can easily be crossed north and south of the Dead Sea, to connect the Syrian and Arabian routes passing through Jordan with the Syrian coastal route skirting the highlands of Palestine and Sinai on its way to Egypt.
- From Damascus, the various inland routes coming from Iraq and Iran in the east, Anatolia in the north, Jordan was the natural passage to the Mediterranean and Egypt.
- In Islamic times, this same highway gained special importance as the pilgrimage road annually taken by Muslims converging on Damascus from different directions on their way to the holy land of the Hijaz.

Thus, down the centuries, the present Jordanian territory has been one of prime strategic importance.



Jordan's Ancient History

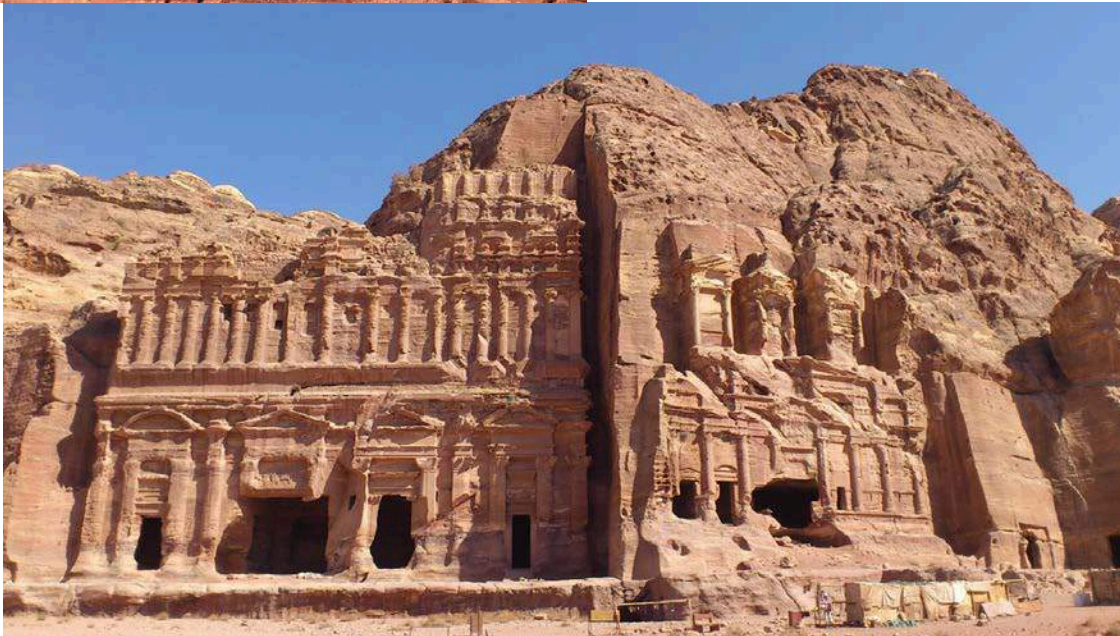


The Nabatean Arabs founded a kingdom in 400 BC with its capital at Raqem, called **Petra** by the Romans. Petra was the most prominent city, linking camel caravans between the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean Sea to Syria and Egypt and beyond to Greece. Control of water sources and an almost magic ability to vanish into the cleft rocks ensured that the Nabateans became very rich and remained unconquered for centuries. Beside living off of trade, the Nabateans were master potters, stone masons, hydrologists and metal workers.

This kingdom lasted under Arab Rule until AD 106 when the Emperor Trajan occupied it and maintained its capital in Damascus. During the reign of the Roman Emperor Diocletius Petra had bishops and churches and its inhabitants became Christians

The West became aware of Petra in 1812 by the Anglo-Swiss Explorer John Lewis Burkhart. First modern excavations began in 1929

Jordan's Ancient History

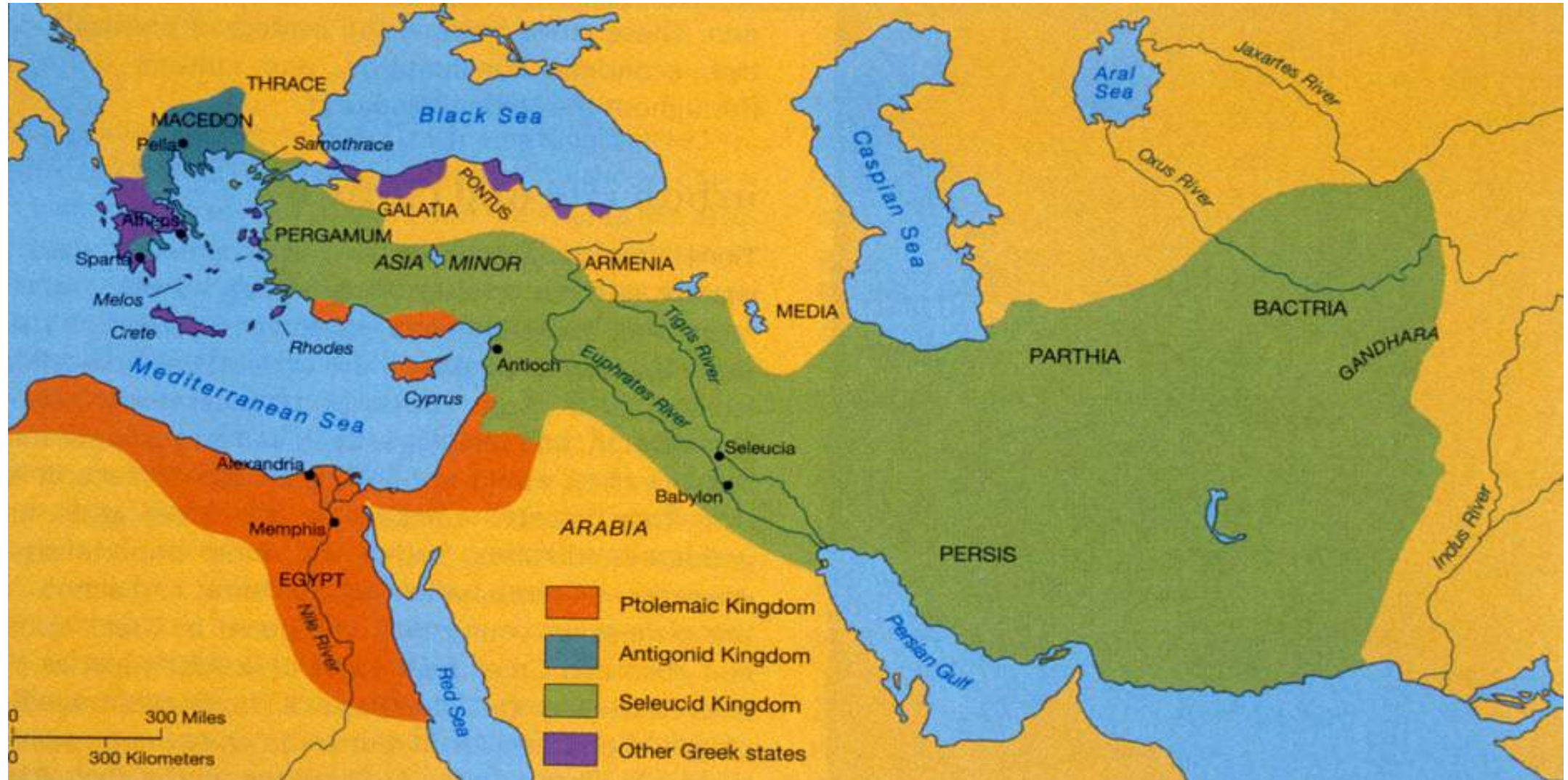


NOVA

Petra, Lost City of Stone
on YouTube
January 24, 2018

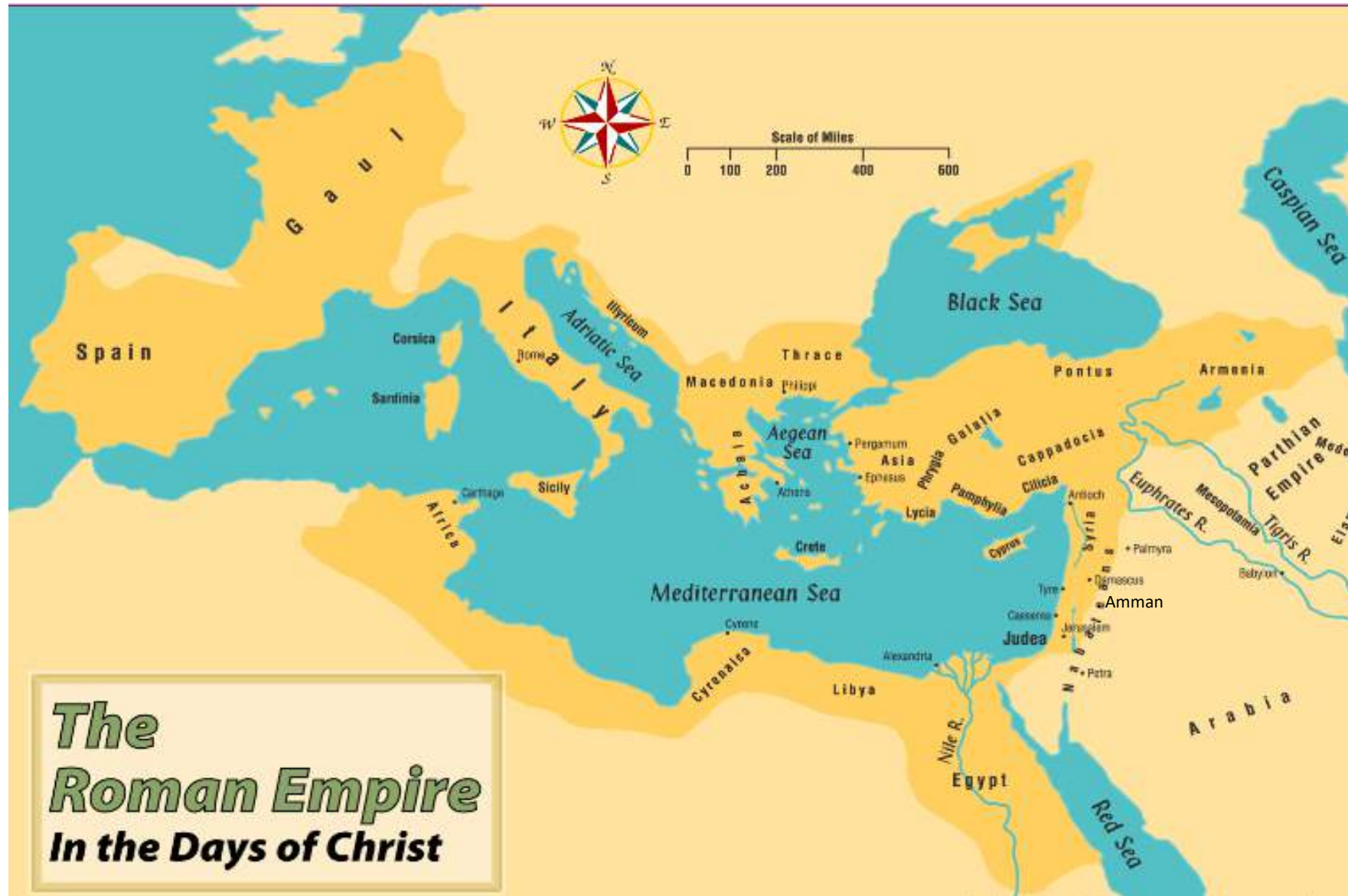
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6xQaEZbVras>

Jordan's Ancient History



Division of Alexander's Empire 332 BC

Jordan's Ancient History



Jordan's Ancient History



Jordan's Ancient History



Empire of Islam to 622 - 750

If we judge greatness by influence, Mohammed was one of the giants of history. He undertook to raise the spiritual and moral level of a people harassed into barbarism by heat and foodless wastes and he succeeded more completely than any other reformer... When he began, Arabia was a desert flotsam of idolatrous tribes; when he died it was a nation. Upon Judaism, Zoroastrianism and his native creed he built a religion simple and clear and strong, which in a generation marched to a hundred victories, in a century to empire and remains to this day a virile force through half the world.

Will Durant, *The Age of Faith*, 1950



Islam is Arabic meaning submission to Allah. Islam has about 1.8 billion faithful worldwide. This number is based on global surveys and estimates from 2010-2011, rounded up to correspond with increases in world population since then. Islamic population statistics count all those who identify themselves as Muslim, which includes Sunni, Shi'a and Sufi. Muslims believe in one God, Allah in Arabic, the same God revealed imperfectly in the Jewish Torah and Christian Bible. Muslims believe Christians and Jews are people of the Book. The Five Pillars are: Faith, Prayer, Alms, Pilgrimage and Fasting. Mosque service is on Friday. Ablutions before prayer. No alcohol or pork. Main holy days are Eid Al Fitr after Ramadan and Eid Al-Adha. Sources of belief are the Qur'an (sacred text) and Hadith (tradition)

Islam is a monotheistic religion that is the second largest and fastest growing religion with over 1.8 billion followers, over 24% of the world's population. Muslims are the majority in fifty countries. Islam teaches that Allah is merciful, all-powerful, unique and has guided mankind through prophets, (Abraham, Moses, Jesus) revealed scriptures (Torah, Bible, Quran) and natural signs.

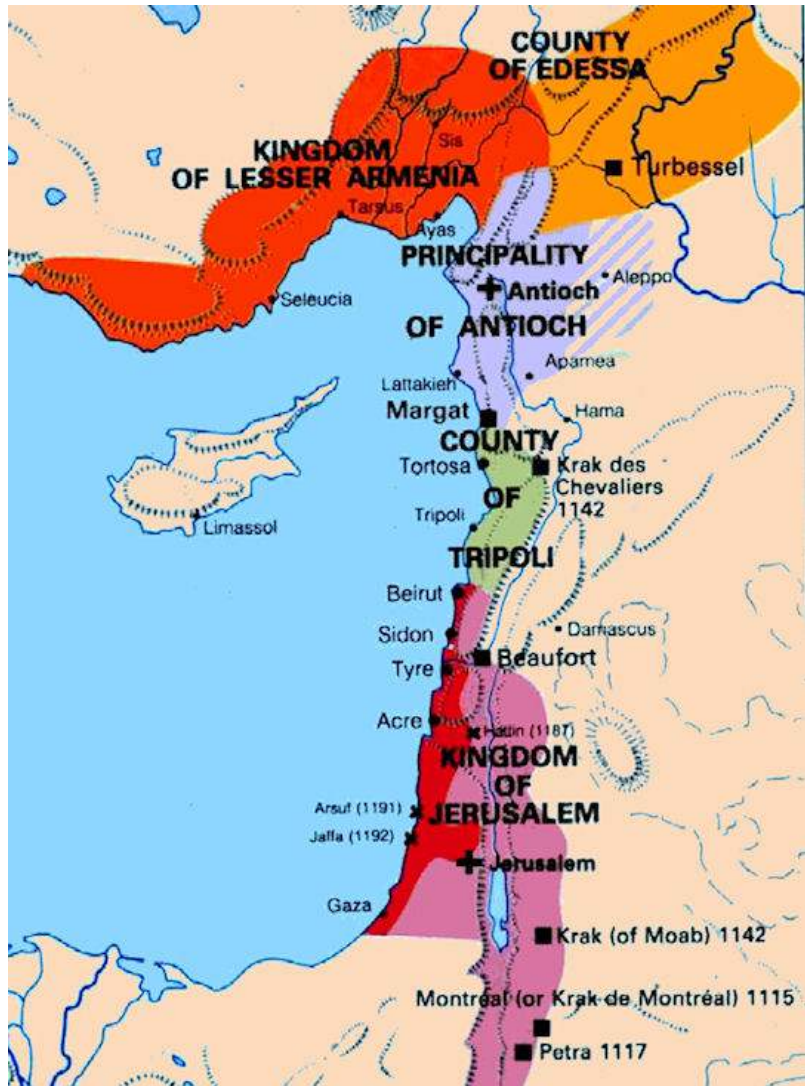


Islam teaches a final judgment with the righteous rewarded paradise and unrighteous punished in hell. Religious concepts and practices include the Five Pillars of Islam:

- Faith – Shahada, a declaration and belief that there is only one God, Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah
- Prayer – Salat, five times a day: Fajr – dawn, Dhuhr – noon, Asr, - afternoon, Maghrib – evening, Isha – night
- Charity – Zakāt, all things belong to Allah, ease the economic burden of others
- Fasting – Siam, abstain from food from dawn to dusk during the month of Ramadan
- Pilgrimage to Mecca – Hajj, once in a lifetime

Islamic law touches on virtually every aspect of life and society from banking and welfare to women and the environment. The cities of Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem are home to the three holiest sites in Islam.

Jordan's Ancient History



Crusader Kingdoms 1099 -1300



Saladin retakes Jerusalem 1187 after defeating the Crusader King Guy of Lusignan at the Battle of Hattin

Jordan's Ancient History

In AD 1187, Saladin, the sultan of Egypt and Syria, watched as his men finally broke through the walls of Jerusalem. They poured into the city full of European Crusaders and their followers. Eighty-eight years earlier, when the Christians had taken the city, they massacred the Muslim and Jewish inhabitants. Saladin spared all the inhabitants of Jerusalem.



Jordan's Ancient History

Ottoman Empire 1300-1917



Jordan Since 1900

The Arab Revolt against the Ottomans in 1916



Sharif Hussein bin Ali
Great Grandfather of King Hussein of Jordan

Jordan Since 1900

British Colonial Rule:

Palestine 1917 – 1948

Jordan 1917 – 1956



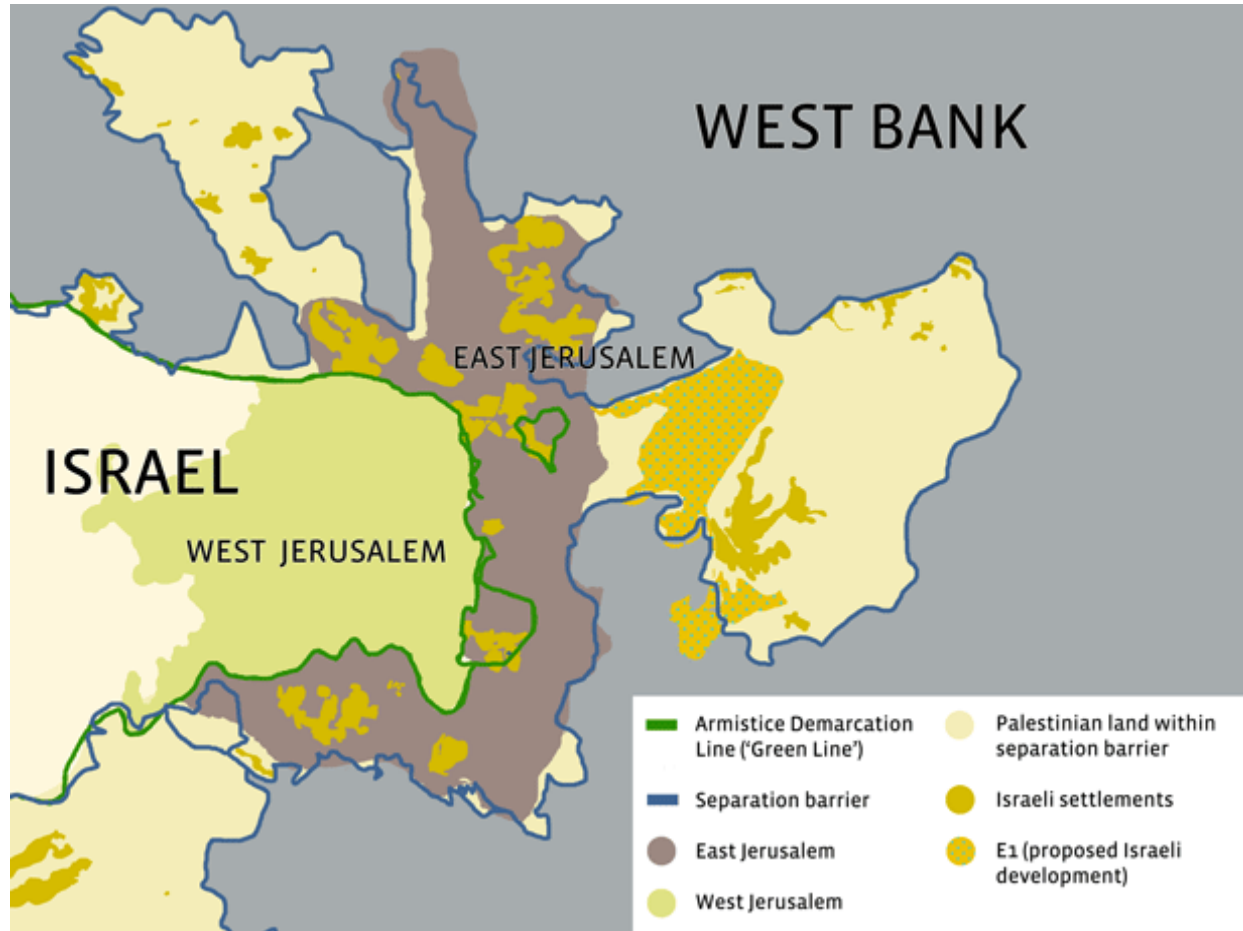
Jordan Since 1900

West Bank of Jordan
under Jordanian rule 1948 – 1967



In the 1967 War, Jordan lost the West Bank which included Jerusalem and Bethlehem

In December 2017, East Jerusalem, overwhelmingly Christian and Moslem, was given to the Israeli State by President Trump.



Profile of Jordan after 1967

- Area: 34,500 square miles, about the same size as Virginia
- Population 7.6 million (in 2015)
- Religion: Sunni Islam, practiced by 93% of the population. (Includes 1% Charkas: White Russians)
- Indigenous Christian minority 7% of the population. (Includes 1% Armenians)

Jordan Today: Three views: Wadi Rum
Amman and Aqaba

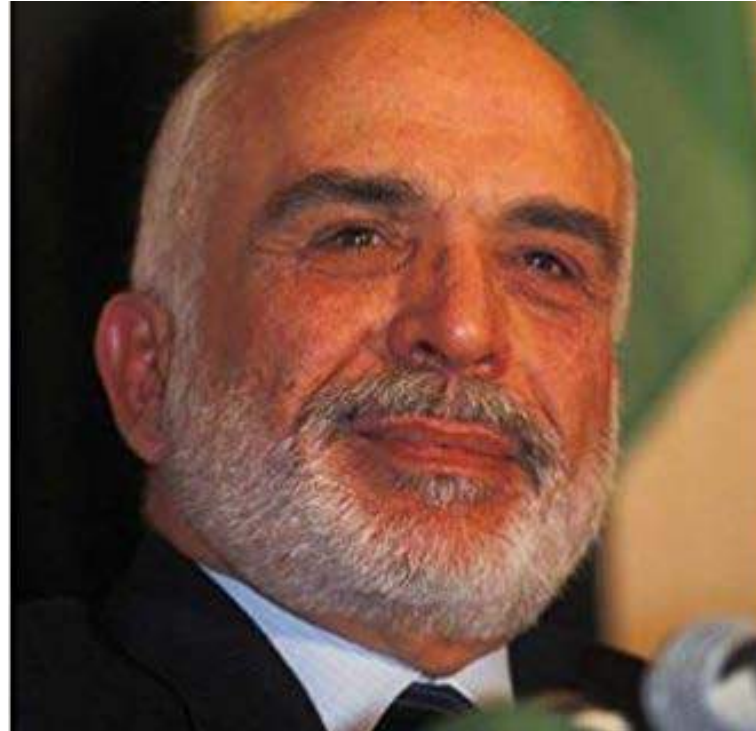


Jordan prides itself on being an "oasis of stability" in a turbulent region.

Capital: Amman
King: Abdullah II of Jordan
Population: 10.48 million



Abdullah I bin Al-Hussein
1921 - 1951



Hussein bin Talal
1953 - 1999



Abdullah II bin Al-Hussein
1999 - present

In the midst of surrounding turmoil, it has been greatly hospitable, accepting refugees from almost all surrounding conflicts as early as 1948.

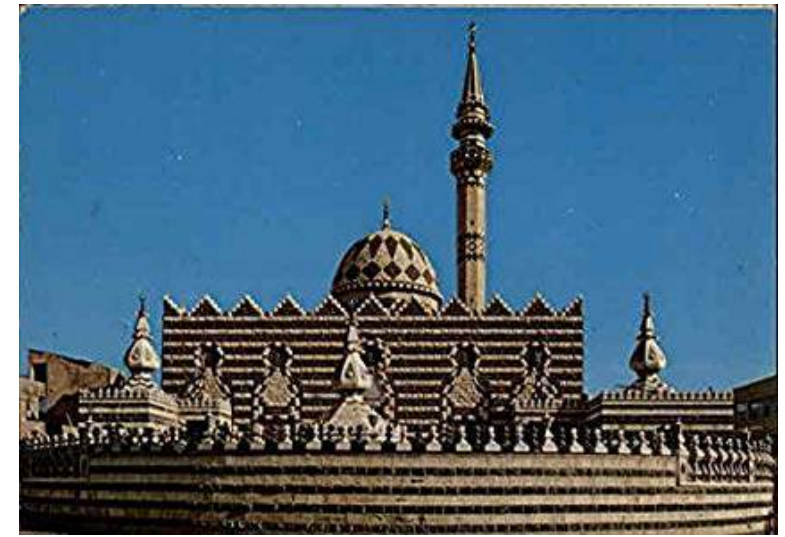
- 2.1 million Palestinians
- 1.4 million Syrians
- Thousands of Iraqi Christians fleeing 2003 war and persecution by ISIL

While Jordan continues to accept refugees, the recent large influx from Syria placed substantial strain on national resources and infrastructure.

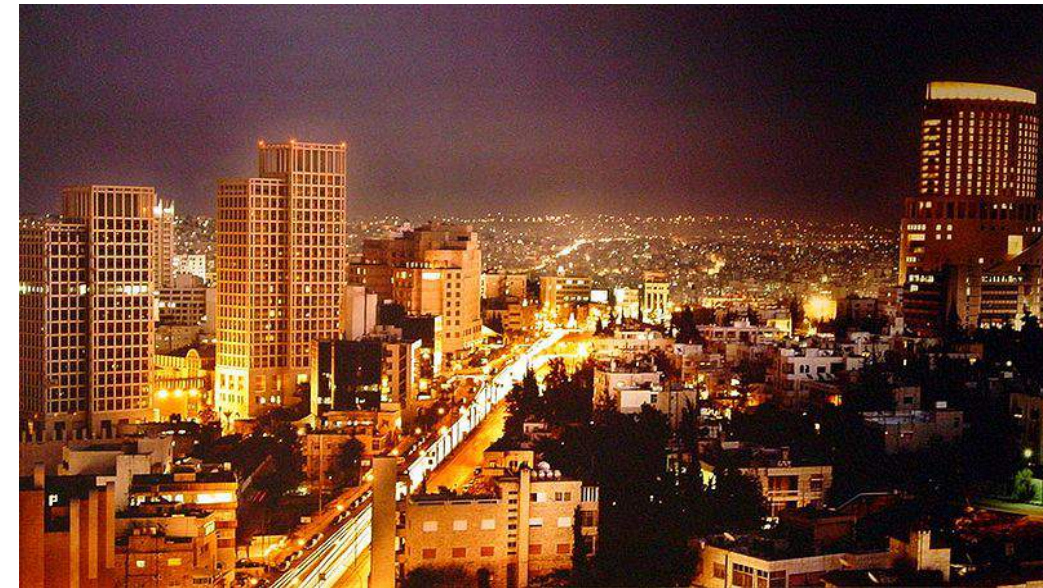
Jordan is classified as a country of:

- **High human development with an upper middle income economy**
- Attractive to foreign investors because of a skilled workforce
- Major tourist destination and
- Medical tourism due to its well developed health sector

A lack of natural resources, large flow of refugees and regional turmoil have continue to hamper economic growth.



Al Ashrafieh Mosque



Downtown Amman 2018

Since the onset of the civil war in Syria and resulting refugee crisis, one of Jordan's most pressing socioeconomic challenges has been managing the influx of 650,000 UN-registered refugees, more than 80% of whom live in Jordan's urban areas. Jordan's own official census estimated the refugee number at 1.3 million as of early 2016.



Zatari Refugee Camp in Northern Jordan

The 13 Palestinian refugee camps in Jordan

1949 – Zarqa

1950 – Irbid

1952 – Hussein

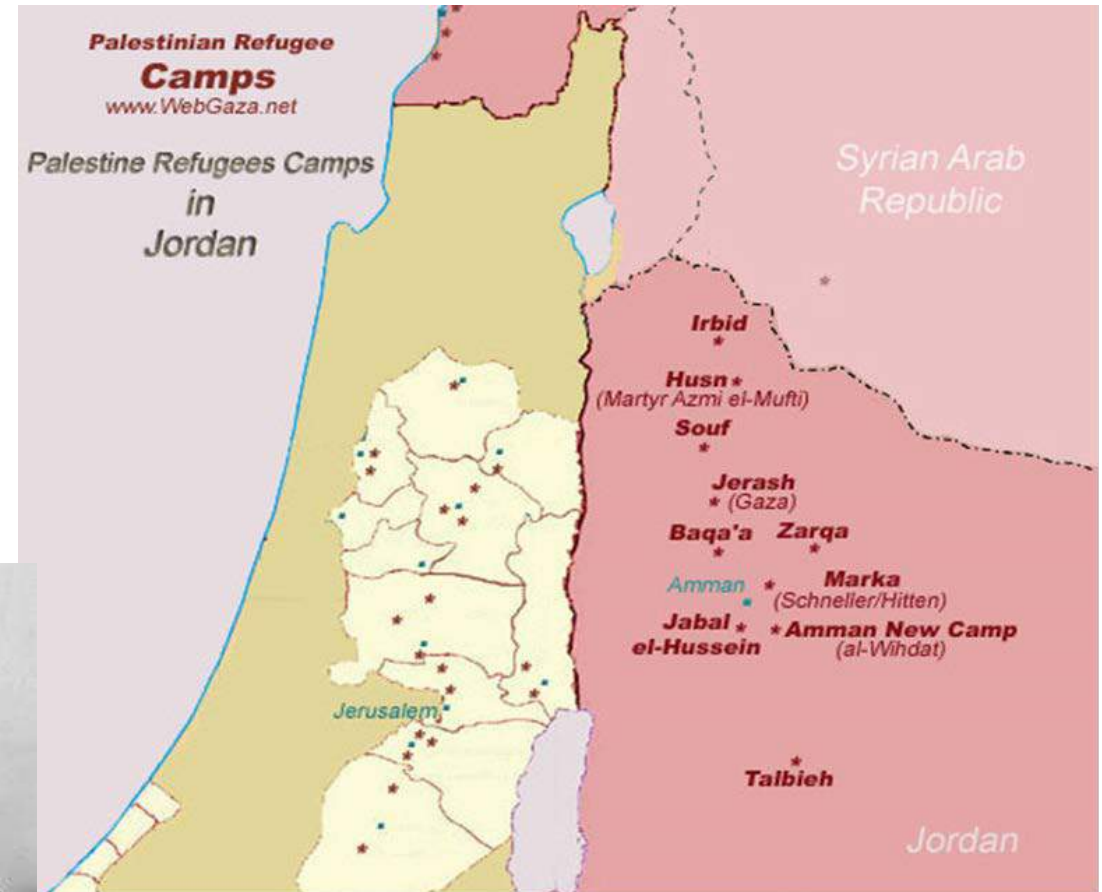
1955 – Wihdat

1956 – Madaba

1967 – Prince Hassan, Souf

1968 – Talibieh, Baqa'a, Azmi al-Mufti, Hitteen, Jerash

1969 -- Sukhneh



Jordan is one of very few Arab countries that grants citizenship to refugees.

Christian Sites in Jordan

The shrine of Noah, Nabi Nuh at Al- Kerak
in Jordan, in the ancient land of Moab.

It is in the form of a cubic room covered
with a Dome overlooking the Dead Sea.



Ajlun-The Elijah Hill is believed to be the place where the prophet Elijah ascended to heaven. There is a chapel with a mosaic floor. It was from this site that he was fed by the ravens who brought him bread and from here that he ascended into heaven. His village of origin was Tishbe, today Khorbet Listib in the Ajlun hills over Wadi al-Yabis



The Monastery of Saint Lot at Ghor as-Safi

Lot who escaped the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah was instructed by Yahweh to neither stop in the plane or look behind. His wife looked back and became a pillar of salt. Lot stopped at the town of Zoar (Ghor as-Safi) and then took refuge in the hill country, where he made his home with two daughters in a cave.

Today, the site is a monastery known as **Dayr 'Ayn Abata**. It is located on the Eastern shore of the Dead Sea 40 miles south of the town of Karak. Excavations in the monastery exposed a three-apsed church with a mosaic floor dated 691 A.D. A large water reservoir and a cave adjacent to the apsed portion. The cave was a tomb in the third millennium B.C. The floor in front of it was paved with mosaic in 606 A.D. The compound west of the church comprises monastic cells and a hostel with a communal hall. The site was in use until the 10th Century A.D. The spring "Ayn Ruba at the foot of the hill was mentioned by the Arab geographer Yaqut in the 13th Century A.D.



Mosque in Salt for the prophet Yusha (Hosea)

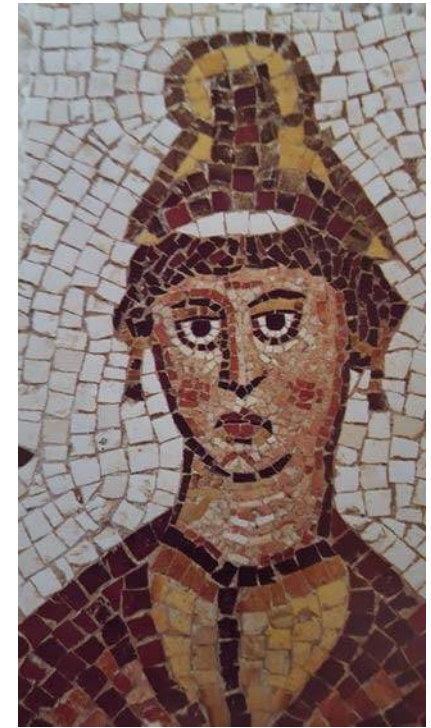


Mosque in Salt for the prophet Suheib, (Jethro the father in law of Moses)

Mount Nebo

The Memorial of Moses

built in the 4th century
Moses died here but no one
knows where exactly.



The Sanctuary at Nebo – the Memorial of Moses

The presumed site of his death and burial place, and a center for pilgrimages since earliest Christian times.



Pope John Paul II on Mount Nebo
March 20, 2000

Aaron's Tomb

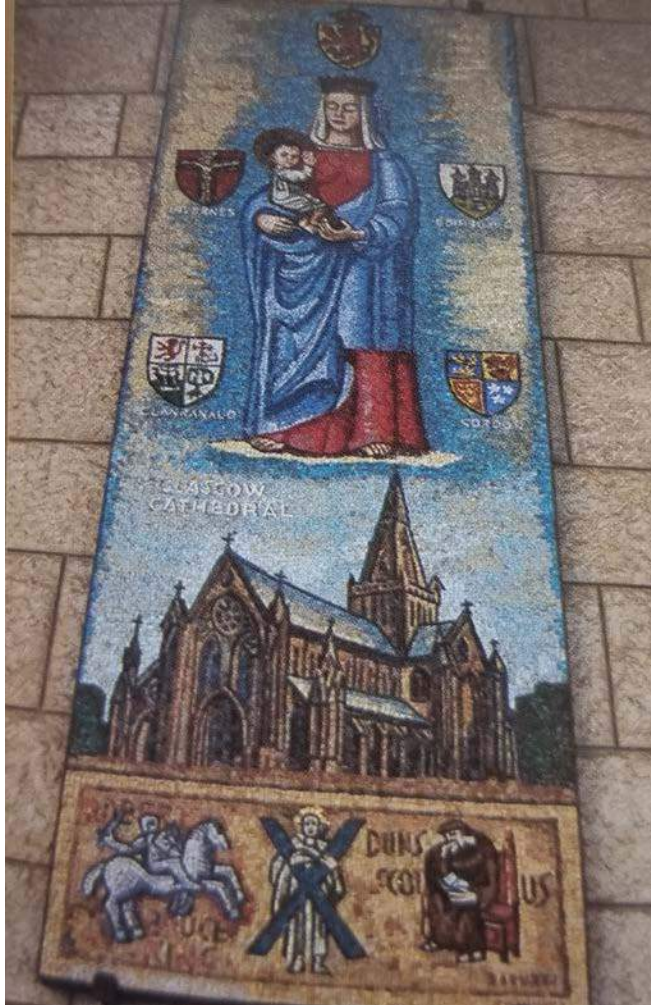
According to Deuteronomy Aaron the elder brother of Moses died and was buried at Moserah in the Sinai. But Numbers gives his place of death at Mount Hor on the Frontier of the land of Edom.

Josephus Flavius recorded in his antiquities that Moses “led his forces away through the desert and came to a place in Arabia called Arken (Reqem) which is today’s Petra. There is a white cupola shrine rising to a height of 4,400 ft which contains a Crypt which contains a memorial tomb, a crypt with inscription excavated in 1998 by a Finnish Team in 1998. It was rebuilt by Sultan al-Nasser Muhammed (1309-1331)



Christian Sites in Palestine – the West Bank of Jordan

Nazareth



Mosaic of the Virgin Mary and the Child Jesus donated by St. Andrew's Church in Scotland



Mass at the Church of the Annunciation



Entrance to the Church of the Annunciation

Christian Sites in Palestine – the West Bank of Jordan

Beit Sahur

The Church of the Shepherds' Fields, one of the most sacred of places, is situated at the end of the Palestinian village of Beit Sahur. The church, built over a cave, immortalizes the proclamation of the angel to the shepherds.



Christian Sites in Jordan

Gadara **Umm Quays** was an impregnable citadel of the 3rd Century BC during the wars between the Seleucids of Syria and the Ptolemies of Egypt

After a decisive victory near Sidon (in the south of Lebanon) the Seleucid Antioch III overran Galilee, crossed the Jordan River and captured Pella (Tabaquat Fihil) slightly south of Gadara. At that point Gadara opened its gates to the Seleucids without any resistance. The Hellenistic city walls reinforced by Towers have recently been uncovered from the southern side.

During the revolt of the Maccabee against the Seleucids in 100 B.C., the Hasmonaean, John Hyrcanus, captured and destroyed Gadara. The Roman general Pompei rebuilt it for the sake of Demetrius, the Gadarene, one of his favorite freedmen, when he conquered the East in 63 B.C.



Christian Sites in Jordan



Umm Qays is 68 miles north of Amman, 1,240 feet above sea level with a magnificent view over the Yarmouk River, the Golan Heights and Lake Tiberias. Known as **Gadara** in Roman times. According to the Bible, the town where **Jesus** cast out the Devil from two demoniacs into a herd of pigs. (Mathew 8:28-34)



In ancient times, Gadara was located near a number of key trading routes connecting Syria and Palestine. Gadara was blessed with fertile soil and abundant rainwater. This town also flourished intellectually in the reign of Augustus and became distinguished for its cosmopolitan atmosphere and university scholars.

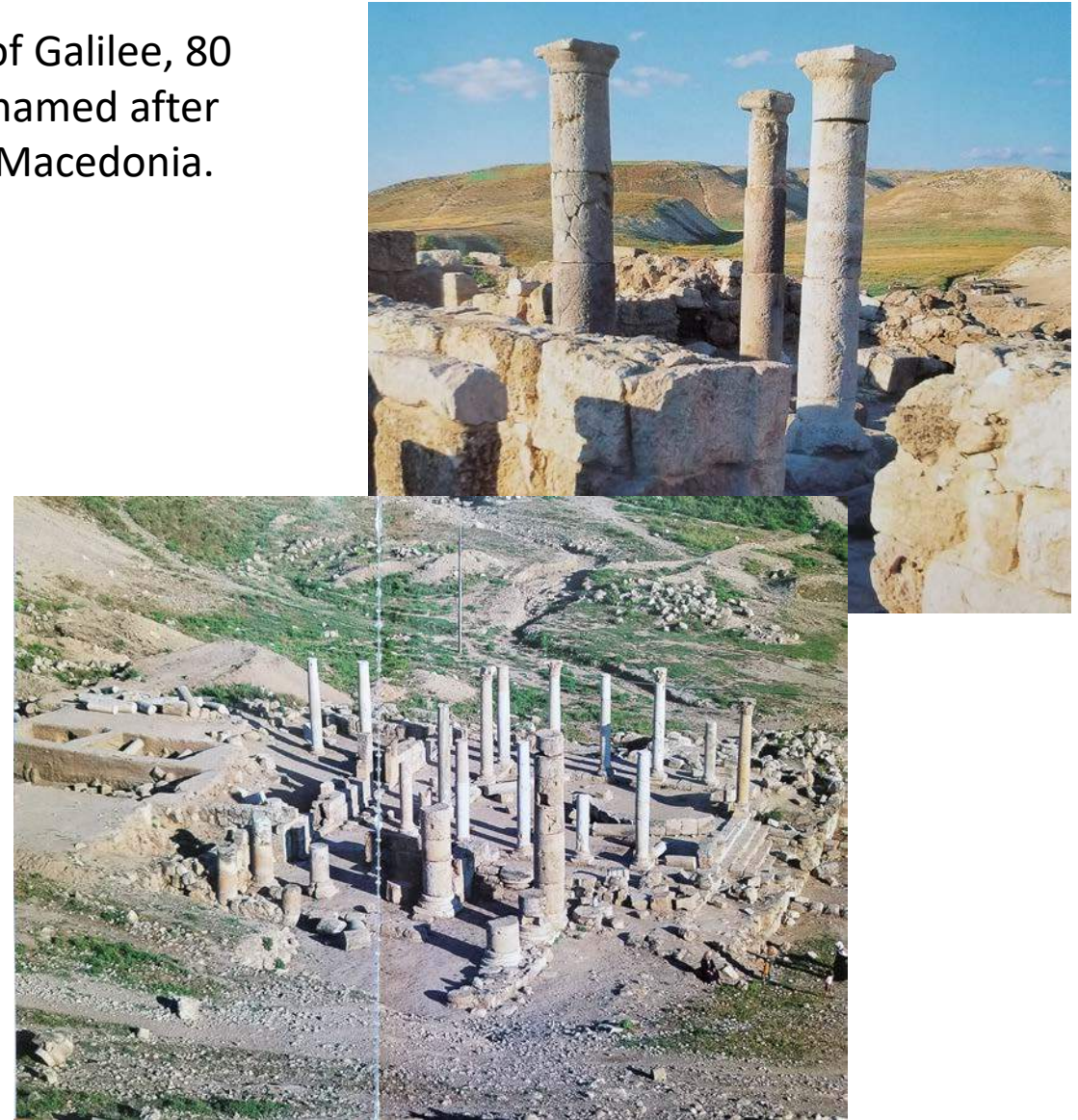
Tabaquat Fihil is in northwestern Jordan, 17 miles south of the Sea of Galilee, 80 miles north of Amman. Known as **Pella** in Greek times, the city was named after the city where Alexander the Great was born, the ancient capital of Macedonia.

- Greek: Πέλλα,
- Arabic: *Tabaqat Fahl*, طبقة فحل



Pella was one of the ten Decapolis cities that were founded during the Hellenistic period and became powerful under Roman jurisdiction.

With a history extending back into the Bronze Age, Pella expanded to its largest state during the reign of the Roman Empire. Today, the city's sizable collection of ruins are excavated by archeologists and attract thousands of tourists annually.



First, they slew Stephan by stoning him, next James the son of Zebedee and the brother of John, by beheading, and finally James who first obtained the episcopal seat at Jerusalem after the ascension, having been commanded by a divine revelation given to men of our Savior and was slain in the manner related. But the rest of the apostles, who were harassed in innumerable ways with a view to destroy them and drive them from the land of Judea, had gone forth to preach the gospel to all nations, relying upon the aid of Christ, when he said, “Go ye, teach all nations in my name.”

The whole body, however, of the church at Jerusalem, having been commanded by a divine revelation given to men of approved piety there before the war, **removed from the city and lived at a certain town beyond the Jordan called Pella.**

Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 5:2-3



Gerasa or Jerash was a Roman city located 30 miles north of Amman. In the first century AD, Jerash was as significant as Amman, then known as Philadelphia.

Jerash was part of the Decapolis, the 10 most important cities in the Roman Middle East, which included Philadelphia and Damascus.

Christianity flourished in Jerash after Emperor Constantine.



Siham, Nadia, Irene & Joey with Rima

Jerash has many Greek and Roman Temples, over a dozen churches, as well as Umayyad mosques

St. George's Orthodox Church in Madaba



Mosaic Map of Jerusalem in St. George's Orthodox Church



Umm al-Rasas



Church of St. Stephen

In 1986, the most important discovery on the site was the mosaic floor of the Church of St Stephen. It was made in AD 785. The perfectly preserved mosaic floor is the largest one in Jordan. The central panel depicts hunting and fishing scenes while another panel illustrates the most important cities of the region:

- Kastron Mefaa
- Philadelphia (Amman)
- Madaba
- Esbounta
- Belemounta
- Areopolis
- Charac Moaba
- Jerusalem
- Nablus
- Caesarea
- Gaza



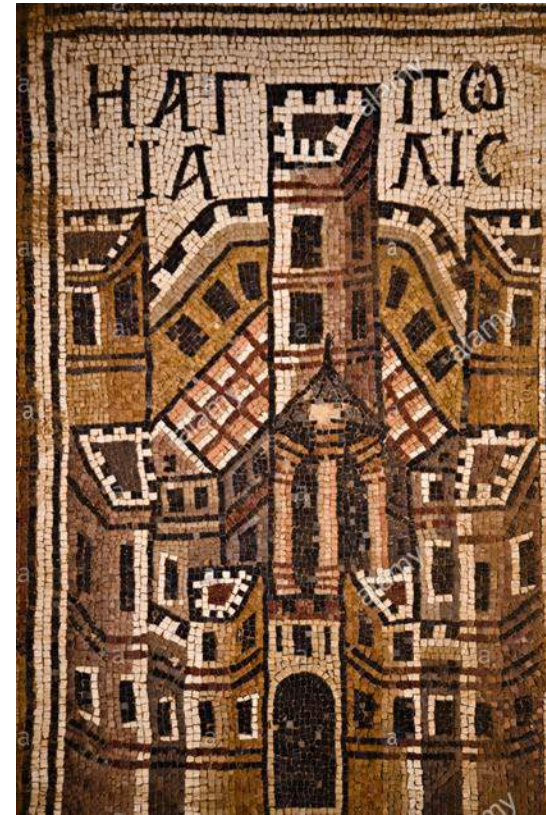
Umm al-Rasas



Philadelphia - Amman



Kastram Mepha'a – Um al-Rasas



Jerusalem



Nablus

Mosaics from the Church of St. Stephan near Mount Nebo

Christian Sites in Palestine – Bethlehem



Church of the Nativity

Christian Sites in Palestine – the West Bank of Jordan

Bethlehem – Church of the Nativity



Orthodox Procession



Christian Sites in Palestine – the West Bank of Jordan

Baptismal Site of Jesus in the Jordan River



Christian Sites in Palestine – the West Bank of Jordan

Baptismal Site of Jesus in the Jordan River



St John the Baptist Church

Christian Sites in Palestine – the West Bank of Jordan

**Pope Francis at the
Baptismal Site
of Jesus in the
Jordan River**

May 24-26, 2014



Baptismal Site of Jesus in the Jordan River



Monastery of John the Baptist



Just east of the Jordan River, about 9 kilometers north of the Dead Sea modern explorers discovered the ruins and foundations of a large number of sandstone piers related to a Byzantine church built at the time of Emperor Anastasius (491-518 AD). This church was considered the most notable memorial church of St. John the Baptist on the east bank of the Jordan River. Theodosius (A.D 530) wrote “5 miles north of the Dead Sea in the place where the Lord was baptized there is a single pillar and on the pillar an iron cross has been fastened, there too is the church of St. John the Baptist, which the Emperor Anastasius built.

Christian Sites in Palestine – the West Bank of Jordan

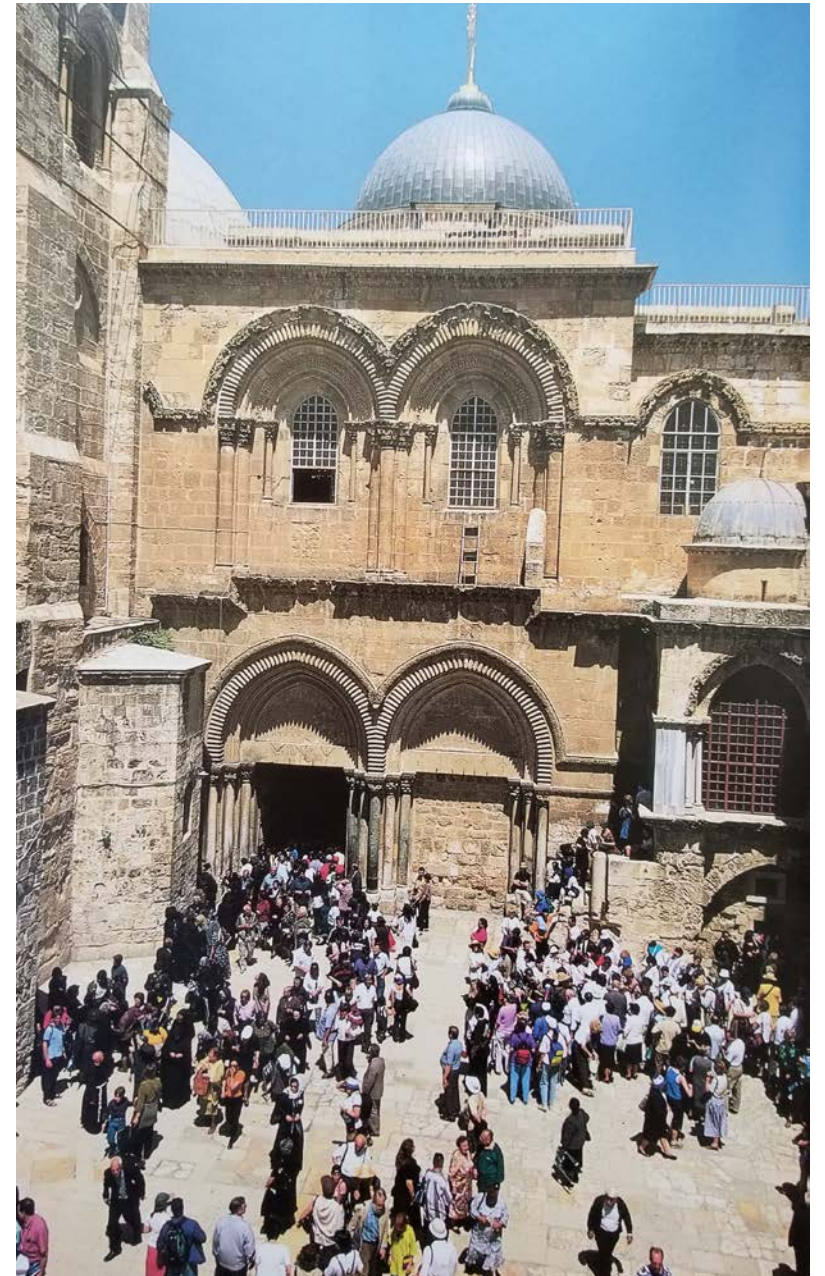
Jerusalem

The Roman Emperor Constantine I, a convert to Christianity, had the temple of Venus in Jerusalem demolished to make way for a church. In the course of the demolition a tomb was discovered that was thought to be the tomb of Jesus.

The first Church of the Holy Sepulchre was approached by a flight of steps from the Cardo, the main street of Jerusalem. Then pilgrims went through a narthex; a basilica; and an open area, the “holy garden,” which had in it the rock of Golgotha, finally reaching the Holy Sepulchre itself.



Church of the Holy Sepulchre



Christian Sites in Palestine – the West Bank of Jordan



Pope Paul VI and King Hussein, May 1964

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BzwKsh-GU9k>

Two Palestinian Catholic Saints



Saint **Marie-Alphonsine Daniel Ghattas** (4 October 1843 – 25 March 1927) was a Palestinian Christian nun who founded the Dominican Sisters of the Most Holy Rosary of Jerusalem (the Rosary Sisters), the first Palestinian congregation. She was beatified by Archbishop Angelo Amato on behalf of Pope Benedict XVI in 2009.

On 6 December 2014 Pope Francis recognized a miracle that had been attributed to her intercession which was a requirement for her canonization. The date of her canonization was announced alongside others passed for canonization on 14 February 2015 and she was canonized on 17 May 2015.

Two Palestinian Catholic Saints

Saint Mariam Baouardy, O.C.D. (Arabic **مريم بواردي**, or **Mary of Jesus Crucified**, 5 January 1846 – 26 August 1878), was a Discalced Carmelite nun of the Melkite Greek Catholic Church. Born to Greek Catholic parents from Syria and Lebanon, she was known for her service to the poor. In addition, she became a Christian mystic who suffered the stigmata, and has been canonized by the Catholic Church.

Her path to canonization solidified on 6 December 2014 with the recognition of a final miracle needed for her canonization. In the consistory of 14 February 2015, Pope Francis announced that she would be canonized on 17 May 2015; she was canonized at the Vatican.



Catholic Bishops in the Holy Land



Georges Bacouni
Greek Melkite Archbishop of Akka



Moussa El-Hage
Maronite Archbishop of Haifa
and the Holy Land



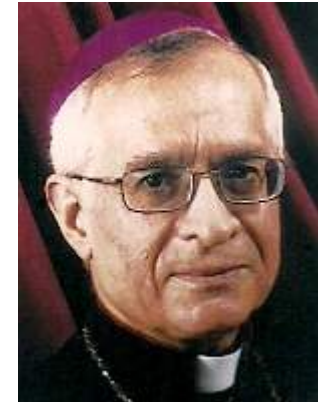
Elias Chacour
Emeritus Greek Melkite Archbishop of Akka



Michel Sabbah
Patriarch Emeritus of
Jerusalem for Latins



Joseph Gébara
Greek Melkite Archbishop
of Petra and Philadelphia



Grégoire Pierre Melki
Patriarchal Exarch of the Syro-Catholic
Patriarchal Exarchate of Jerusalem

Catholic Bishops, Sisters and Clergy in the Holy Land



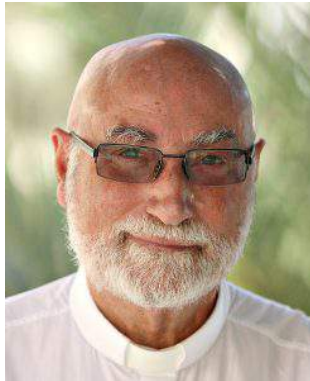
Bruna Fasan
President, Teaching Sisters
of Saint Dorothy



Rafic Nahra
Patriarchal Vicar for Hebrew
Speaking Catholics in Israel



Seylim Sayegh
Emeritus Patriarchal Vicar for Jordan



Jean-Daniel Gullung
Assumptionists Fathers Monastery
Ma'aleh Hashalom – Mount Zion



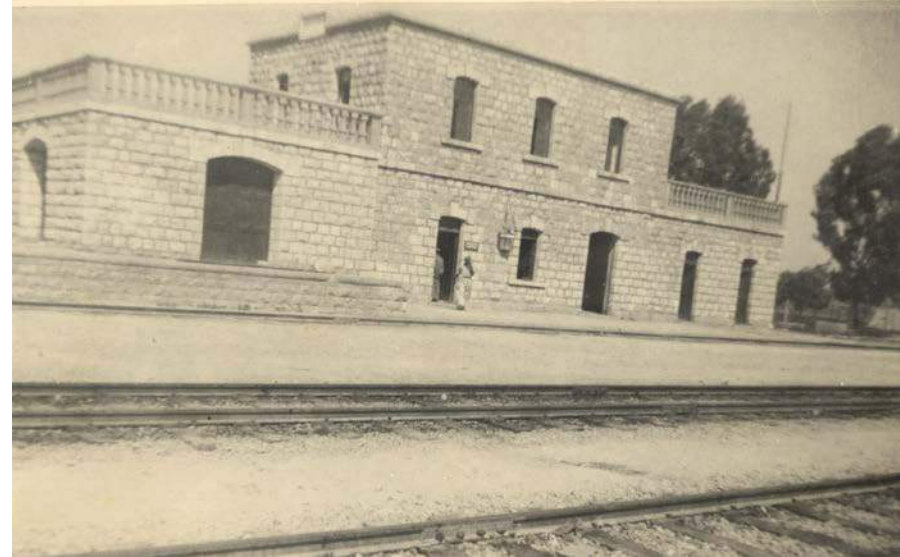
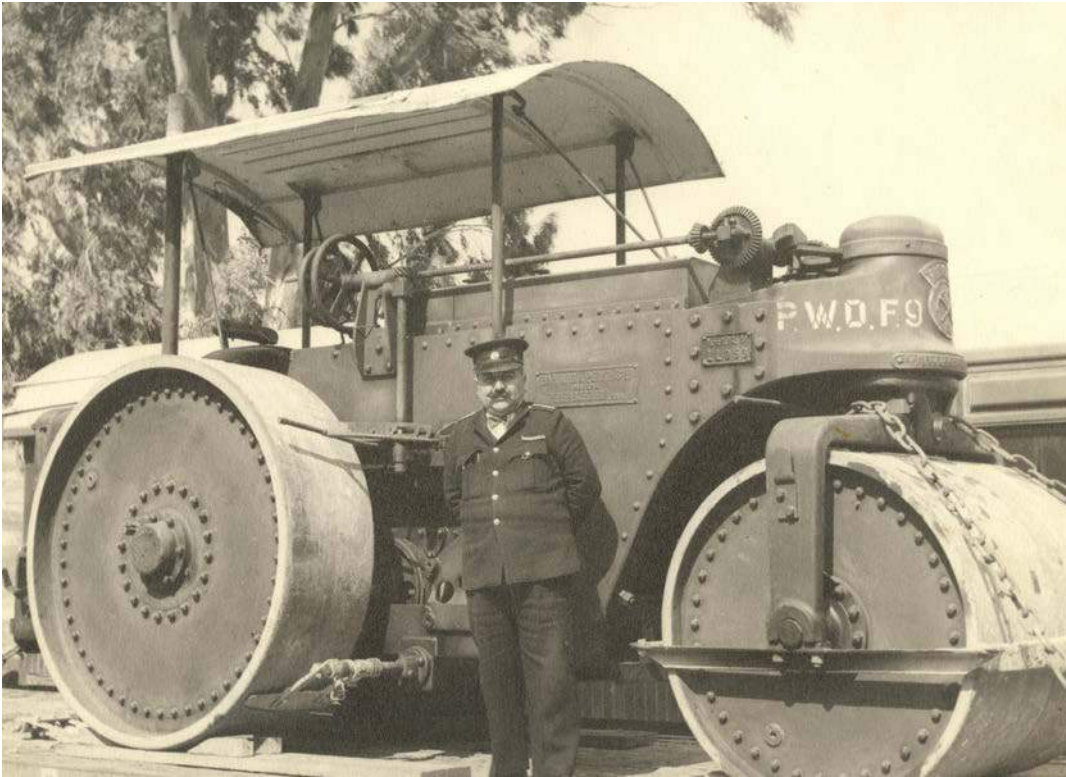
Zaid A. Habbabah
Chaldean Patriarchal Vicar
for Jordan



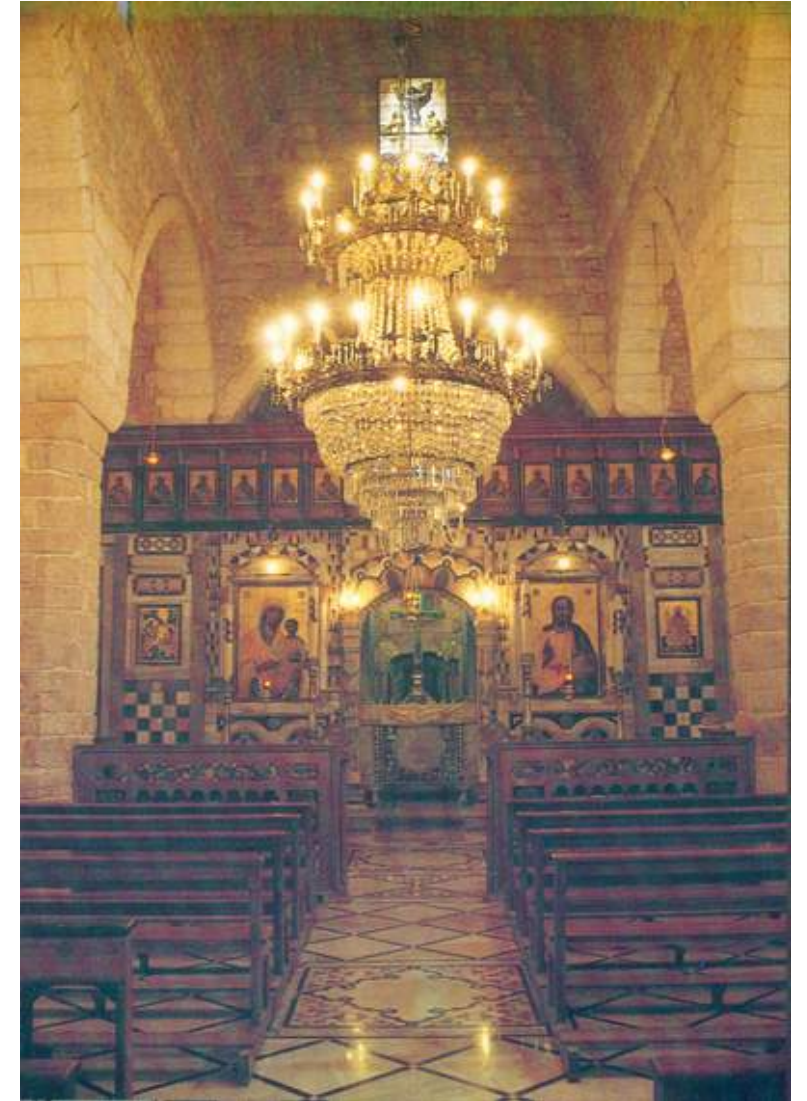
Kamel-Hanna Bathish
Emeritus Latin Vicar General

My Family's Christian Roots

My grandparents on my father's side are: Anis and Nabiha Abuzeid. Anis was a Station Master in Wadi Sarrar, Palestine during the British Mandate (1922-1948).



My grandfather studied theology to become a priest in the Salvatorian Seminary in Sidon, Lebanon. He was cantor in the Greek Catholic Church in Amman. The Greek Catholic Church celebrates Mass in Arabic and Greek.



My Family's Christian Roots

My grandparents, Anis and Nabiha Abuzeid were Greek Catholics: namely they follow the Pope of Rome, but their liturgy is the Greek Eastern liturgy written by The Archbishop of Constantinople, John Chrysostom, the Golden Mouth. My grandfather Anis wanted to become a priest. He studied theology at the Monastery of the Savior in Sidon, Lebanon.



Anis and Nabiha at the port of Jaffa, Palestine



My grandparents on my mother's side are Toufiq and Foumia Ghawi. They were Roman Catholics. My grandfather was a custom officer working with the British, inspecting imported goods in the port of Jaffa, Palestine. Both my grandparents were living in Jaffa where my father Fouad, met my mother Beatrice.

My Family's Christian Roots

19
ابتنا بياتريسي غاوي ولدت
بيافا في ٢٤ آب سنة ١٩٢٦
الساعة ٢ صباحاً وتعمدت
بيافا نهار السبت الساعة
٦ مساءً في ٨ كانون ثاني سنة
١٩٢٧ وتزوجت علي حوّا

Our Daughter Beatrice Ghawi,
She was born in Jaffa @ 2:00a.m
Aug 24, 1926. Baptized in Jaffa
Saturday @ 6:00pm, Jan 08, 1927.
Married Fouad Abuzeid May 30, 1943
at the Latin Church, Jaffa.



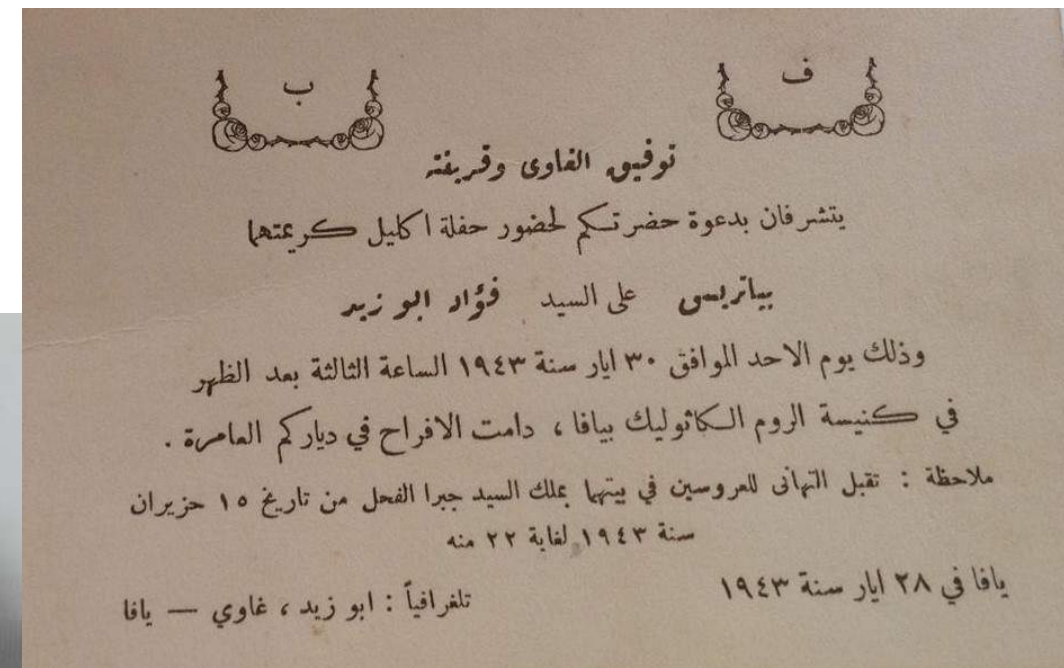
My Mom Beatrice Ghawi as an angel



My Aunt Georgette as an angel

My Family's Christian Roots

Both my grandparents were living in Jaffa where my father Fouad, met my mother Beatrice.



My Family in Jaffa on Palm Sunday

My Grandparents - Anis & Nabiha

My Mom & Dad – Beatrice & Fouad with Fadua, Anis & me

My Dad's brother George



Jaffa in 1945

Jaffa is an ancient port city, famous for its association with the biblical stories of Jonah, Solomon and Saint Peter as well as the myth of Andromeda and Perseus.

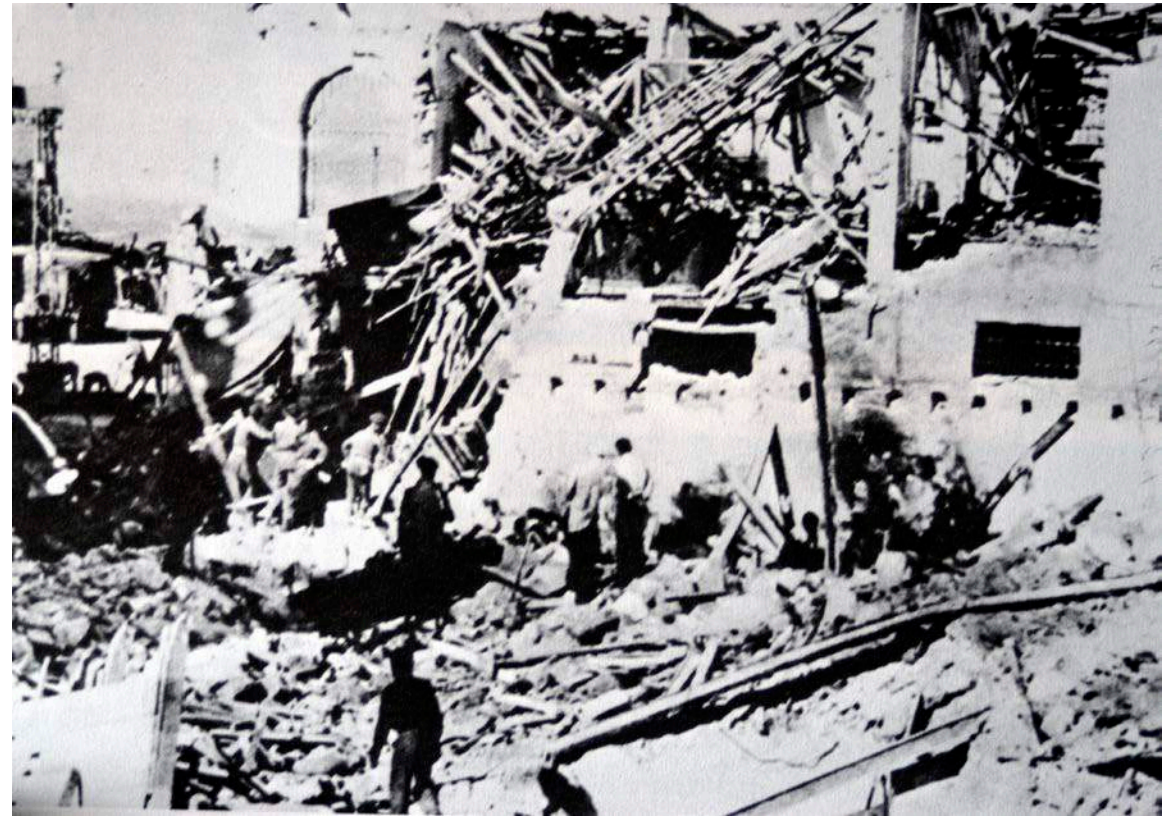
Perseus is one of the greatest heroes of Greek Mythology. He was the son of mighty Zeus and mortal Danae. He is best known as the slayer of the Gorgon Medusa, a fearsome monster, and as the rescuer of the Ethiopian princess Andromeda. Perseus is also said to be an ancestor of Hercules and the Asian race of the Persians. He was praised as a brave man, a good son and an honorable king.

Jaffa is famous for its oranges



My Family's Christian Roots

In 1948 we were driven out of Palestine during the Nakba when Jaffa was attacked.



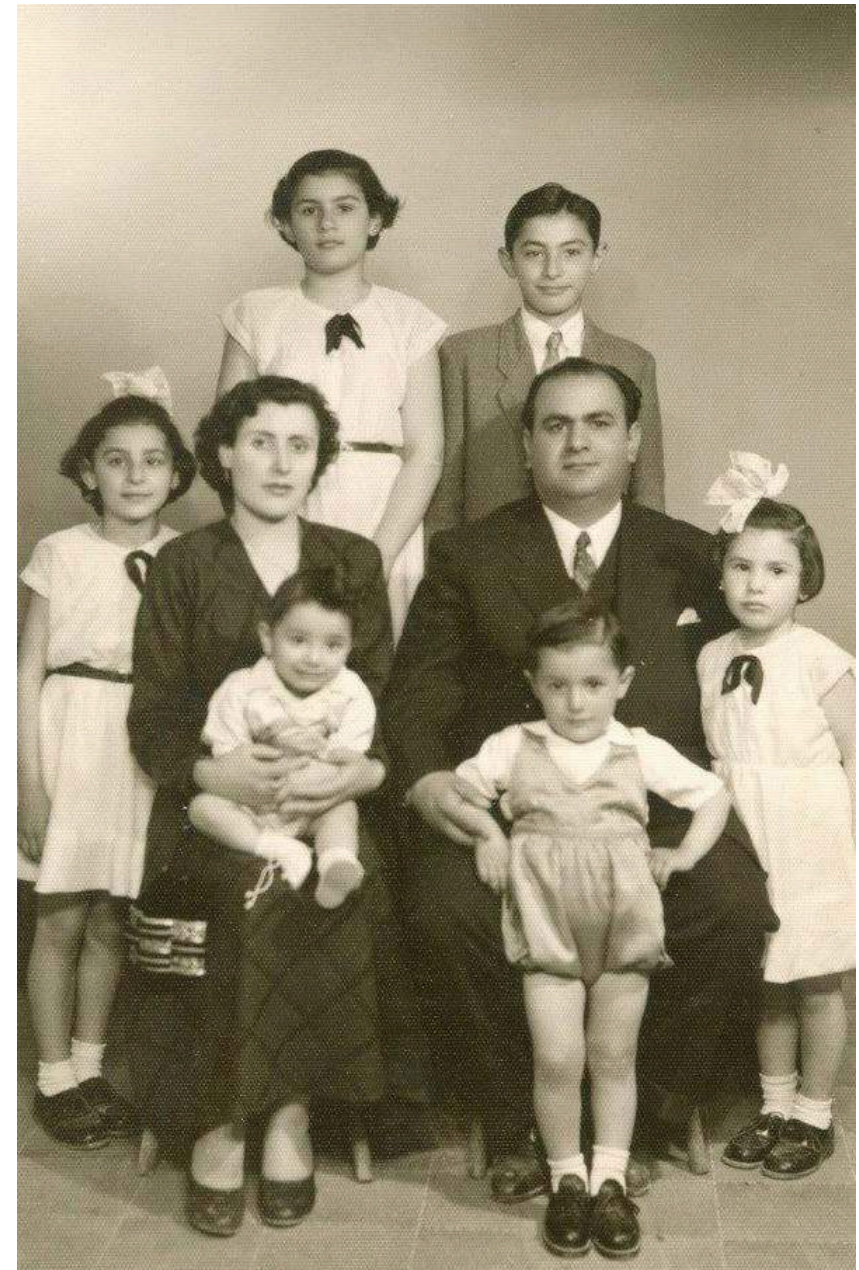
On 4 January 1948 the Zionist militia Lehi detonated a truck bomb outside the 3-story Serrani building, Jaffa's Town Hall, built by the Ottomans. The explosion killed 26 and injured hundreds.

My Family in Beirut

Fouad and Beatrice



Fouad and Beatrice
Fadua
Anis
Siham
Nina
Elias
Assad



My Family's Christian Roots

With my grandparents and their children on Palm Sunday

My grandparents Anis and Nabiha had four children: Two boys, Fouad and George and two girls, Georgette and Souade. Amman, Jordan.



Anis and Nabiha with George, Georgette, Fouad and Beatrice
and the family of Fouad and Beatrice: Fadua, Anis, Siham, Nina, Elias,, Assad

My Family's Christian Roots



Baptism of Elias



Baptism of Assad

My Family's Christian Roots



Siham's First Communion



Nina's First Communion

My Family's Christian Roots



My younger brother Elias' First Communion

My Family's Christian Roots

Outside the church of Frere de la Salle
College after the Baptism of my cousin
Nicola Abuzeid

This is where we celebrated evening
vespers in the Month of May for the
Blessed Mother



Grandma Foumia, Tante Margaret, Mom, Tante Aida, Anis, Tante Vera,
Tante Georgette, Siham holding Marlene, Audette Hazboun, Tante Leila,
Caroline, Vivian, Nancy, Titi, Fiti, Richard, Lilian, Nina

My Family's Christian Roots

Baptism of my cousin Nadia Abuzeid with my Dad Fouad AbouZeid as godfather and mother of Tante Leila as godmother



My Family's Christian Roots

Georgette wanted to be a Carmelite nun. But her father found out about her intention and forbade her to take that step. She made an oath to dedicate her life to Christ. She founded a school in Amman, Jordan, starting with Kindergarten and each year she added a class until 12th grade. However, she met the love of her life, Musa (Arabic for Moses) when she was in her thirties.



Georgette and Musa

My Family's Christian Roots



She wrote the pope of Rome to absolve her of her promise. Since marriage is a sacrament, the Pope absolved her of her oath and charged her to love her husband and raise her children in the Christian Catholic tradition.



My Family's Christian Roots

Souad, like her sister also went to the Carmel St. Joseph school and wanted to be a nun. Learning from her sister's experience, she did not tell her father. She sold her jewelry and boarded a plane to Paris, became a nun and then informed her father who never forgave her for running away. She is now 84 years old and as happy a nun as can be. She graduated from the Sorbonne University majoring in Arabic studies. She served in: Paris, France: in Beirut, Lebanon: in Cairo, Egypt: in Mount Carmel, Israel and back again to Cairo, Egypt where she is today.



The Orthodox Club in Amman – A Gathering Place of Christian Families



My Amman Family



My Amman Family

Kindergarten to 2nd grade at Carmel St. Joseph, a Roman rite boarding school run by the French Carmelite nuns in Beirut, Lebanon. Instruction was in French except for one hour of Arabic a day

3rd grade to 12th. Grade at the Sister of Nazareth School administered by the Greek Catholic Diocese, a K-12 school. Its graduates are tri-lingual: Arabic, English and French. The school accepts Christian and Muslim students. The majority of students are Christian of all denominations.

Instructions in all subjects was in Arabic except for English and French language classes. The school offers Kindergarten to 12th Grade. We had catechism classes taught by nuns until 9th grade and by priests from 10th to 12th grade. Every Monday morning, we had to report where we went to church each Sunday.



My Mom belongs to the Latin Rite or Roman Rite of the Catholic Church. In the month of May we used to celebrate and pray to Mary. We would pray in French. I went to The Sisters of Nazareth School.



My class with King Hussein

King Abdullah giving certificate to the principal of my school



My Amman Family



My sister Fadua was educated at the Friends School that was founded by the Quakers in Ramallah. The school has played an important role in Palestinian education for over 120 years. In 1869 Friends started a number of small schools for girls in the villages around Ramallah, followed by the “Girls Training Home of Ramallah” in 1889. In the first year there were fifteen students from places as far away as Beirut and Jaffa, as well as from Ramallah.

In 1901 a boys’ training school was established, and although this was located on a separate site, the boys and girls had classes together for an hour and a half a week – an early initiative in co-education. Both schools were closed during the First World War, 1914 – 18, but reopened in 1919.

After the partition of Palestine in 1948, the school grew to cater for the refugees from the coastal areas taken over by Israel. It also raised money for needy families and expanded its scholarship fund. During the 1950s and early 1960s, the school enhanced its educational reputation and attracted students from all over the Middle East.

My Amman Family



My best friend was my neighbor, a Muslim, named Salwa Barakat. We used to exchange pastries during our respective religious feasts.

The Sisters of Nazareth School and Church



My Amman Family



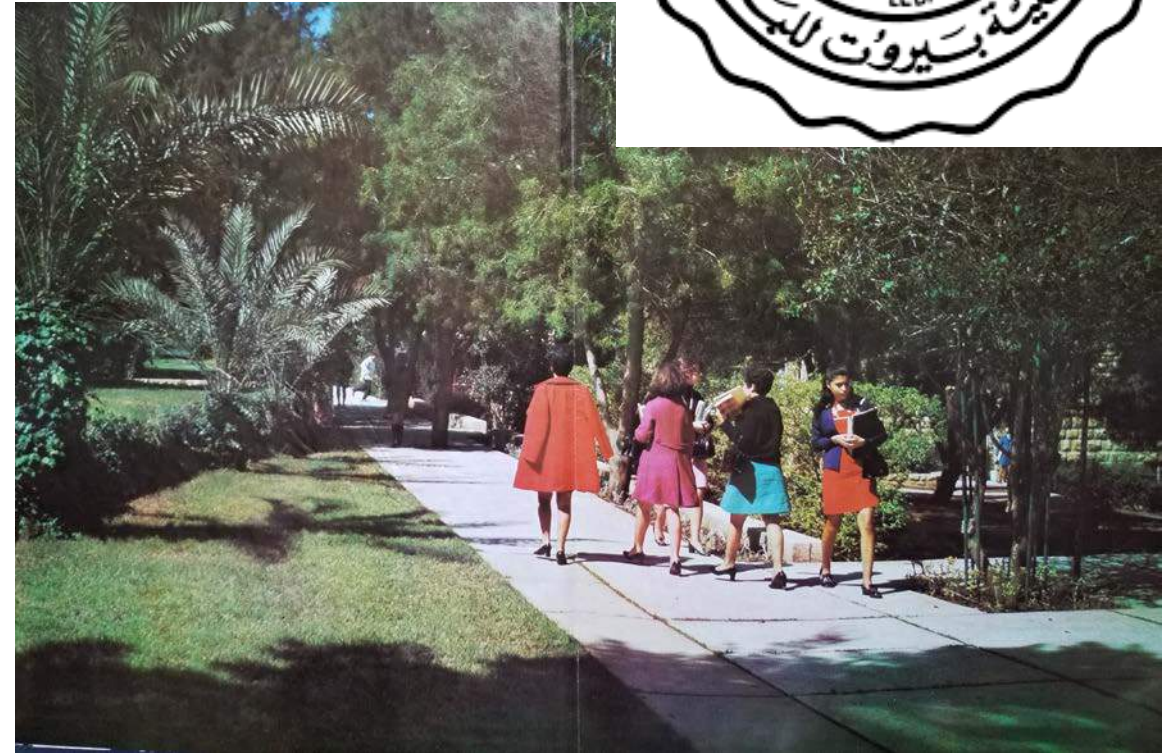
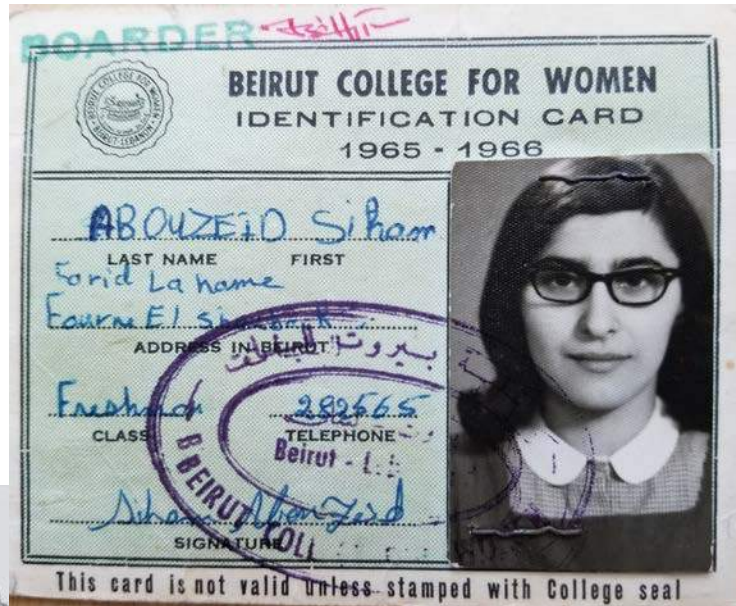
Meeting after mass with Madelein, Lynn, Maya, Alex, Tala, Tamara and me



St. Mary of Nazareth Church

Higher Education

Beirut College for Women, B.S. Degree in Mathematics, all my electives were in philosophy. I studied theology at the Catholic Theological Seminary. We had vespers in the evenings



Graduate School The American University of Beirut, Lebanon – M.S. in Mathematics.



Graduate School – Doctorate in Mathematics Education

The University of Miami



Rutgers University



I worked at the Royal Scientific Society from 1972 to 1973
as a Curriculum Advisor for Mathematics.



الجمعية العلمية الملكية
Royal Scientific Society



I worked at the University of Jordan from 1973 to 1975
as the first women to teach in the Mathematics
Department



Christians are exceptionally well integrated in the Jordanian society and have a high level of freedom, though they are not free to evangelize Muslims. They form a significant part of the kingdom's political and economic elite. Christians enjoy high economic and social opportunities in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan compared to the position of some, but not all, of their co-religionists in the rest of the Middle East. Christians are allotted 9 out of a total of 110 seats in the Jordanian parliament and also hold important ministerial portfolios, ambassadorial appointments, and positions of high military rank.

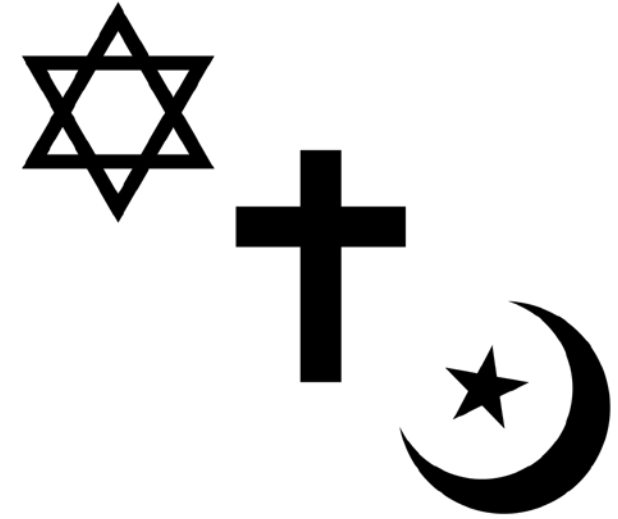
Jordanian Christians are allowed by the public and private sectors to leave their work to attend mass on Sundays. All Christian religious ceremonies are publicly celebrated in Jordan, Christians have established good relations with the royal family and the various Jordanian government officials and they have their own ecclesiastical courts for matters of personal status. The government has contributed to restoring pilgrimages to the baptismal site of Jesus Christ.

Christians involved in Jordanian politics include; Sami Halaseh and Hazim Al-Naser, minister of Public Works and minister of Water and Irrigation respectively. Also Dina Kavar, current Jordanian Ambassador to the U.S., was the first Arab woman to lead the Security Council through Jordan's seat who also happens to be a Jordanian Christian.

The Jordan Times, June 2014

The Challenges to Christianity in Jordan, Palestine, and other Arab countries

- Due to the Emergence of Islam in the 7th Century resulted in the Christians becoming a minority in the Arab World
- The inability of Christians in Jordan to visit the Holy lands under Israeli occupation as they used to before the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948
- West Bank Christians lack of access to Jerusalem and the Holy Land
- Rivalry among Christian denominations for influence in Jerusalem and the Holy Land
- The control of foreign Christian Bishops of church lands in Jerusalem which they will not cede to the Palestinian Arab Christians such as the Greek church and the Russian church.
- The flight of the Christians for economic reasons who cannot live as second class citizens under Israeli occupation. The University of Bethlehem is a University funded by the Pope of Rome. Nowadays it has more Muslim students than Christians.
- The emergence of ISIS after the Iraq war with its belligerent ideology against the Christians. Churches in Iraq have been destroyed and priests and congregations were massacred.



The Challenges to Christianity in Jordan, Palestine, and other Arab countries

Country	% Christian	Number of Christians
Lebanon	41.0%	1,702,000
Kuwait	15.0%	458,000
Egypt	10.5%	7,892,000
Syria	10.2%	2,251,000
United Arab Emirates	9.0%	944,000
Bahrain	9.0%	88,000
Qatar	8.5%	168,000
Jordan	6.0%	400,000
Saudi Arabia	5.5%	1,200,000
Palestine	2.0%	271,000
Middle East Region	4.82%	15,374,000

CIA World Fact Book, May 2018

For Further Reading

1. **The Modern History of Jordan** by Kamal Salibi, 2010
2. **Pilgrimage in Early Christian Jordan** by Burton MacDonald, 2010
3. **Dying in the Land of Promise** by Donald E. Wagner, 2003
4. **The Holy Land, The Road to Heaven** by Hany Ziv, 2000
5. **Jerash - A Brief Guide to the Antiquities** by Rami G. Khouri, 1988
6. **Petra - A Brief Guide to the Antiquities** by Rami G. Khouri, 1988
7. **Biblical Sites – Jordan Land of Prophets** by Fawzi Zayadine, 1984

