

“Islam for Christians”

John W. Herbst, PhD

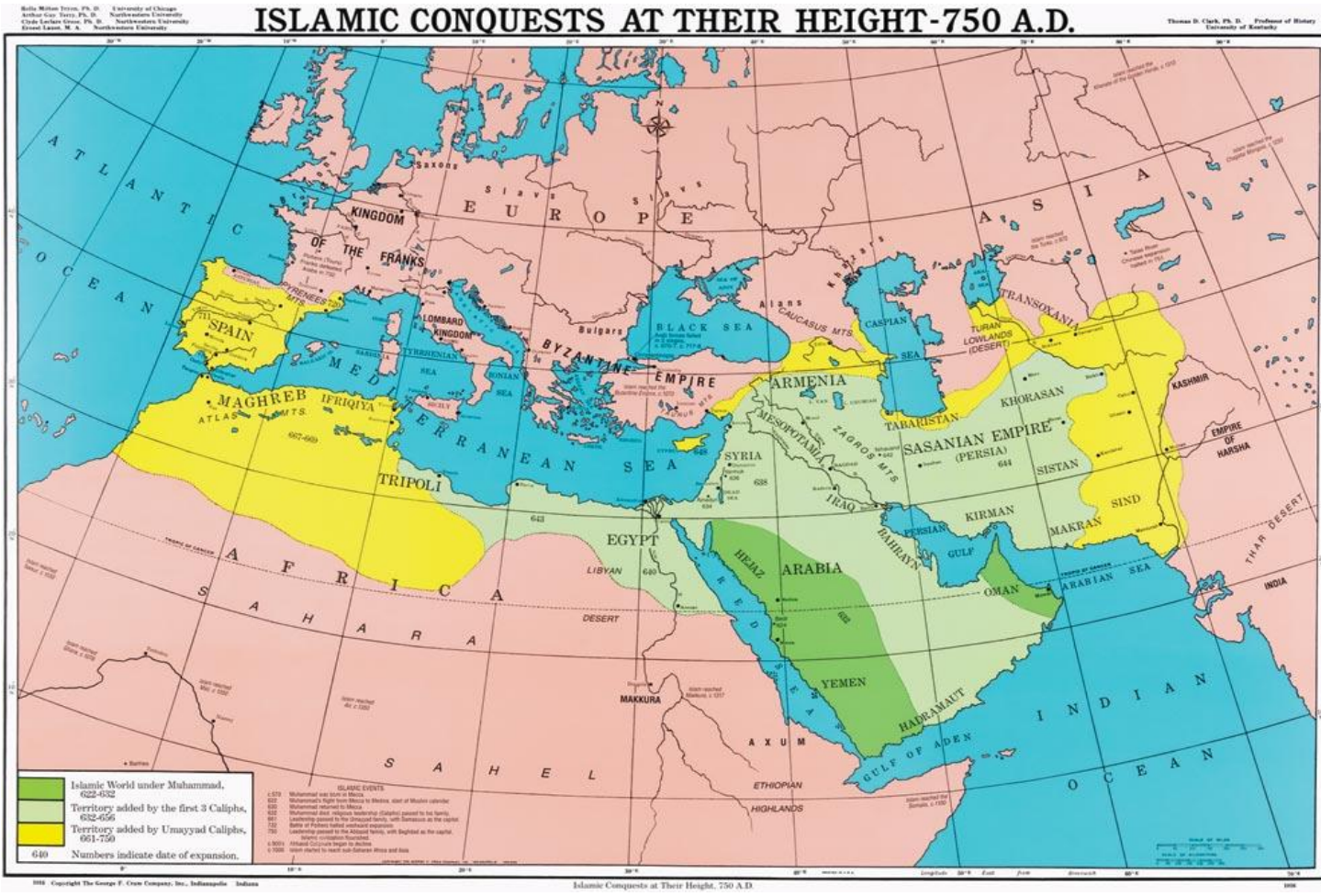
“Islam, the Middle East, and Terrorists: Wisdom for Troubled Times”

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Two concepts that shape Muslim thinking on the Middle East

1. The distinction between Muslim lands and Christian lands
2. The reality that Christian nations are richer and more powerful than Muslim nations

1 - Muslim Lands, Christian Lands



Muslim Territory

- ▶ Early Muslim conquests seem “miraculous”
- ▶ In early Muslim history, borders are defined between Muslim and Christian territory

Muslim Perception of the Crusades

- ▶ Christians invaded Muslim territory and held it for 200 years
 - ▶ Territory included Jerusalem
- ▶ God helped Muslims to take back Muslim territory

Concept 2: Christian Nations are Richer and More Powerful than Muslims Nations

- ▶ If Islam is the “right” religion, then why is the Christian world richer and stronger than the Muslim world?

Issue 2: An answer... (Usually accepted by Western Muslims)

- ▶ Muslims should “accommodate” more
 - ▶ The state should not be involved in religion
 - ▶ Muslims should be willing to work and study with non-Muslims

Issue 2: Another answer...

- ▶ Muslims have become too “accommodating”
- ▶ Muslims must become *more* “Muslim”
- ▶ Muslim lands should restrict the movement of non-Muslims (to avoid religious contamination)

Terrorists who Use Islam: Common Goals

1. Expel Westerners from Saudi Arabia
2. Expel Jews (and Christians) from Israel/ Palestine
 - ▶ Palestine was included in the “miraculous” conquests
 - ▶ Muhammad ascended to heaven from Jerusalem (the *miraj*)
3. “Strict” Enforcement of “Muslim” Law

Palestine

- ▶ Traditional name for the area we know as “Israel”
- ▶ Historical residents are Muslim Arabs (with a few Christian Arabs)
- ▶ Controlled by the Ottoman Empire (Turks), 1517-1917

Modern Zionism: A *political and cultural* idea

- ▶ The world should have a country for Jewish people
 - ▶ Anti-Semitism is real and enduring
 - ▶ Jewish people cannot count on anyone to help them
 - ▶ A Jewish country can be the center of Jewish language, arts, and culture.

Zionism and Palestine

- ▶ Jews move from Russia to Palestine in the early 20th century
 - ▶ Massive Eastern European Anti-Semitism
 - ▶ Western Europe perceives that Palestine is sparsely occupied

Great Britain Steps in

- ▶ Britain seizes Palestine during World War I
 - ▶ Aided by Palestinian Arabs who want independence from the Ottoman Empire
- ▶ Britain promises Palestine to the Jews (“Balfour Declaration”)
- ▶ Britain promises Palestine to the (Palestinian) Arabs
 - ▶ British expectation that Arabs and Jews will just “get along” ... (?)

Creation and Expansion of Israel

1948 - the U.N. grants independence to the Jewish State of Israel (purple)

Israel is immediately attacked by Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and Iraq, but maintained its borders (roughly).

1967 - Israel captures the West Bank, Gaza (“Gaza Strip”), and the Golan Heights (yellow)



Israel Today: Political Reality

- The West Bank and Gaza have limited autonomy, but are controlled by Israel
- Israel is negotiating with Syria to return the Golan Heights



Israel Today: Muslim Concerns

Europe and the US took Palestine from Muslims and gave it to Jews

Palestinian Muslims who became refugees during the 1948 and 1967 wars are not permitted to return to their ancestral homes

Israel has committed human rights violations against Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza

More Palestinian non-combatant civilians are killed each year by Israelis, than are Israeli non-combatant civilians killed by Palestinians



Modern Muslim concerns re: Israel

- ▶ Acknowledgement of the plight of Palestinians dominated by Israel
- ▶ A peace process which is fair to Palestinians
- ▶ Access to Dome of the Rock and the al-Iqsa Mosque
- ▶ Recognition of Jerusalem's significance for Muslims

A Christian Movement: Dispensational Premillennialism (“DP”)

- ▶ Teaches that Jesus will return to earth at the end of a seven-year “Tribulation.”
- ▶ Popularized through the spread of the Scofield Study Bible in the early 20th century.
- ▶ Famous DP advocates: Hal Lindsey (*The Late Great Planet Earth*); Tim LaHaye (“*Left Behind*”), Billy Graham, Jerry Falwell Sr., John F. MacArthur, Pat Robertson.

Why do DP'ers support Classical Zionism?

- ▶ The “tribulation” begins *after* the construction of a new Temple in Jerusalem
- ▶ The Temple will be built by the Jews
- ▶ A Jewish state can organize the rebuilding of the Temple

A way forward (“Two State Solution”)

- ▶ Everyone accepts that Israel should exist as a place of refuge for Jewish people.
- ▶ Jerusalem becomes a “shared” city for Jews, Christians, and Muslims (and everyone else)
- ▶ The West Bank and Gaza become the country of Palestine, with secure borders for Israel

John W. Herbst, PhD

www.ChristianGuidetoIslam.com

herbstot13@gmail.com