

# Children of Abraham: Judaism, Christianity & Islam

Rabbi Michael Lotker - [www.lotker.com](http://www.lotker.com)



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Rabbi Michael Lotker

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On this site you will learn a bit about Rabbi Lotker, be able to contact him, learn about the services he offers, learn about his classes and talks, access class materials, hear some of his sermons, and learn about his book, A Christian's Guide to Judaism



## ***"Children of Abraham: Comparing Judaism, Christianity and Islam (Aug. 4, 11, 18 & 25)"***

About half the people of the world worship the God of Abraham as members of faith traditions that trace themselves back 4000 years to this inspired individual. In four classes, Rabbi Lotker will introduce these three faiths with special emphasis on where they are similar and where they differ. We will read texts from the Hebrew Bible, the Christian Scripture and the Koran relating to the Garden of Eden, Abraham, Moses, and others to help understand the fascinating history and theology that shape our worlds to this day. Differences in belief, historical origins and the reasons behind historical and current conflicts will be explored. We will also take a detailed look at Holy Neighborhood of Jerusalem and the sacred sites to be found there.

- > Copies of Slides**
- > Suggested Reading**
- > Video of Session #1**

# Outline and Introductions

## ● Outline of the four classes

- Class 1: Introduction & Basic Stories of the Three Traditions
- Class 2: Holy Books
- Class 3: Fundamental Beliefs
- Class 4: Exploring Jerusalem

**This is a Jew's (not necessarily "the Jewish" perspective.**

## ● Introduction

- Name as many religions as you can
- What do they have in common?
- How do they differ?
- Comparing religions: what are their goals?

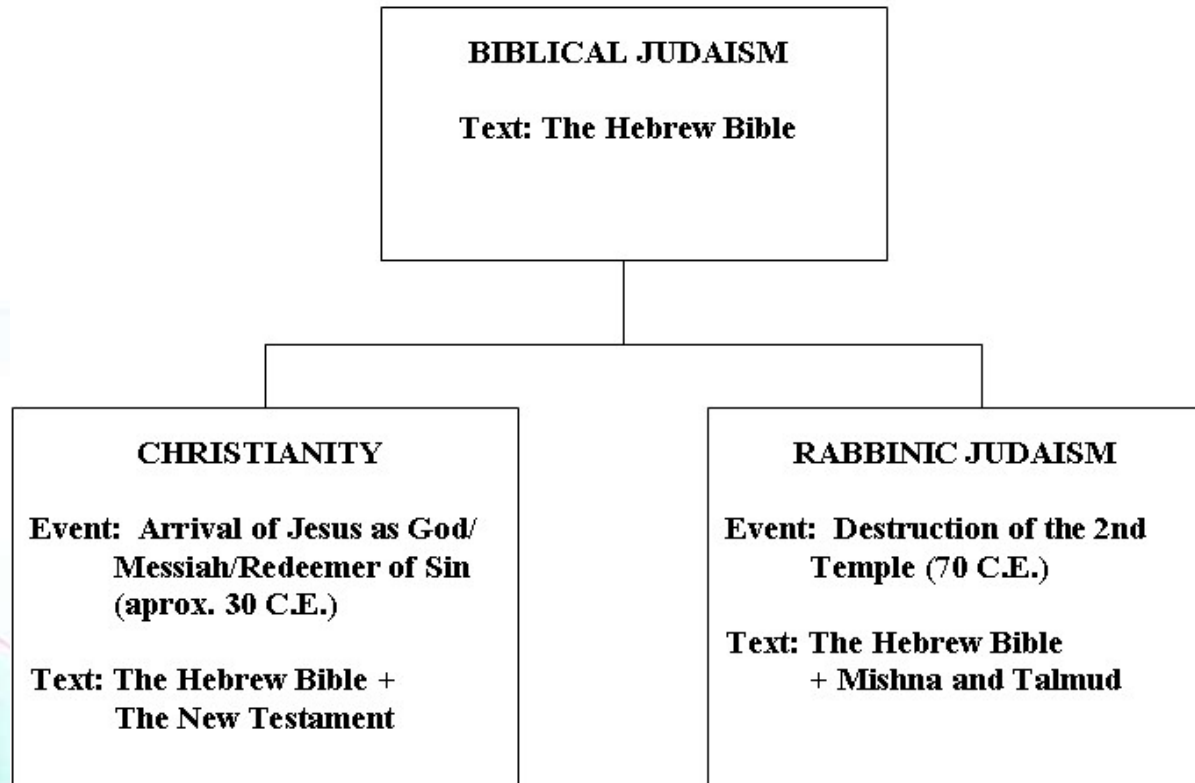
# Timeline

## **Overall timeline for Judaism, Christianity and Islam**

- Abraham about 2000 BCE (Before the Common Era)
- Moses about 1200 BCE
- David and First Temple about 1000 BCE
- Destruction of 1<sup>st</sup> Temple 586 BCE
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple 530 BCE
- Torah completed 400 BCE
- Prophets completed 200 BCE
- Jesus (executed about 33 CE (Common Era))
- Destruction of 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple 70 CE
- Hebrew Bible completed 90 CE
- New Testament completed 150 CE
- Roman Empire accepts Christianity – 313 CE
- Completion of Talmud 500 CE
- Mohammed 570-632 CE
- Mohammed's Emigration to Medina – 622 CE = Beginning of Muslim Calendar

# Judaism & Christianity: Siblings

## Relationship Between Christianity & Modern Judaism



# Introduction to the Three Religions

- **Judaism**

- Hebrew Bible and Talmud
- Focus on actions rather than on beliefs
- Unique: In that it is both a people and religion
- A few movements
- Does not seek converts
- About 15 million people (0.2% of world – most have never met a Jew)

- **Christianity**

- Grows out of Judaism and Jewish idea of Messiah
- Adds elements quite foreign to Judaism
- Adds New Testament to Hebrew Bible
- Quickly becomes a gentile (not Jewish) movement
- Wildly successful when Roman Empire become Christian
- Many movements and churches – some 42,000
- Focus on belief and faith
- Seeks converts
- About 2 billion people (31% of world)

# Introduction to the Three Religions

- **Islam**

- *Islam* means “submission (to the will of God)” – related to *salaam=shalom* (peace and wholeness). One who surrenders, whose faith is Islam, is a *Muslim*
- Influenced by Judaism and Christianity. *Allah* is simply the Arabic word for God (same God, God of Abraham, as Judaism & Christianity).
- Starts as Arab religion but expands quickly to non-Arab world
- Holy Book is the *Qur’an* – includes much of Hebrew Bible, *Midrash* & NT
- Primary and last prophet is Mohammed
- Closer to Judaism than to Christianity
  - Emphasis on Religious Law & Actions
- Two major movements – *Sunni* (90%) and *Shia* (10%), are the result of an historical split over Muhammad’s succession.
- Seeks converts
- Islam (the religion) and Islamism (late 20<sup>th</sup> century totalitarianism)
- About 1.5 billion people (23% of world)



# Basic Stories of the Three Traditions

- **Judaism** – reads the Hebrew Bible through the interpretive lens of the *Talmud* and Rabbis (of Talmudic times)
  - Creation: the Bible teaches Who's in charge – it's not a science or a history textbook
  - Patriarchs: characters are very human, flawed
  - Egypt
    - Why did we go there?
    - What happened?
    - How did we get out?
    - What was God's purpose in getting us out?
  - Redemption – crossing the sea – history has direction
  - Sinai
  - Covenant
  - Temple destruction and Diaspora
  - *Tikkun Olam* and the purpose of Jews and Judaism.

# Judaism: Images



# Basic Stories of the Three Traditions

- **Christianity** – reads the Hebrew Bible through the interpretive lens of the New Testament and Church Fathers
  - Creation – focus on Adam and Eve and Original Sin
  - Abraham's faith is powerful even without Torah
  - Jewish Law (especially in Greek translation) as an impossible challenge
    - Jewish response – God doesn't expect perfection
    - Christian response – we need another path to God
  - Emphasizes Jews' Failure to comply with Torah
    - Prophetic critiques
    - Destruction of Temple and Diaspora

# Basic Stories of the Three Traditions

## ● Christianity – continued

- The Life of Jesus
  - Birth and Christmas
    - Miracle birth common in Hebrew Bible: Isaac, Samuel, Sampson
    - Virgin birth – Key is Greek translation of Is. 7:14 (*alma/betulah*)
  - Early life: son of a carpenter, he is a scholar
  - Faith healing/miracle working/preacher
    - Basic teachings are Jewish
    - Reason he is not considered a Jewish prophet (but *is* a Muslim prophet)
    - Preaches the coming of God's kingdom soon
      - Teaching in very turbulent times
      - Lots of Jewish movements then: Sadducees, Pharisees, Essenes, Zealots, Nazarenes (Jews who followed Jesus = Christians)
      - Teaches that ethics and faith are more important than strict observance of Jewish law (not too different than Reform Judaism)
        - Criticism of Judaism often understood as antisemitic
        - Really an intra-Jewish debate like Orthodox – Reform debate

# Basic Stories of the Three Traditions

## ● **Christianity** – life of Jesus (continued)

- Gets in trouble with Roman rulers - He was leader of large numbers of people
  - They decide to put him to death as a dangerous zealot
  - Crucifixion was the standard means of torturing and executing zealots/revolutionaries
  - The Passion - Execution of Jesus - Did the Jews kill Jesus?
    - Crucifixion not a Jewish form of capital punishment
    - In those days, Jews had no power to execute, and this High Priest (Caiaphas) was particularly subservient to Rome.
    - Gospel: Jews allowed to let one prisoner free at Passover
      - Jews insist on Jesus' crucifixion
      - Jews take blame “on us and all our children” (Mathew 27:25)
      - There is no precedent in Jewish or Roman law for this kind of “pardon”
    - Understanding the story
      - NT (especially the gospels) written after destruction of Temple
      - Christians courting Rome & not blame them for killing God.

# Basic Stories of the Three Traditions

## ● **Christianity** – the role of Paul

- Paul was a Jew (named Saul) who never met Jesus but had a mystical vision of him (struck blind on road to Damascus).
- Mission to the gentiles: You don't have to be Jewish to be Christian.
- Meaning of Jesus' life and death
  - Jesus is the perfect sacrifice (in the Biblical model) for the most pervasive sin (Original Sin)
    - Just as one man (Adam assisted by Eve) brought sin/death, one man (Jesus assisted by Mary) resolves
  - We can't be justified by Law, need faith.
- Paul is the true genius and father of Christianity.
  - Christianity is not the religion of Jesus – Judaism was the religion of Jesus. Christianity is a religion about Jesus.
  - Paul won a significant intra-Christian battle about the nature of Christianity – that it is a path to God for everyone, not just Jews.
  - He is the author of most of the New Testament

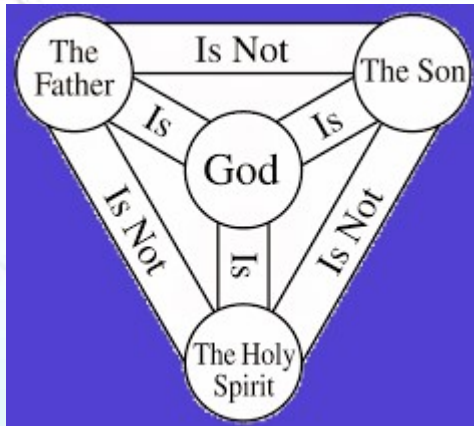
# Basic Stories of the Three Traditions

- The meaning of Jesus
  - Messiah (anointed = *mashiach* = *christos* = Christ)
  - God (one of three in Trinity)
  - Sacrificed for the sins of the world
  - Key to justification with God & eternal life in heaven is faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior
  - Then people do good things as sign of being “saved”
  - Jesus does not fulfill a single Jewish prediction associated with the Messiah
  - Promise of the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Jesus to fulfill Jewish prophecies concerning messiah.

# Christianity: Images

FOR GOD  
SO LOVED  
THE WORLD  
THAT HE  
GAVE HIS  
**ONE AND ONLY SON**  
THAT  
WHOEVER  
BELIEVES  
IN HIM  
SHALL NOT  
PERISH  
BUT HAVE  
ETERNAL  
LIFE  
JOHN 3:16

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# Basic Stories of the Three Traditions

- **Islam:** The *Koran* (or *Qur'an*) does not directly incorporate either the Hebrew Bible or the New Testament but does include much material therefrom.
  - God gives revelation to all peoples
    - Written revelation to Jews and Christians (“peoples of the book”) – but they are understood to have misunderstood and corrupted this revelation
  - Setting in Arabia in 600 CE
    - Arab tribes
    - War like
    - Worshiped idols
    - Jews and Christians living there – the Arabs knew Jewish and Christian stories
  - Revelation to Muhammad via the angel Gabriel
    - Takes place over 20 years
    - In beautiful Arabic
    - Traces himself back to Abraham through Ishmael
    - Establishes the *Kaaba* (means “cube”) in Mecca as central shrine
      - Pilgrimage is called the *Haj*
    - Muhammad is viewed as sinless.

# Basic Stories of the Three Traditions

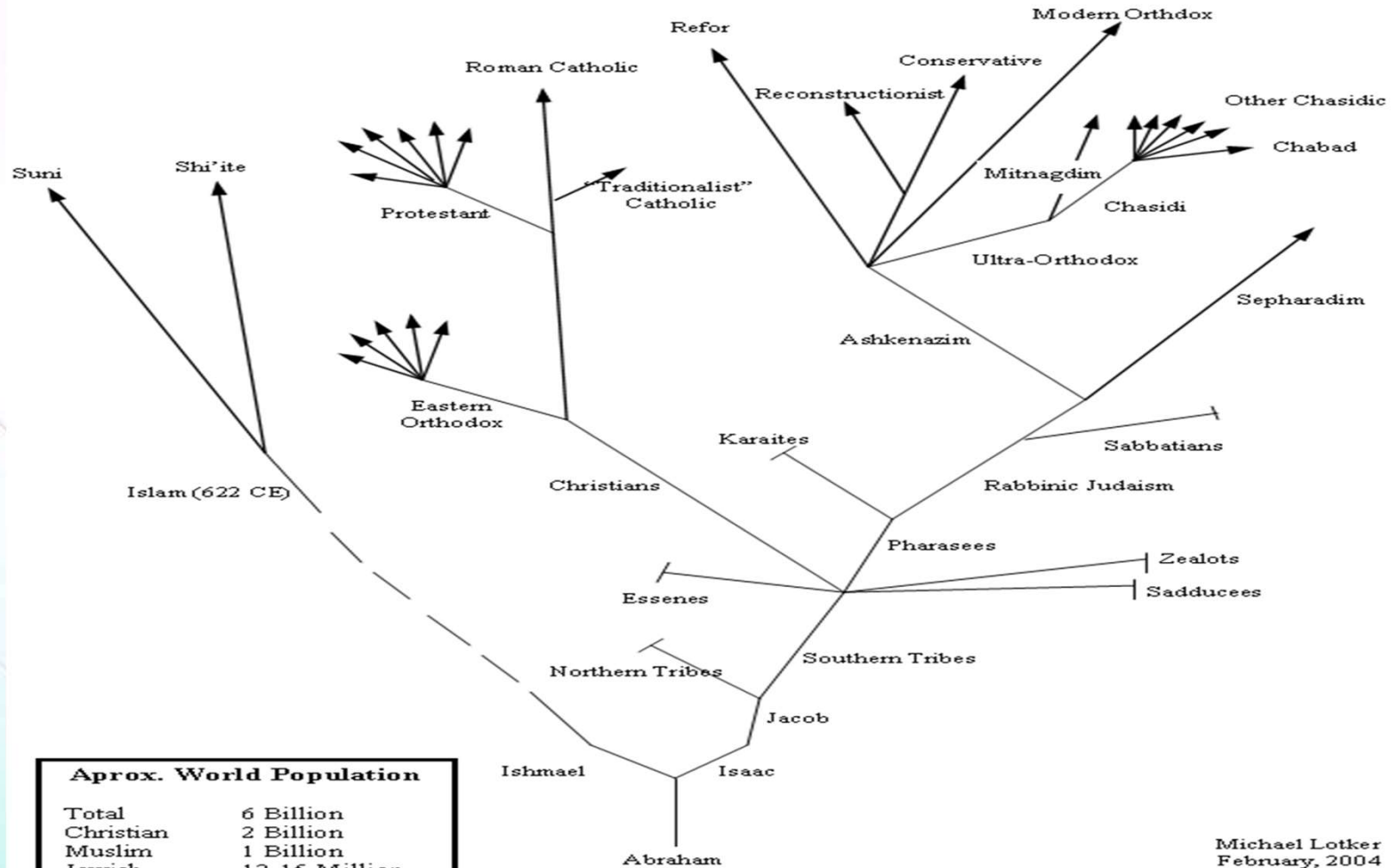
- The *Qur'an* – we will discuss more next time
  - In Arabic – all translations are understood to be interpretations.
  - More important to Islam than the *Tanach* or NT is to Judaism and Christianity
    - Muslim prayer service is entirely from the *Qur'an*
    - Muslims don't question the *Qur'an*
    - Tradition of committing *Qur'an* to memory
  - Arranged in *Suras* (chapters) and verses with the longest *suras* first – it's not in chronological order.
- Like Judaism,
  - Islam has an important oral tradition
  - Islam is a religion of religious law
  - Islam rejects the idea that God can become human.

# Islam: Images



# Three Paths to the Same God

## Children of Abraham: Paths to God



Aprox. World Population	
Total	6 Billion
Christian	2 Billion
Muslim	1 Billion
Jewish	12-15 Million

Michael Lotker  
February, 2004

# Suggested Reading

## **Judaism**

- Alfred J. Kolatch, *The Jewish Book of Why*, Jonathan David Publishers, Inc. 1981, and *The Second Book of Why*, 1985. Widely available and very readable collection of questions and answers about Jewish practice, customs, etc.
- Michael Lotker, *A Christian's Guide to Judaism*, Paulist Press, 2004.
- Joseph Telushkin, *Jewish Literacy*, William Morrow and Company, Inc. New York, 1991. A wonderful resource, the book devotes a page to a page and a half to key topics of Jewish literacy.
- Stephen M Wylen, *Settings of Silver*, Paulist Press, 1989. This is an extremely readable college level treatment

## **Christianity (see also Interfaith Understanding)**

- Reza Aslan, *Zealot: The Life and Times of Jesus of Nazareth*, Random House, 2013. A readable book focusing on the historical Jesus and how Christianity transformed him into the Christ.
- Amy-Jill Levine & Marc Zvi Brettler, *The Jewish Annotated New Testament*, Oxford University Press, 2011. Excellent commentaries and 30 wonderful essays.
- John C. McCollister, *The Christian Book of Why*, Jonathan David Publishers, Inc. 1983.

# Suggested Reading

## Islam

- A. Yusuf Ali (trans. & commentary), *The Holy Qur'an*, Islamic Propagation Centre International, 1946. It's easy to find English versions of the Qur'an; I particularly like the many helpful footnotes and Index in this version.
- Reza Aslan, *No God but God: The Origins, Evolution, and Future of Islam*, Random House, 2011. A very readable historical and modern perspective.
- Michael Cook, *The Koran: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2000. The title says it all.
- Frederick Mathewson Denny, *An Introduction to Islam*, Macmillan Publishing Co., 1994. An excellent, detailed, college level introduction.

# Suggested Reading

## Interfaith Understanding

- Michael J. Cook, *Modern Jews Engage the New Testament: Enhancing Jewish Well-Being in a Christian Environment*, Jewish Lights Publishing, 2008. A fascinating explanation of how Christianity evolved out of Judaism and Roman pagan religions.
- Reuven Firestone, *Who Are the Real Chosen People? The Meaning of Chosenness in Judaism, Christianity and Islam*, Skylight Paths Publishing, 2008.
- Leon Klenicki & Geoffrey Wigoder, eds., *A Dictionary of the Jewish-Christian Dialogue*, Paulist Press, 1984. Jewish and Christian scholars write brief (2-3 page) essays on 38 interesting topics.
- Arthur J. Magida, ed., *How to Be a Perfect Stranger: A Guide to Etiquette in Other People's Religious Ceremonies*, Jewish Lights Publishing, 1996 (Vol. I) and 1997 (Vol. 2). A brief overview of the beliefs and religious ceremonies of 37 different religions.
- Gerald Sigal, *The Jew and the Christian Missionary: A Jewish Response to Missionary Christianity*, KTAV Publishing House, 1981. A Jewish scholar addresses 67 scriptural issues in the Hebrew and Christian scriptures – useful if you are curious as to how Judaism addresses such issues.

# Suggested Reading

## History

- Karen Armstrong, *A History of God*, Ballantine Books, 1993. This is a wonderful history of how ideas about God evolved focusing on Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.
- Carroll, James, *Constantine's Sword: The Church and the Jews*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2001. Very well written, if lengthy, discussion of the relationship between the two faiths and on the historical development of the Church.
- Richard Elliott Friedman, *Who Wrote the Bible?*, Harper & Row, 1987. A fascinating look at the documentary hypothesis of the Bible and how it was written.
- Paul Johnson, *A History of the Jews*, HarperPerennial, 1988. There are many excellent books on Jewish history; I have found this one especially helpful.
- Stephen M. Wylen, *the Jews in the Time of Jesus*, Paulist Press, 1996. An excellent, readable introduction for those especially interested in these times.



# CNN Series Of Interest



I hope that the CNN series might be interesting for our own discussions in the “Children of Abraham” series starting 8/4/21

# **Children of Abraham: Judaism, Christianity & Islam Session #2: Holy Books**

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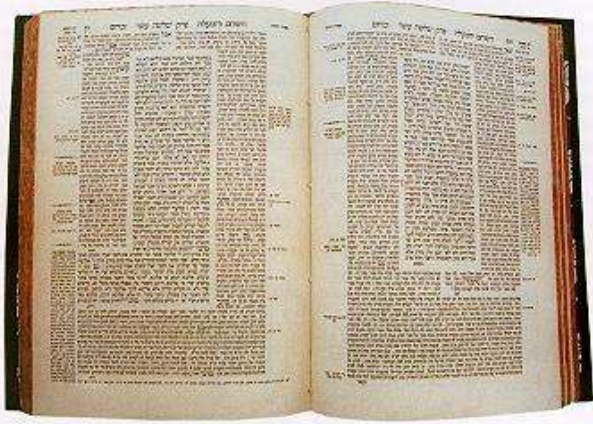
# A Word on My Perspective

- My approach is a Jewish one.
- My approach is a scholarly one and not an Orthodox one.
  - I believe there is a God
  - I believe that God gives us direction in the form of sacred scripture.
  - But I believe that humans are involved in the transmission & receipt of scripture and so I don't believe scripture is inerrant.
  - And I believe we derive amazing insights and benefits from those who hold scripture to be inerrant.
- I am Israel/*Yisrael*/ ישראל - I wrestle with God.

# Introduction

- **What makes something holy?**
- What is holy in Judaism?
  - Initially, only the Sabbath
  - Today: Torah scroll, sacred words, the Temple Mount, and the graves of the *tzadikim*.
- What is holy in Christianity?
  - Churches, places associated with the life of Jesus and church figures, relics, holy (blessed) water, wine and wafer of communion, icons and symbols.
- What is holy in Islam?
  - Mecca, the Kaaba, Medina, Jerusalem (Dome of the Rock)

# Holiness in Judaism

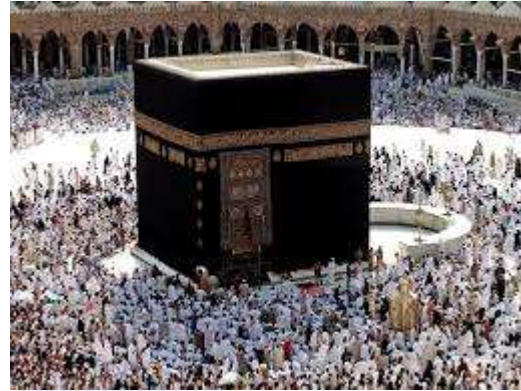


# Holiness in Christianity

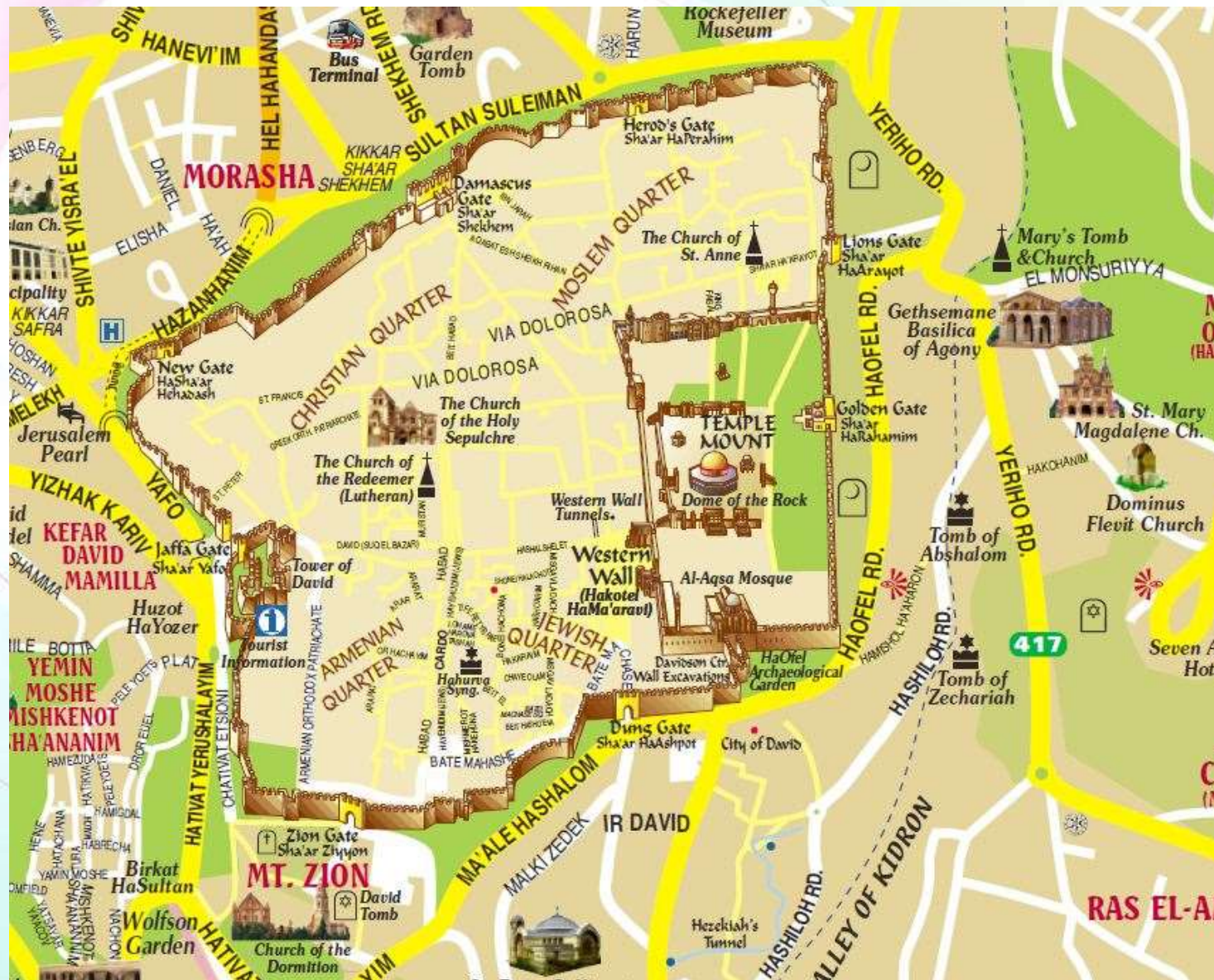




# Holiness in Islam



# The Holiest Neighborhood



# The Holiest Neighborhood



Church of the Holy Sepulchre

Dome of the Rock

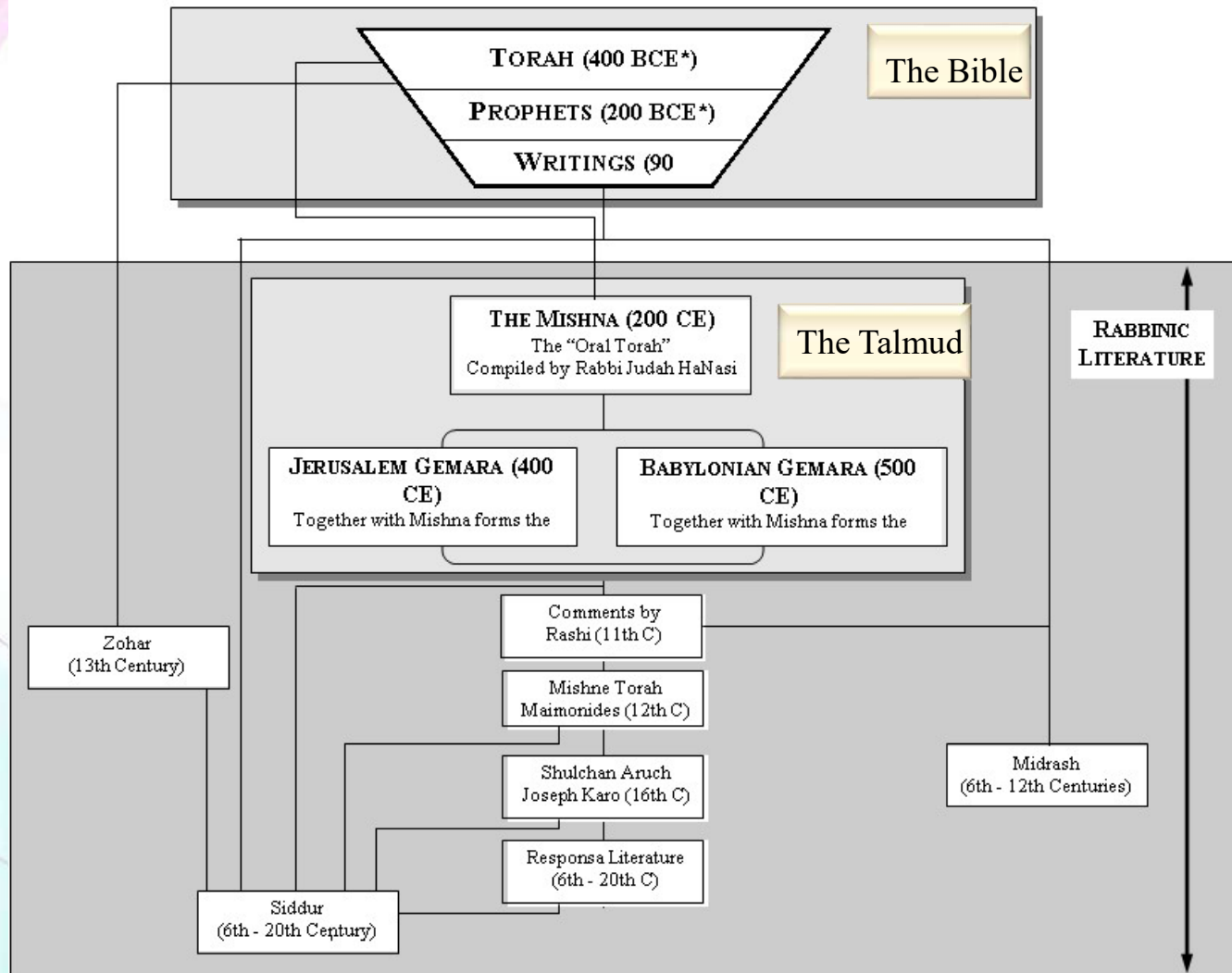
Western Wall

# Sacred Literature in Judaism: Bible

- Three sections: *Tanach* - תנ"ך
- : Acronym for sections: *Torah/Neviim/Ketuvim*
  - *Torah*: the first five books of the Bible
    - Scroll, Torah Portion, Haftarah
    - Stories: Adam & Eve, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Splitting the sea, 10 Commandments
  - *Neviim* -- Prophets:
    - In the prophets: Samson, King David, King Solomon, Elijah, Jonah
    - Mostly historical material
  - *Ketuvim* – Writings:
    - In the writings: Psalms (the Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want....), Job, Ruth, Esther, Daniel in the Lion's Den

# Jewish Sacred Lit. Beyond the Bible

## JEWISH SACRED LITERATURE



\* Aproximate Dates of Canonization

Michael Lotker 4/98

# Talmud & Rabbinic Literature

- Talmud = *Mishna* plus *Gemarra*
  - In the Talmud:
    - Stories: Abraham smashing the idols, Moses and the hot coals
    - Prayers: *Baruch Ata Adonai Eloheinu Melech HaOlam*
      - What should be in the prayerbook
    - Laws and Rules of Judaism
      - Shabbat
      - Milk and meat
      - *Chanukah*
      - What do we do at the Passover *Seder*
    - Why rabbinic Judaism?
      - Destruction of the Temple
      - Growing with the times
      - Need a portable religion
  - Prayerbook: *Siddur* – structure of prayers

# Christian Sacred Literature

- Structure of Christian Bible: OT and NT - Better names might be “First & Second Testaments”
- Is the Christian OT the same as the Hebrew Bible?
  - Protestant: Same but in different order
  - Some additional books in Catholic & Orthodox canons:
- Why do the Christians need a NT?
  - Tells the Jesus story – they tell it 4 times
    - Jesus is the Latin form of the name Joshua (“*Yehoshuah*”) which means “God will save.”
  - Explains the meaning of the life and death of Jesus
  - Give guidance to the new movements (letters of Paul)

# Christian Sacred Literature

- Why is there Antisemitism in the NT?
  - Reflects intra-Jewish conflict in early church
  - Reflects need to promote Christianity to Romans by deflecting blame for Jesus' execution.
- Why Jews don't accept Jesus as Messiah/God
  - Christianity changes the meaning of the concept of Messiah to include Trinity, redemption of sin, etc.
  - For Jews, Messiah is fully human and only human
  - Coming of Jewish Messiah linked to world peace, end of disease, ingathering of Jews to *Eretz Yisrael*, etc.
  - Christians see these prophecies as being fulfilled with the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Jesus



# Muslim Sacred Literature

- The *Qur'an*
  - Arabic – taught that it is impossible to translate – all translations are considered commentaries.
  - Muslim belief about how the *Qur'an* came to be
    - Gabriel appears to the illiterate Muhammad at age 40
      - Dictates Qur'an over a period of years
    - Canonized after the death of Muhammad
  - Not a narrative text
    - The only sustained narrative is the story of Joseph
  - Familiar figures in Muslim, Jewish and Christian traditions are in the Qur'an
    - Adam, his wife, Satan
    - Abraham, Isaac, Ishmael, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, total of 25 Prophets
    - Jesus and Mary

# Muslim Sacred Literature

- Familiar stories (and how they differ in the *Qur'an*)
  - Adam and Eve and Satan
  - The Binding of Abraham's son
  - Abraham and the idols
  - Joseph
  - Moses
- Why is there Antisemitism in the Qur'an?
  - Reaction to Jews' rejection of the new religion of Muhammad
- Importance of Qur'an
  - Prayers all taken from Qur'an
  - Goal of memorizing part or all.
- *Hadith* literature – reports about the life and thoughts of Mohammad.

# Hebrew Bible/OT Compared

## Canons of the Old Testament

Hebrew Old Testament Jewish Bible (TaNaK)	Protestant Old Testament	Roman Catholic Old Testament	Greek Orthodox Old Testament
Torah	Pentateuch	Pentateuch	Pentateuch
Genesis	Genesis	Genesis	Genesis
Exodus	Exodus	Exodus	Exodus
Leviticus	Leviticus	Leviticus	Leviticus
Numbers	Numbers	Numbers	Numbers
Deuteronomy	Deuteronomy	Deuteronomy	Deuteronomy
Nebiim (Former Prophets)	Historical Books	Historical Books	Historical Books
Joshua	Joshua	Joshua	Joshua
Judges	Judges	Judges	Judges
	Ruth		
Samuel	1 Samuel	1 Samuel	1 Samuel (1 Kingdoms)
	2 Samuel	2 Samuel	2 Samuel (2 Kingdoms)
Kings	1 Kings	1 Kings	1 Kings (3 Kingdoms)
	2 Kings	2 Kings	2 Kings (4 Kingdoms)
	1 Chronicles	1 Chronicles	1 Chronicles
	2 Chronicles	2 Chronicles	2 Chronicles
			1 Esdras
	Ezra	1 Esdras	Ezra (2 Esdras)
	Nehemiah	2 Esdras (Nehemias)	Nehemiah
		Tobit	Tobit
		Judith	Judith
	Esther	Esther	Esther
		1 Maccabees	1 Maccabees
		2 Maccabees	2 Maccabees
			3 Maccabees
			4 Maccabees

# Hebrew Bible/OT Compared

## Canons of the Old Testament

Hebrew Old Testament Jewish Bible (TaNaK)	Protestant Old Testament	Roman Catholic Old Testament	Greek Orthodox Old Testament
	Wisdom	Wisdom	Wisdom
	Job	Job	Job
	Psalms	Psalms	Psalms
			Odes
	Proverbs	Proverbs	Proverbs
	Ecclesiastes	Ecclesiastes	Ecclesiastes
	Song of Solomon	Canticles	Song of Solomon
	Wisdom	Wisdom	Wisdom of Solomon
	Ecclesiasticus	Sirach	Sirach
<b>Nebiim (Latter Prophets)</b>	<b>Major Prophets</b>	<b>Major Prophets</b>	<b>Major Prophets</b>
Isaiah	Isaiah	Isaiah	Isaiah
Jeremiah	Jeremiah	Jeremiah	Jeremiah
	Lamentations	Lamentations	Lamentations
		Baruch	Baruch/Letter of Jeremiah
Ezekiel	Ezekiel	Ezekiel	Ezekiel
	Daniel	Daniel	Daniel
<b>Book of the Twelve</b>	<b>Minor Prophets</b>	<b>Minor Prophets</b>	<b>Minor Prophets</b>
Hosea	Hosea	Hosea	Hosea
Joel	Joel	Joel	Joel
Amos	Amos	Amos	Amos
Obadiah	Obadiah	Obadiah	Obadiah
Jonah	Jonah	Jonah	Jonah
Micah	Micah	Micah	Micah
Nahum	Nahum	Nahum	Nahum
Habakkuk	Habakkuk	Habakkuk	Habakkuk
Zephaniah	Zephaniah	Zephaniah	Zephaniah
Haggai	Haggai	Haggai	Haggai
Zechariah	Zechariah	Zechariah	Zechariah
Malachi	Malachi	Malachi	Malachi

# Hebrew Bible/OT Compared

## Canons of the Old Testament

Hebrew Old Testament Jewish Bible (TaNaK)	Protestant Old Testament	Roman Catholic Old Testament	Greek Orthodox Old Testament
Kethubim (Writings)			
Psalms			
Job			
Proverbs			
Ruth			
Song of Songs			
Ecclesiastes			
Lamentations			
Esther			
Daniel			
Ezra/Nehemiah			
Chronicles			



# Surprising Passages from the Hebrew Bible

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning of \_\_\_\_\_, God created... **(note: grammatical error, impossible to literally translate).**

**(Did God make man and woman simultaneously or not?)** 1:27 And God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them... 2:7 Then the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul... 2:22 And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from the man, made He a woman, and brought her unto the man

**(Just before the flood story)** 6:1 And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, 6:2 that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives, whomsoever they chose. 6:3 And the Lord said: 'My spirit shall not abide in man for ever, for that he also is flesh; therefore shall his days be a hundred and twenty years.' 6:4 The Nephilim were in the earth in those days, and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bore children to them; the same were the mighty men that were of old, the men of renown.

**(Can God see the future?)** 6:5 And the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6:6 And it repented the Lord that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart.

# Surprising Passages from the Hebrew Bible

**Does God play fair with Pharaoh?)** Exodus 7:2 Thou shalt speak all that I command thee; and Aaron thy brother shall speak unto Pharaoh, that he let the children of Israel go out of his land. 7:3 And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply My signs and My wonders in the land of Egypt. 7:4 But Pharaoh will not hearken unto you, and I will lay My hand upon Egypt, and bring forth My hosts, My people the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt, by great judgments. 7:5 And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I stretch forth My hand upon Egypt, and bring out the children of Israel from among them.

**(More Translation Fun)** Exodus 20:13 (Jewish Pub. Society Translation) Thou shalt not murder. (King James Translation) Thou shalt not kill. (Both are correct! The English word kill meant, in King James time, murder. Simple killing was called “slaying” then.)

**(Abortion not murder – but what’s about “eye for an eye?”)** Exodus 21:22 And if men strive together, and hurt a woman with child, so that her fruit depart, and yet no harm follow, he shall be surely fined, according as the woman's husband shall lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges determine. 21:23 But if any harm follow, then thou shalt give life for life, 21:24 eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, 21:25 burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.

Lev. 24:19 And if a man maim his neighbour; as he hath done, so shall it be done to him: 24:20 breach for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth; as he hath maimed a man, so shall it be rendered unto him.

Deut. 19:21 And thine eye shall not pity: life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.

# Surprising Passages from the Hebrew Bible

**(Do Jews sacrifice children?)** Judges 11:29 Then the spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah, and he passed over Gilead and Manasseh, and passed over Mizpeh of Gilead, and from Mizpeh of Gilead he passed over unto the children of Ammon. 11:30 And Jephthah vowed a vow unto the Lord, and said: 'If Thou wilt indeed deliver the children of Ammon into my hand, 11:31 then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, it shall be the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a burnt-offering.' 11:32 So Jephthah passed over unto the children of Ammon to fight against them; and the Lord delivered them into his hand. 11:33 And he smote them from Aroer until thou come to Minnith, even twenty cities, and unto Abel-cheramim, with a very great slaughter. So the children of Ammon were subdued before the children of Israel. 11:34 And Jephthah came to Mizpah unto his house, and, behold, his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances; and she was his only child; beside her he had neither son nor daughter. 11:35 And it came to pass, when he saw her, that he rent his clothes, and said: 'Alas, my daughter! thou hast brought me very low, and thou art become my troubler; for I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and I cannot go back.' 11:36 And she said unto him: 'My father, thou hast opened thy mouth unto the Lord; do unto me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth; forasmuch as the Lord hath taken vengeance for thee of thine enemies, even of the children of Ammon.' 11:37 And she said unto her father: 'Let this thing be done for me: let me alone two months, that I may depart and go down upon the mountains, and bewail my virginity, I and my companions.' 11:38 And he said: 'Go.' And he sent her away for two months; and she departed, she and her companions, and bewailed her virginity upon the mountains. 11:39 And it came to pass at the end of two months, that she returned unto her father, who did with her according to his vow which he had vowed; and she had not known man. And it was a custom in Israel, 11:40 that the daughters of Israel went yearly to lament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite four days in a year.



# Surprising Passages from the Hebrew Bible

**(Still More Translation Fun)** Isaiah 7:14 (JPS correct version)

“Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign: behold, the young woman shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”

(King James, incorrect, mistranslation-original error in the Greek) 7:14 “Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”

**(How many Gods?)** Psalm 82:1 “God stands in the divine assembly; among the divine beings He pronounces judgement.”

# Key New Testament Passages

John 1:1 (**Jesus as fulfillment of Torah**) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... 1:14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

John: 8:44 (**Jesus Speaking to the Jews**) Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

Matthew 5:17 (**Jesus speaking**) Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.

Matthew 7:12 (**Golden Rule**) Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

Matthew 27:24 When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it. 27:25 Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children.

# Key New Testament Passages

1 Thessalonians 2:14 For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews: 2:15 Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men:

John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

John 3:16 **(so you will know what all the signs at football games, on the bottom of In & Out Burger Cups, etc. are about!)** For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

1 Corinthians 7:1 Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman. 7:2 Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband... 7:8 I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I. 7:9 But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn. 7:10 And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: 7:11 But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away (divorce) his wife.

# Key New Testament Passages

I Corinthians 15:3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; ...15:16 (**Importance of Jesus' resurrection**) For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: 15:17 And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins

Galatians 2:21 I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

Galatians 3:26 (**Christianity is the path to God for non-Jews**) For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. 3:27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. 3:29 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise... 5:6 For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.

Hebrews 8:13 In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.

Revelations 13:18 Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred sixty and six.

[Gematria of נרון קסר "Neron Kesar = Nero Caesar" is 50+200+6+50+100+60+200= 666]

# Key Passages from the Qur'an

2:62 (**People of the Book Protected**) Lo! Those who believe (in that which is revealed unto thee, Muhammad), and those who are Jews, and Christians, and Sabaeans - whoever believeth in Allah and the Last Day and doeth right - surely their reward is with their Lord, and there shall no fear come upon them neither shall they grieve.

2:256 There is no compulsion in religion.

3: 67 (**Abraham a Muslim; Jews/Christians criticized**) Abraham was not a Jew, nor yet a Christian; but he was an upright man who had surrendered (to Allah), and he was not of the idolaters... 70 O People of the Scripture! Why disbelieve ye in the revelations of Allah, when ye (yourselves) bear witness (to their truth) ?  
71 O People of the Scripture! Why confound ye truth with falsehood and knowingly conceal the truth ?

# Key Passages from the Qur'an

4:46 (**Jews criticized**) Some of those who are Jews change words from their context and say: "We hear and disobey; hear thou as one who heareth not" and "Listen to us!" distorting with their tongues and slandering religion. If they had said: "We hear and we obey: hear thou, and look at us" it had been better for them, and more upright. But Allah hath cursed them for their disbelief, so they believe not, save a few

Here's the Hebrew of Ex. 24:7

וַיִּקְחֵם סֵפֶר הַבְּרִית וַיִּקְרָא בְּאָזְנֵי הָעָם  
וַיֹּאמְרוּ כָּל אֲשֶׁר-דִּבֶּר יְהוָה נַעֲשֶׂה וְנִשְׁמָע:

“And he took the Book of the Covenant , and read it in the hearing of the people; and they said, “All that the Lord has said will be do and obey (*na-a-she v neesh-ma* - lit. we will do and hear)”

My understanding is that the Arabic *a-sah-nah* which sounds like the Hebrew *neesh-ma*, means “disobey” rather than obey.

(4:46:10)  
wa' aṣaynā  
and we disobey[ed]”

وَعَصَيْنَا  
PRON V CONJ

CONJ – prefixed conjunction *wa* (and)  
V – 1st person plural perfect verb  
PRON – subject pronoun

الواو عاطفة  
فعل ماضٍ و«نا» ضمير متصل في محل رفع فاعل

# Key Passages from the Qur'an

4:157 (**Jesus not crucified**) And because of their saying: We slew the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, Allah's messenger - they slew him not nor crucified him, but it appeared so unto them; and lo! those who disagree concerning it are in doubt thereof; they have no knowledge thereof save pursuit of a conjecture; they slew him not for certain.

4:171 (**Jesus as Messiah just a messenger, not God**) O People of the Scripture! Do not exaggerate in your religion nor utter aught concerning Allah save the truth. The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, was only a messenger of Allah, and His word which He conveyed unto Mary, and a spirit from Him. So believe in Allah and His messengers and say not "Three" - Cease! (it is) better for you! - Allah is only One God. Far is it removed from His Transcendent Majesty that He should have a son.

# Key Passages from the Qur'an

5:12 (**Jews and Christians misconstrued their covenants**) Allah made a covenant of old with the Children of Israel and We raised among them twelve chieftains, and Allah said: Lo! I am with you. If ye establish worship and pay the poor-due, and believe in My messengers and support them, and lend unto Allah a kindly loan, surely I shall remit your sins, and surely I shall bring you into Gardens underneath which rivers flow. Whoso among you disbelieveth after this will go astray from a plain road. 13 And because of their breaking their covenant, We have cursed them and made hard their hearts. They change words from their context and forget a part of that whereof they were admonished. Thou wilt not cease to discover treachery from all save a few of them. But bear with them and pardon them. Lo! Allah loveth the kindly. 14 And with those who say: "Lo! we are Christians," We made a covenant, but they forgot a part of that whereof they were admonished. Therefor We have stirred up enmity and hatred among them till the Day of Resurrection, when Allah will inform them of their handiwork.

5:77 (**Jews/Christians criticized**) Say: O People of the Scripture! Stress not in your religion other than the truth, and follow not the vain desires of folk who erred of old and led many astray, and erred from a plain road. 78 Those of the Children of Israel who went astray were cursed by the tongue of David, and of Jesus, son of Mary. That was because they rebelled and used to transgress. 79 They restrained not one another from the wickedness they did. Verily evil was that they used to do!



# Key Passages from the Qur'an

9:5 (**Convert idolaters at sword point**) Then, when the sacred months have passed, slay the idolaters wherever ye find them, and take them (captive), and besiege them, and prepare for them each ambush. But if they repent and establish worship and pay the poor-due, then leave their way free. Lo! Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.

17:33 (**Do not kill innocents**) And slay not the life which Allah hath forbidden save with right. Whoso is slain wrongfully, We have given power unto his heir, but let him not commit excess in slaying. Lo! he will be helped.

28:38 (**Pharaoh orders Haman to build the Tower of Babel**) And Pharaoh said: O chiefs! I know not that ye have a god other than me, so kindle for me (a fire), O Haman, to bake the mud; and set up for me a lofty tower in order that I may survey the God of Moses; and lo! I deem him of the liars.

37:101 (**The Akeda-binding of Isaac**) So We gave him tidings of a gentle son. 102 And when (his son) was old enough to walk with him, (Abraham) said: O my dear son, I have seen in a dream that I must sacrifice thee. So look, what thinkest thou ? He said: O my father! Do that which thou art commanded. Allah willing, thou shalt find me of the steadfast. 103 Then, when they had both surrendered (to Allah), and he had flung him down upon his face, 104 We called unto him: O Abraham! 105 Thou hast already fulfilled the vision. Lo! thus do We reward the good. 106 Lo! that verily was a clear test

# For Next Class

- Basic Beliefs of the Three Religions
- *Dabru Emet*: A Jewish Statement on Christians and Christianity
- A Sacred Obligation: Rethinking Christian Faith in Relation to Judaism and the Jewish People (Statement by Christian Scholars)
- The Letter to Baghdadi – A Statement by Muslim Scholars on ISIS

# **Children of Abraham: Judaism, Christianity & Islam Session #3: Basic Beliefs**

**Rabbi Michael Lotker - [www.lotker.com](http://www.lotker.com)**



# Supporting materials available at lotker.com

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Welcome to Rabbi Michael Lotker's website. Here, you will find information about Rabbi Lotker, his services and his book, A Christian's Guide to Judaism.

On this site you will learn a bit about Rabbi Lotker, be able to contact him, learn about the services he offers, learn about his classes and talks, access class materials, hear some of his sermons, and learn about his book, A Christian's Guide to Judaism



## ***"Children of Abraham: Comparing Judaism, Christianity and Islam (Aug. 4, 11, 18 & 25)***

About half the people of the world worship the God of Abraham as members of faith traditions that trace themselves back 4000 years to this inspired individual. In four classes, Rabbi Lotker will introduce these three faiths with special emphasis on where they are similar and where they differ. We will read texts from the Hebrew Bible, the Christian scripture and the Koran relating to the Garden of Eden, Abraham, Moses, and others to help understand the fascinating history and theology that shape our worlds to this day. Differences in beliefs, historical origins and the reasons behind historical and current conflicts will be explored. We will also take a detailed look at Holy Neighborhood of Jerusalem and the sacred sites to be found there.

- > Copies of Slides**
- > Suggested Reading**
- > Video of Session #1**
- Video of Session #2**

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# Introduction

- **Which is the best religion?**
  - It depends on what's bothering you and what your religious goal is.
- **In any religion, there are two leaps of faith:**
  - **#1: Belief in God**
  - **#2: Belief in Revelation – Does God Care?**

# Judaism

- For Judaism, God's primary concern is what we do -- not what we believe
- Judaism is both a religion and a people/nation
- *Mitzvot*/Commandments
  - In the Torah and Bible
  - Expanded in the Talmud
    - Example: Work on Shabbat
    - Example: *Kashrut* – dietary laws
- The different Jewish Movements: Orthodox, Conservative, Reform & Reconstructionist
- These movements developed only recently (early 1800s) and only in the Ashkenazi world.

# Judaism and Jesus



**Why Don't Jews Accept Jesus as the Messiah?**



# The Word “Messiah”

English “Messiah” is a translation of the Hebrew “*Mashiach*” [משיח]

- *Mashiach* means “anointed.”
  - Kings of Israel were anointed by pouring holy oil on their heads.
  - 39 references to “messiah” in Heb. Bible
    - Not one refers to future redeemer
- When the Hebrew Bible was translated into Greek (about 200 BCE), the Hebrew *Mashiach* became the Greek “*Christos*” [Χριστός].
- The Greek *Christos* gives rise to the English “Christ.”

# Jewish Understanding of Messiah

- Fully Human and Only Human
- A Political and/or Military Ruler like King David
- Not God in any sense
- Not the son of God in any sense beyond the idea that we are all children of God
- Not connected with redemption of sin
  - Only we can atone for our sins
  - For sins against God, God forgives
  - For sins against others, God cannot forgive unless the person offended forgives
- Messiah not at the heart of Judaism

# Jewish Prophecies Concerning Messiah

- A time of peace on earth
  - Peace among people
  - Peace among animals
- All the world will come to know the one God
- Details unresolved
  - Mystics see the time as supernatural
  - Rationalists believe that we will do the work to make the world perfect
  - Many believe in a Messianic Age rather than an individual Messiah.

# My “Has the Messiah Come?” Test

- Read the LA Times cover to cover every day for a month.
- If there's no story of war, or hatred or hunger or disease, the Messianic Age may be here!



# Why Don't Jews Accept Jesus As Messiah?

- No world peace, no Messiah
- The Second Coming not a Jewish idea
- But the larger issue is whether Jesus is God
  - The idea of God taking human form, suffering with us and dying for our sins is
    - Beautiful and inspiring
    - But not Jewish!
- This is why I can have great respect for Christianity but less sympathy for “Jews for Jesus” and “Messianic Jews”

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  - This is why I can have great respect for Christianity but less sympathy for “Jews for Jesus” and “Messianic Jews”
  - **This issue is not “Who was Jesus” but “ Who is God.”**

# Judaism (continued)

- Why didn't the Jews accept Jesus as a prophet?
  - Didn't speak in God's name
  - Competition between Judaism and Christianity
- The role of Jews in the world
  - To repair the world (*Tikkun Olam*)
  - To teach the world about God
  - Not to convert others
    - Judaism is the one true religion -- for Jews
- Jewish Services: *Minyan, Shema, Amidah & Torah Service*

# Christianity

- This is a “true” or “pure” religion in that there is:
  - No ethnic requirement
  - Based only on beliefs – if you accept Jesus as Lord and Savior and God as a Trinity, you are Christian
- Problem of Original Sin and the nature of people as sinful
  - Solution of the problem is the perfect sacrifice, God becomes a sinless human
  - Jesus dies for all the sins of the world
  - Everyone in the world must accept Jesus – i.e., everyone should be Christian
  - If you can get the benefits of heaven without Jesus, why did he have to die?



# Christianity

- Christianity is the path to the God of Abraham for non-Jews
  - Many Christian Churches now hold that Jews need not convert
  - Not always viewed this way
- The idea that Jesus is both god and man is settled in 325 in the Nicæan Creed.

# Christianity

- Main Divisions of Christians
  - Catholic Church
  - Orthodox Church – split
    - Many oriented along national lines – Greek Orthodox, Russian Orthodox, etc.
  - Protestant – split by Martin Luther and others
    - Many split along doctrinal lines
      - Lutherans, Episcopalians, Baptists, Presbyterians, etc.
      - There are some 43,000 different Protestant movements
  - Some churches consider themselves Christian but are not considered so by Christians
    - Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses

# Christianity

- Heart of Services is the Eucharist/Communion
- Another key element in all Christian movements is baptism.
- A key point of the Protestant approach is that it is by faith that one is saved from sin.
  - Rom. 10:9 - “if you confess with your lips that “Jesus is Lord” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.”
  - Eph.2:8 “for it is by grace you have been saved through faith, not from yourselves, it is the gift of God, not by works.”

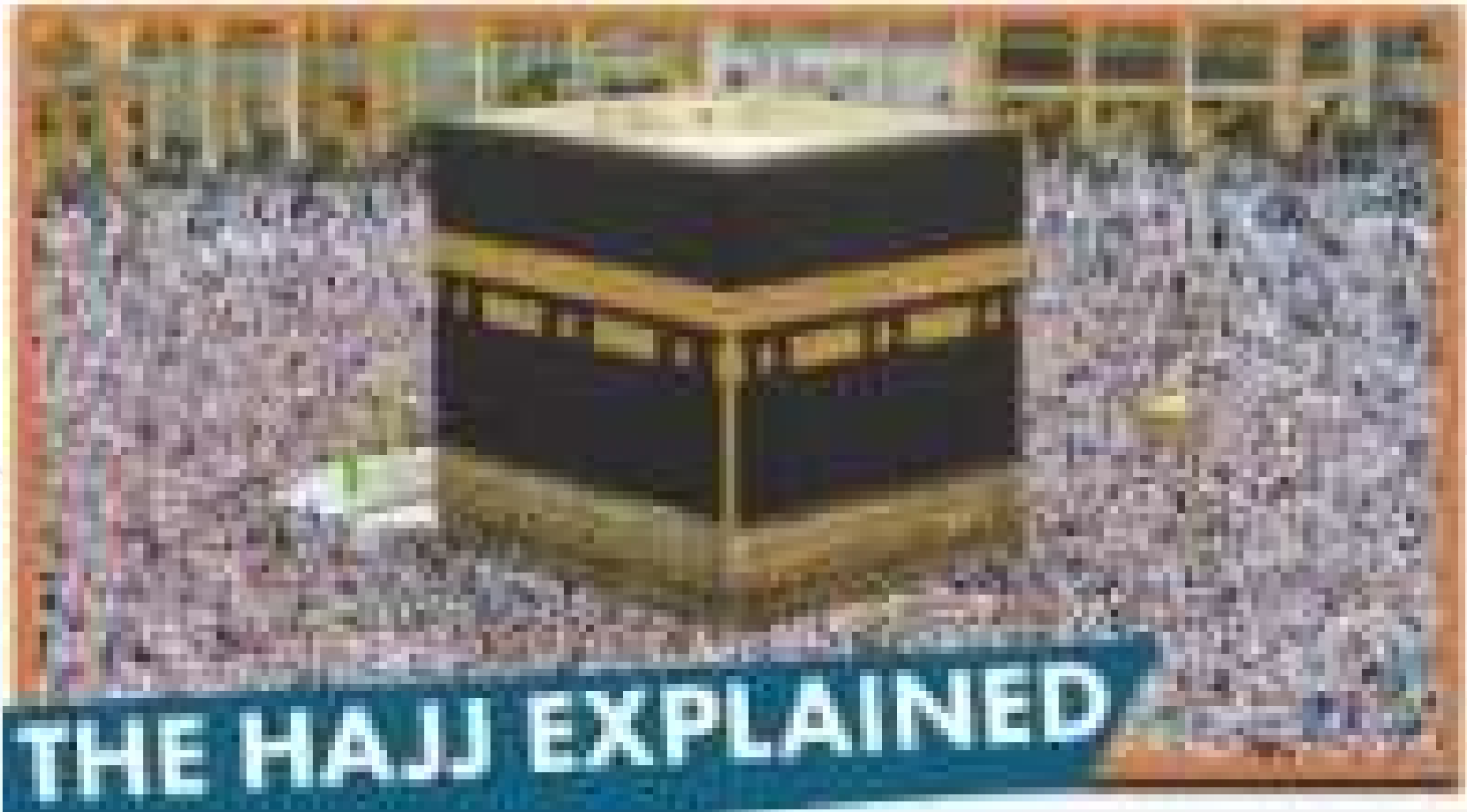
# Islam

- Basic idea of the last and best revelation to Mohammed
- Main concept is submission to the will of *Allah*.
- 5 pillars
  1. Proclamation “There is no God but *Allah* (God) and Mohammed is His Prophet”
  2. Prayer 5 times per day – intense, highly regulated, formal observance including prostration in the direction of Mecca.
  3. *Haj* – pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in your life
  4. *Ramadan* – fasting, worship and charity
  5. Charity
- Sometimes a sixth pillar, *jihad* meaning “striving” or “exertion,” is added
  - Holy war is only one element of jihad
  - Personal striving toward piety is a key meaning.

# Islam

- Islam believes in prophets (including Hebrew prophets, Jesus and others – but Jesus is not crucified or resurrected), angels (including the angel *Iblis* or Satan), the final judgment, heaven and hell, predestination (generally),
- Main service is Friday afternoon
  - Liturgy taken from the *Qur'an*
  - Friday is not considered a Sabbath, however.
- Holy Days
  - *Ramadan* – month of daytime fasts (from food, drink, sex)
    - 9<sup>th</sup> month of the lunar year [4/1 – 4/30/2022]
    - 1<sup>st</sup> revelation of *Qur'an* given during this month
    - Children, ill, pregnant and nursing mothers exempt from fasting
  - *Kurban Bayram* (Feast of Sacrifice)
    - 2 months after end of *Ramadan*
    - Commemorates Abraham's sacrificing a ram instead of his son.
  - Prophet's birthday [10/19/2021]

# Video: The Haj Explained



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZeLjS--McoU>

# Islam – Holy Days

	Hijri date	1442 AH	1443 AH	1444 AH	1445 AH
Islamic New Year	1 Muḥarram	20 Aug. 2020	9 Aug. 2021	30 July 2022	19 July 2023
Ashura	10 Muḥarram	29 Aug. 2020	18 Aug. 2021	8 Aug. 2022	28 July 2023
Arba'een <sup>[a]</sup>	20 or 21 Ṣafar <sup>[b]</sup>	8 Oct. 2020	27 Sep. 2021	17 Sep. 2022	6 Sep. 2023
Eid-e-Shuja' (Eid-e-Zahra) <sup>[c]</sup>	9 Rabī' al-Awwal	26 Oct. 2020	15 Oct. 2021	5 Oct. 2022	24 Sep. 2023
Mawlid an-Nabī	12 Rabī' al-Awwal (Sunni)	29 Oct. 2020	18 Oct. 2021	8 Oct. 2022	27 Sep. 2023
('Birthday of the Prophet' [Muhammad]) <sup>[d]</sup>	17 Rabī' al-Awwal (Shia)	3 Nov. 2020	23 Oct. 2021	13 Oct. 2022	2 Oct. 2023
Birthday of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib <sup>[a]</sup>	13 Rajab	25 Feb. 2021	14 Feb. 2022	4 Feb. 2023	25 Jan. 2024
Laylat al-Mi'raj	27 Rajab <sup>[e]</sup>	11 Mar. 2021	28 Feb. 2022	18 Feb. 2023	8 Feb. 2024
Laylat al-Bara'at	15 Sha'bān	28 Mar. 2021	18 Mar. 2022	7 Mar. 2023	25 Feb. 2024
Birthday of Hujjat-Allah al-Mahdī <sup>[c]</sup>	15 Sha'bān	28 Mar. 2021	18 Mar. 2022	7 Mar. 2023	25 Feb. 2024
First day of Ramaḍān	1 Ramaḍān	13 Apr. 2021	2 Apr. 2022	23 Mar. 2023	11 Mar. 2024
Laylat al-Qadr	19, 21, 23, 25, 27, or 29 Ramaḍān <sup>[f]</sup>	between 1 & 11 May 2021	between 20 & 30 Apr. 2022	between 10 & 20 Apr. 2023	between 29 Mar. & 8 Apr. 2024
Chaand Raat <sup>[g]</sup>	29 or 30 Ramaḍān <sup>[h]</sup>	12 May 2021	1 May 2022	20 Apr. 2023	9 Apr. 2024
<b>Eid al-Fitr</b>	<b>1 Shawwāl</b>	<b>13 May 2021</b>	<b>2 May 2022</b>	<b>21 Apr. 2023</b>	<b>10 Apr. 2024</b>
Hajj	8–13 Dhū al-Ḥijja	18–23 July 2021	7–12 July 2022	26 June – 1 July 2023	14–19 June 2024
Day of Arafah	9 Dhū al-Ḥijja	19 July 2021	8 July 2022	27 June 2023	15 June 2024
<b>Eid al-Adha</b>	<b>10 Dhū al-Ḥijja</b>	<b>20 July 2021</b>	<b>9 July 2022</b>	<b>28 June 2023</b>	<b>16 June 2024</b>
Eid al-Ghadeer <sup>[a]</sup>	18 Dhū al-Ḥijja	28 July 2021	17 July 2022	6 July 2023	24 June 2024
Eid al-Mubalah <sup>[a]</sup>	24 Dhū al-Ḥijja	3 Aug. 2021	23 July 2022	12 July 2023	30 June 2024

Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamic\\_holidays](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamic_holidays)

# Islam

- Dietary Laws- *Halal* – all Kosher foods are acceptable since animals are slaughtered in the name of God
  - Carrion (anything that was not properly slaughtered), pork, blood, forbidden
  - Predators (animals and birds), dogs, donkeys and some other animals forbidden
  - Shellfish permitted, however
- Circumcision
  - Not mentioned in the Qur'an
  - Generally observed at varying ages from 7 days to puberty depending on local custom.
- Jews and Christians are “People of the Book” and not to be forcibly converted.
  - Historically they were *dhimmis*, protected so long as subservient.
- We owe Islam the science of Hebrew grammar and theology.



# For Next Class

- Exploring Jerusalem
  - In Arabic: *Al-Quds* – “the Holy (City)”
- Video Visits to:
  - The Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif
  - The Dome of the Rock and the Al Aqsa Mosque
  - The Church of the Holy Sepulchre
- Discussion of archeology of Jerusalem

# **Children of Abraham: Judaism, Christianity & Islam Session #4: Exploring Jerusalem**

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**Jewish Federation**  
OF VENTURA COUNTY

7620 Foothill Road  
Ventura, CA 93004-1125

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THE POWER OF COMMUNITY

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# Supporting materials available at lotker.com

Rabbi Michael Lotker

Home Rabbi Lotker Life Cycle Events A Christian's Guide Weddings Sermons Classes Contact Us Join Zoom

Welcome to Rabbi Michael Lotker's website. Here, you will find information about Rabbi Lotker, his services and his book, A Christian's Guide to Judaism.

On this site you will learn a bit about Rabbi Lotker, be able to contact him, learn about the services he offers, learn about his classes and talks, access class materials, hear some of his sermons, and learn about his book, A Christian's Guide to Judaism



## ***"Children of Abraham: Comparing Judaism, Christianity and Islam" (Aug. 4, 11, 18 & 25)***

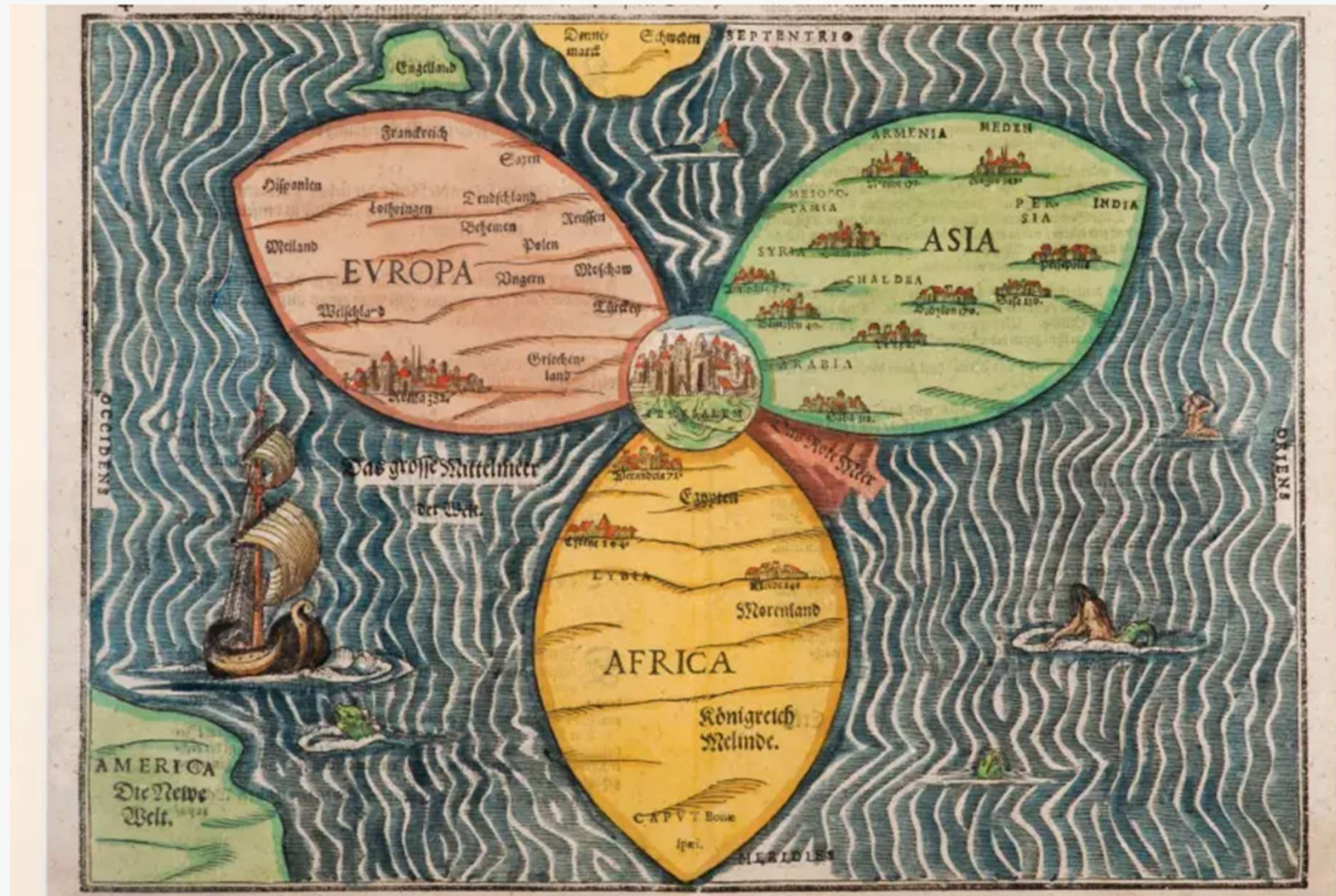
About half the people of the world worship the God of Abraham as members of faith traditions that trace themselves back 4000 years to this inspired individual. In four classes, Rabbi Lotker will introduce these three faiths with special emphasis on where they are similar and where they differ. We will read texts from the Hebrew Bible, the Christian scripture and the Koran relating to the Garden of Eden, Abraham, Moses, and others to help understand the fascinating history and theology that shape our worlds to this day. Differences in beliefs, historical origins and the reasons behind historical and current conflicts will be explored. We will also take a detailed look at Holy Neighborhood of Jerusalem and the sacred sites to be found there.

- > **Copies of Slides**
- > **Suggested Reading**
- > **Video of Session #1**
- > **Video of Session #2**
- > **Video of Session #3**

# Where In the World is Jerusalem

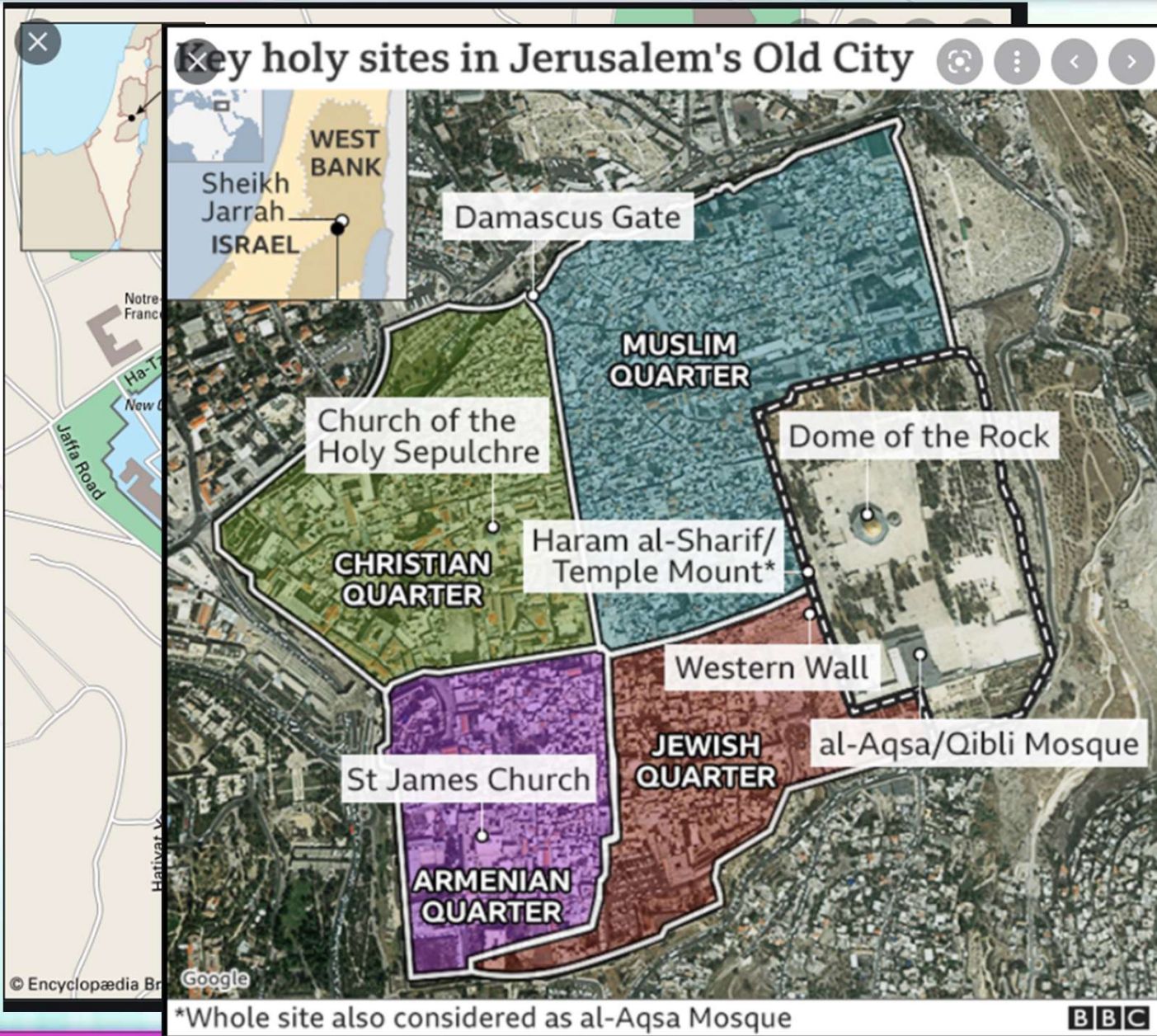


# Jerusalem Was Thought to Be the Center of the World



Clover Leaf Map – Heinrich Bünting – 16/17 Century – Hand-Colored Engraving

# Taking a Closer Look



# Topography of Jerusalem





# Welcome to Jerusalem

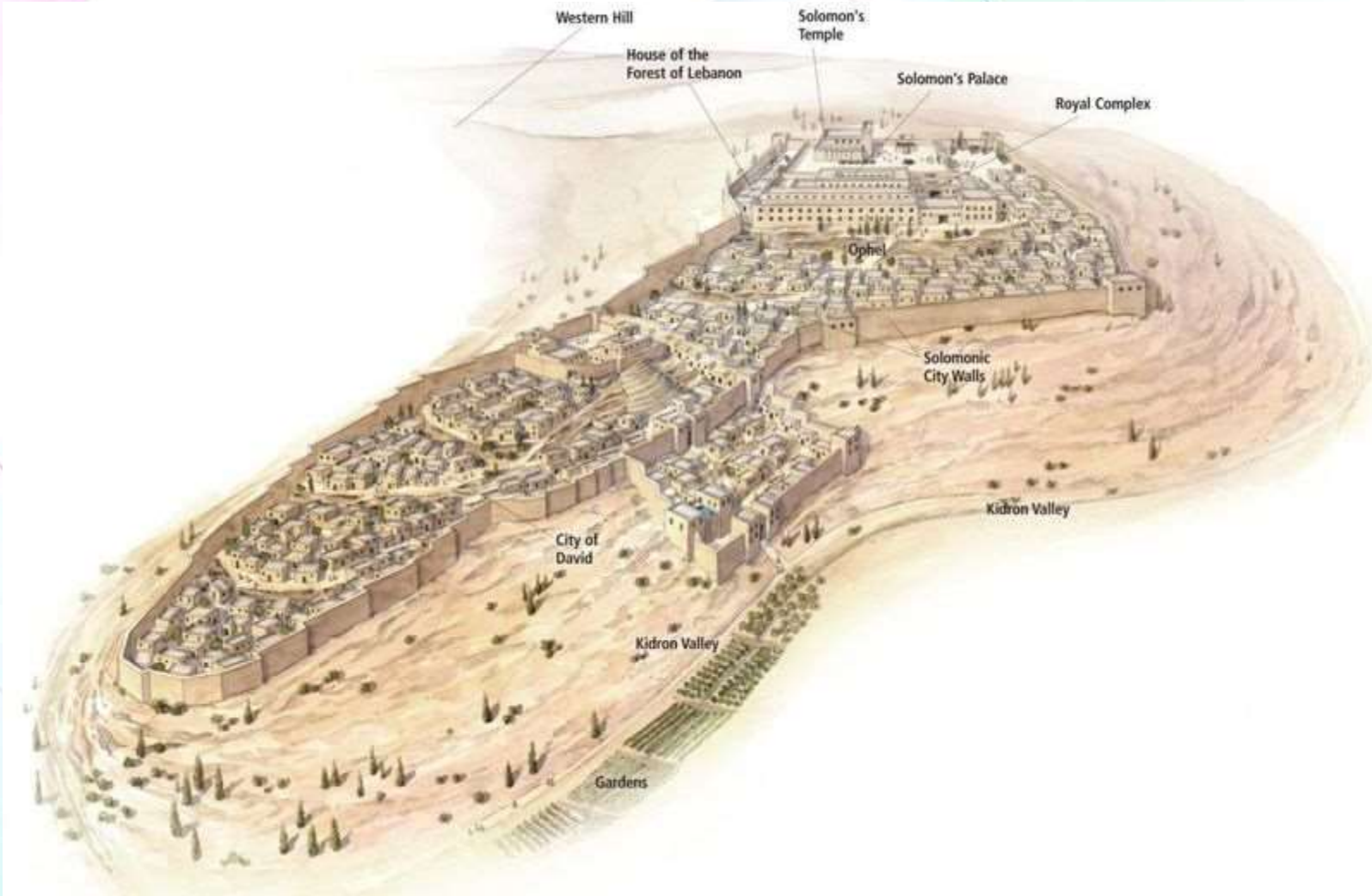


<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u9zujnEd--g>

# Israel & The Temple

- **Concept of the sacred**
  - **1<sup>st</sup> thing holy is time**
    - **“God blessed the 7<sup>th</sup> day and hallowed it” (Gen. 2:3)**
  - **God gives Abraham the land but it is not described as holy**
  - **In rabbinic tradition, the Tabernacle is created only after the incident of the Golden Calf when God realizes that people need physical expressions of the sacred.**
- **Jerusalem and the Temples**
  - **David conquers the city but is not allowed to build the Temple**
  - **Note: he schleps around the Ark into battle**
  - **Solomon builds the 1<sup>st</sup> Temple in about 900BCE.**
    - **Temple destroyed in 586BCE by Babylonians (Iraqis)**
  - **Rebuilt 80 years later**
    - **But is a pale imitation of the original**
- **Herod’s Temple (not considered the 3<sup>rd</sup> Temple)**
  - **Herod rebuilds 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple about 30BCE**
  - **Destroyed by Romans in 70CE**

# Solomon's Jerusalem



# Solomon's Temple



# Solomon's Temple: Location

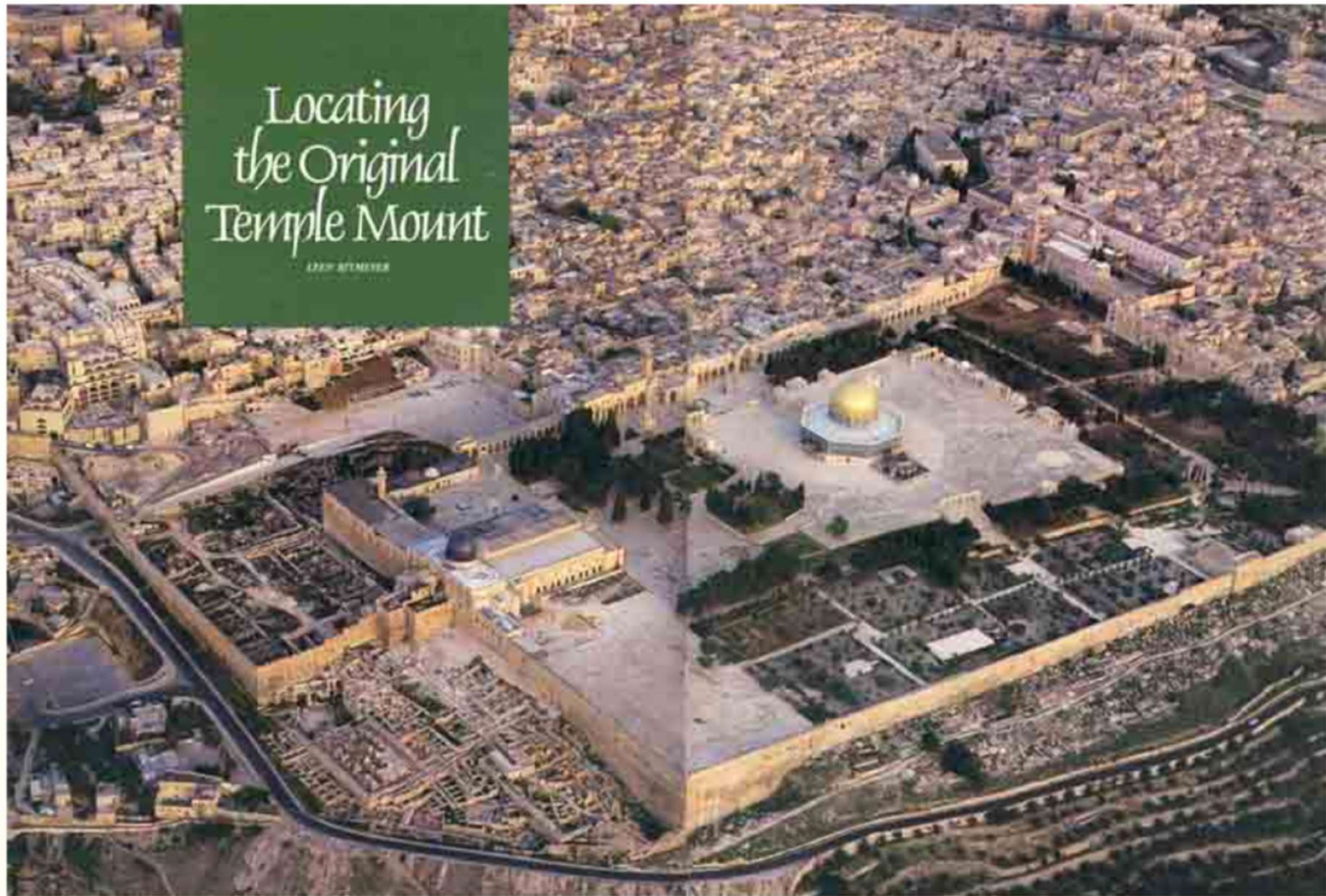


A Christian take: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xt6lQae8ues>

# Solomon's Temple: A Visit



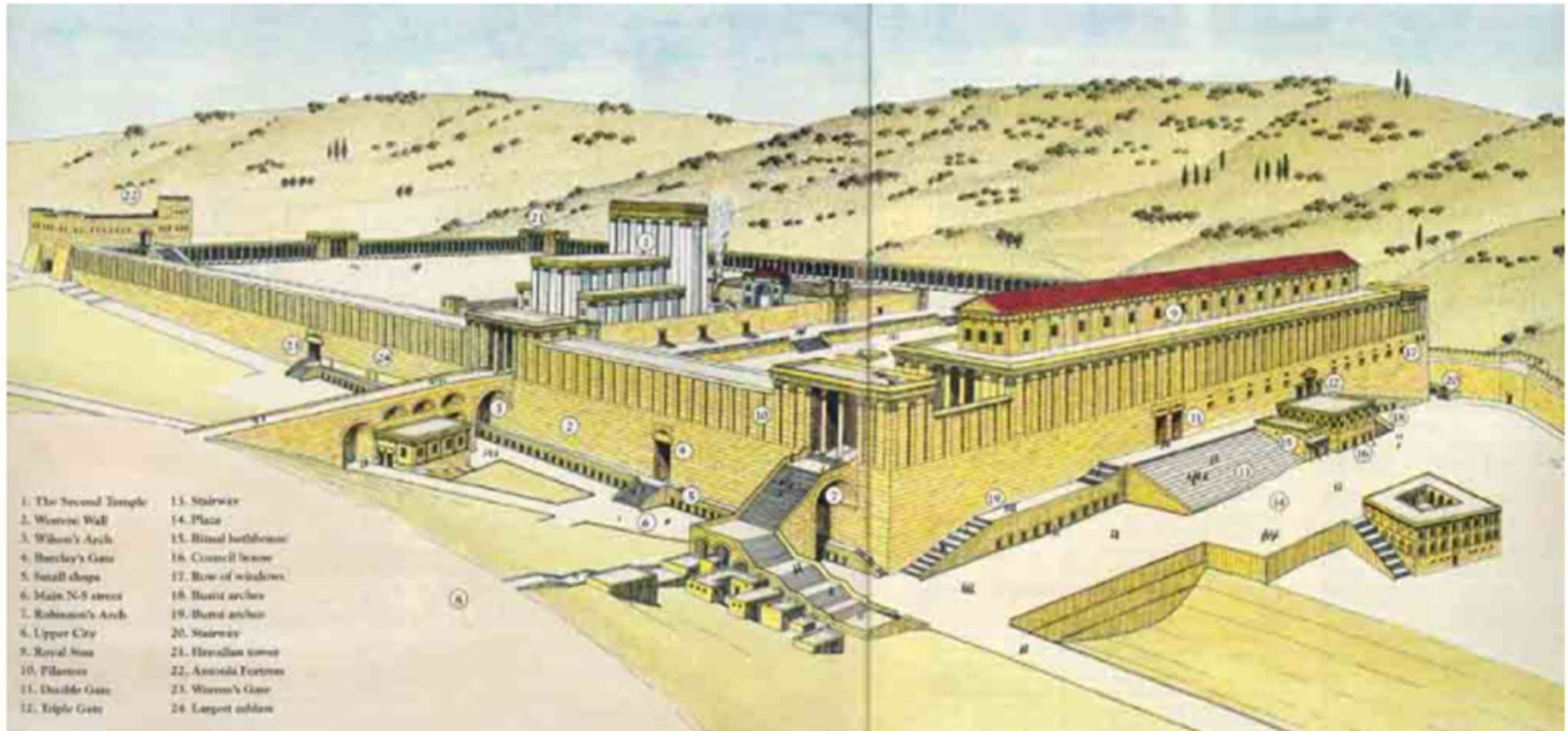
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y2tha7ogpec>



Baron Wolman

# The Temple in Herod's Time

HOME / BAR / NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1989



Leen Ritmeyer



# A Closer Look at Herod's Temple

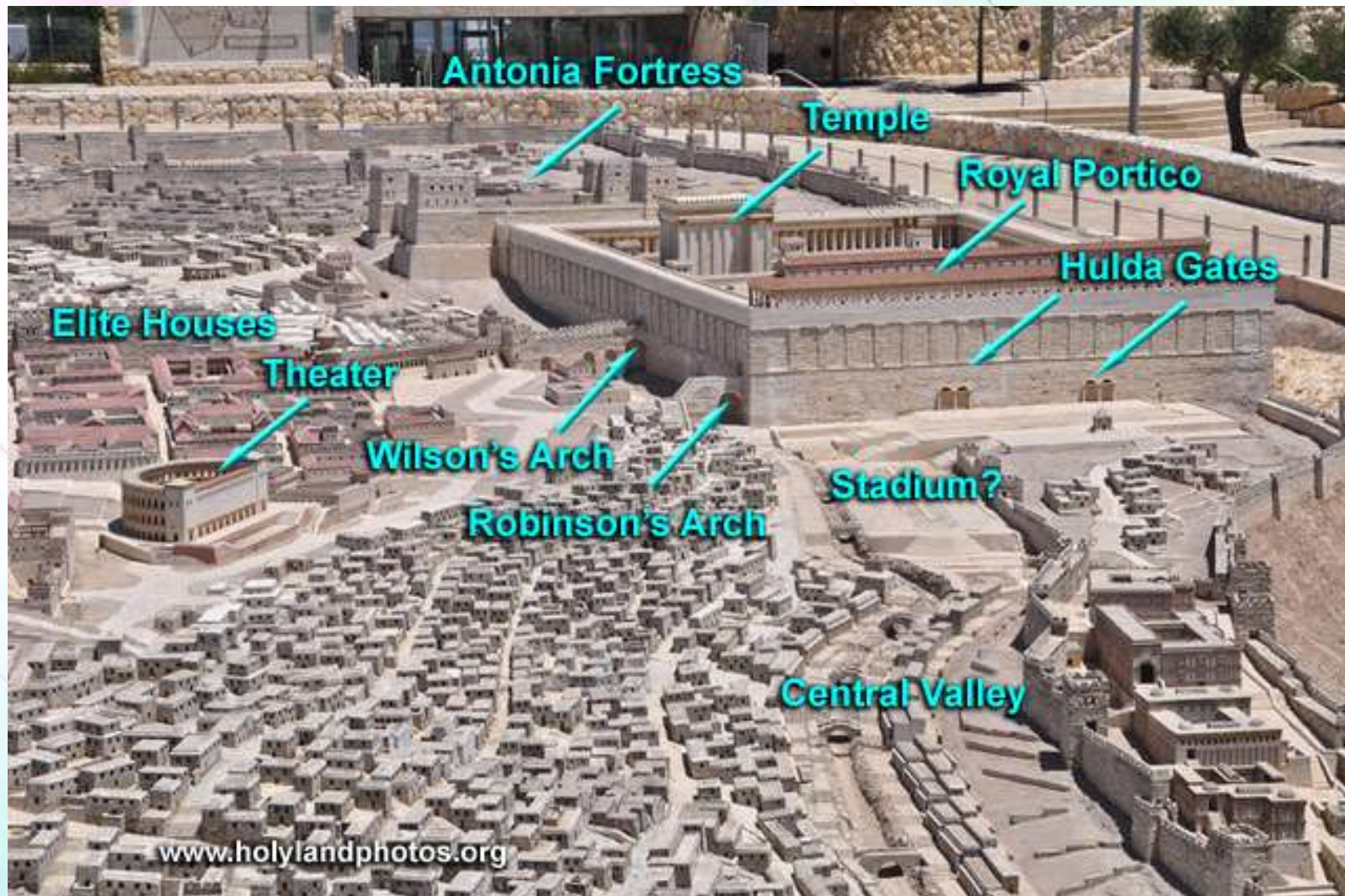


<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ElAMqb5Jc78>

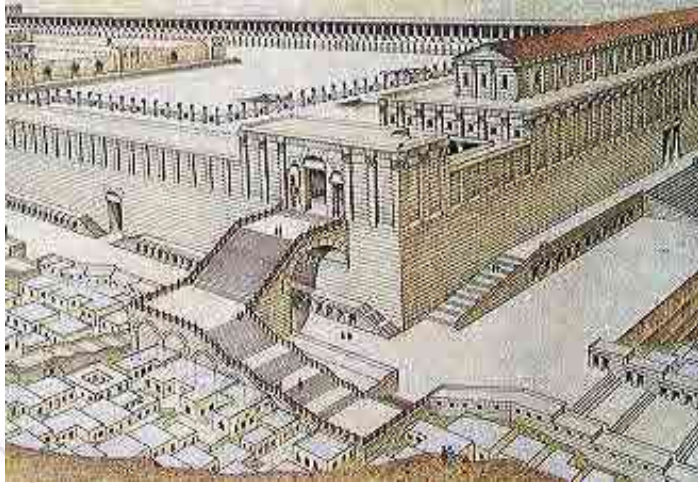
# 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple as Rebuilt by Herod



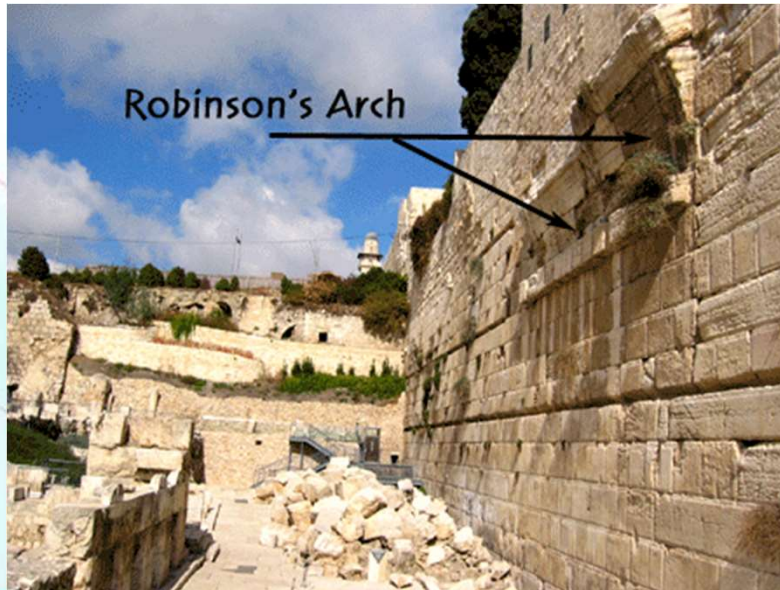
# 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple as Rebuilt by Herod



# Robinson's Arch

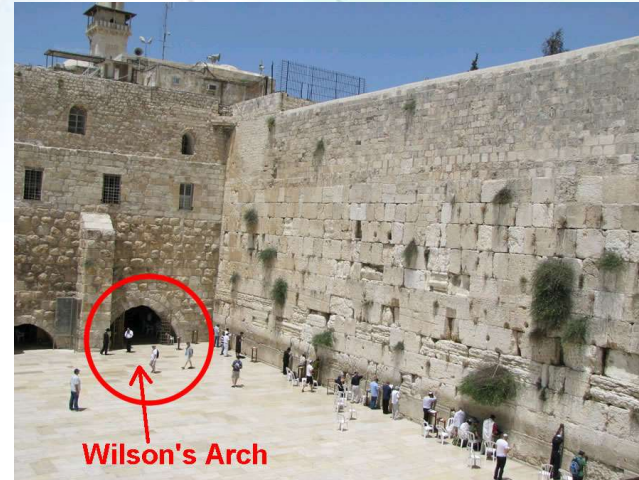


1967

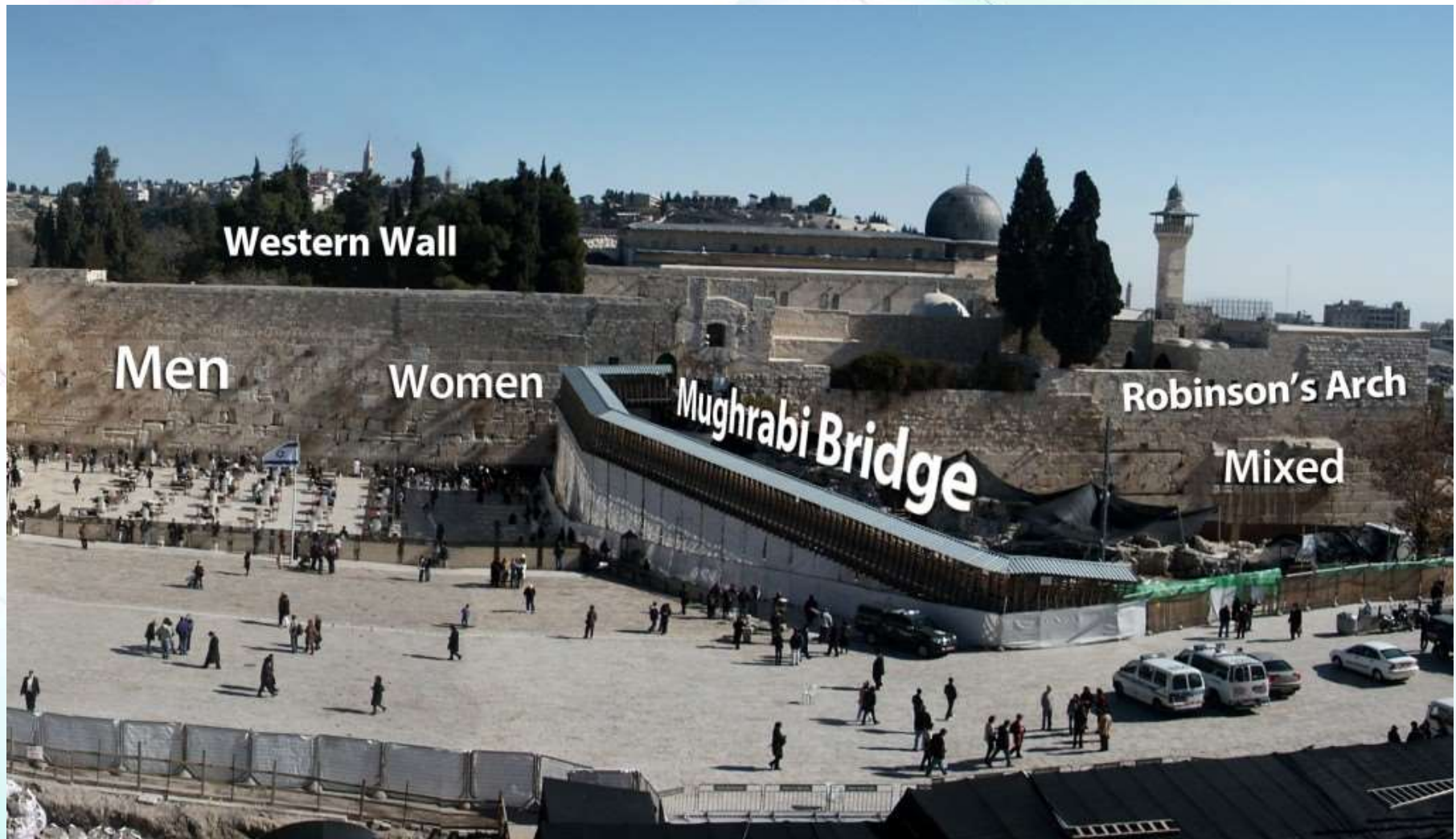


Today

# Wilson's Arch



# Western Wall Today

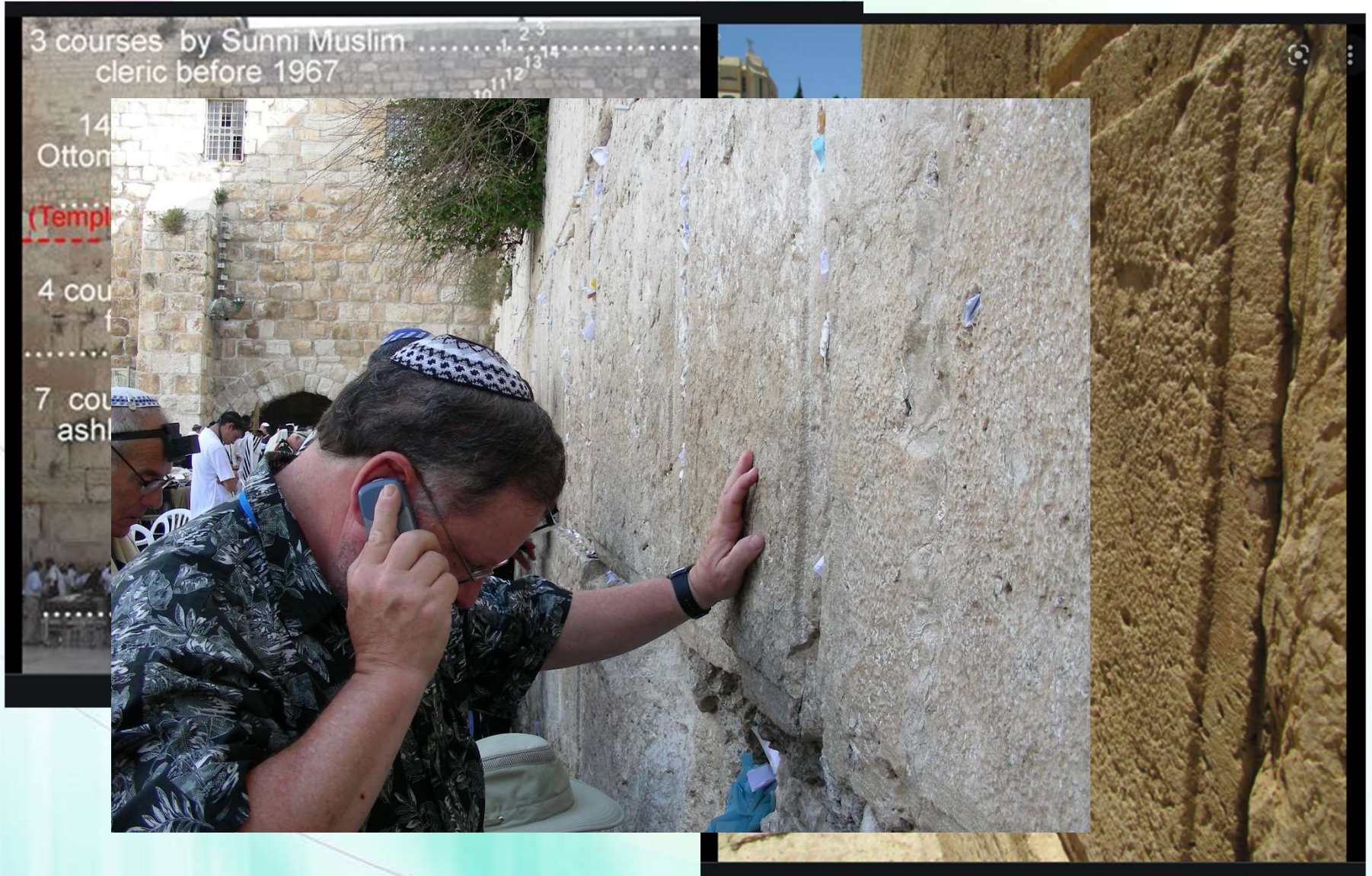


# Western Wall Before 1948



For g  
of the

# Western Wall Structure





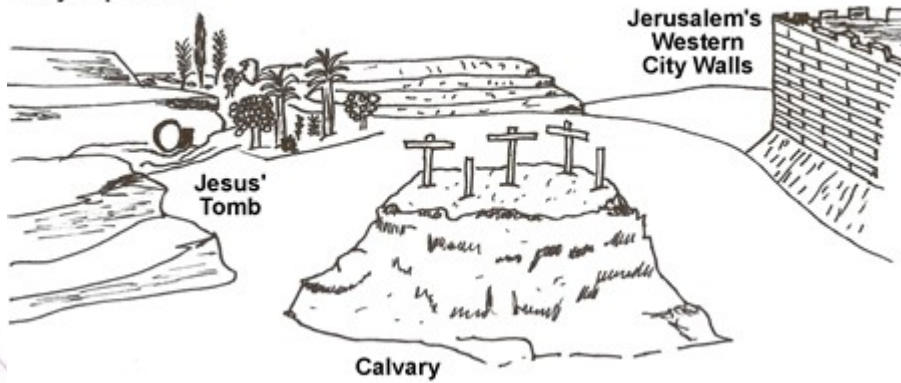
# Church of the Holy Sepulchre

- **Holiest Spot in Christian World**
  - **Plausible site of crucifixion**
    - **Was outside city walls in 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple times**
    - **Jewish graves found in it**
    - **Was site of Roman temple in Constantine's time**
    - **Found by Queen Helena**
  - **Church built on the site**
  - **Site and city the subject of crusades**

# Church of the Holy Sepulchre

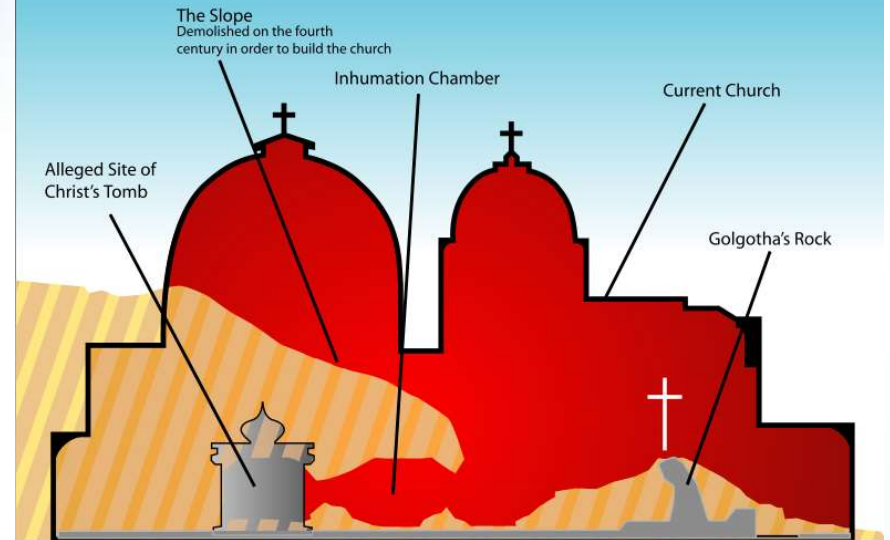
Site of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher

30 AD

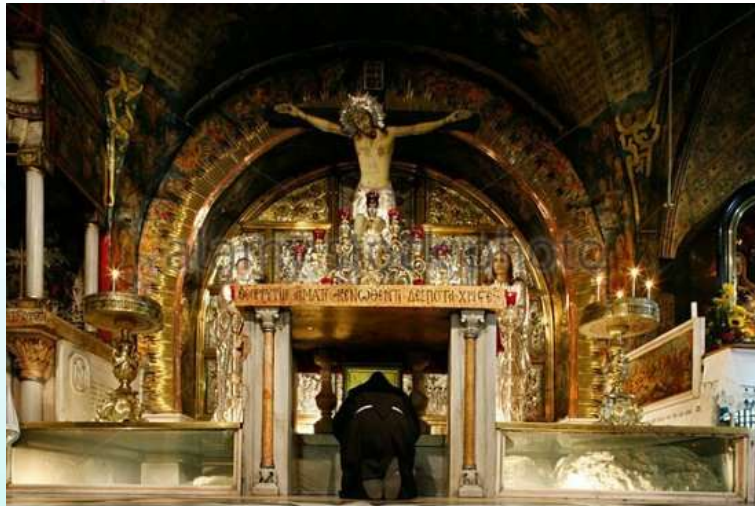


## Calvary

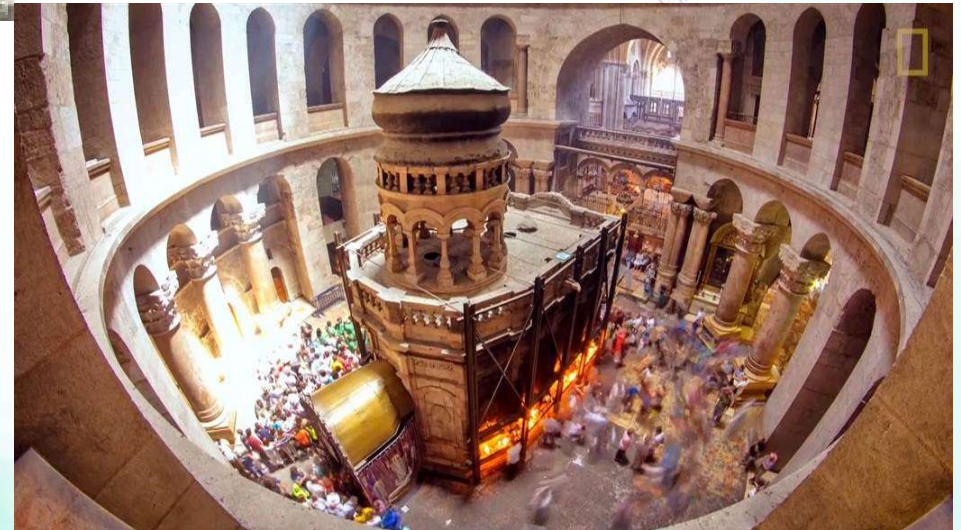
On the first century A.C. it was just a rocky denivellation outside the town



# Church of the Holy Sepulchre



www.alamy.com - BK5184



# Church of the Holy Sepulchre: Intro



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K9C74bEnawY&t=43s>

# Church of the Holy Sepulchre: Tour



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

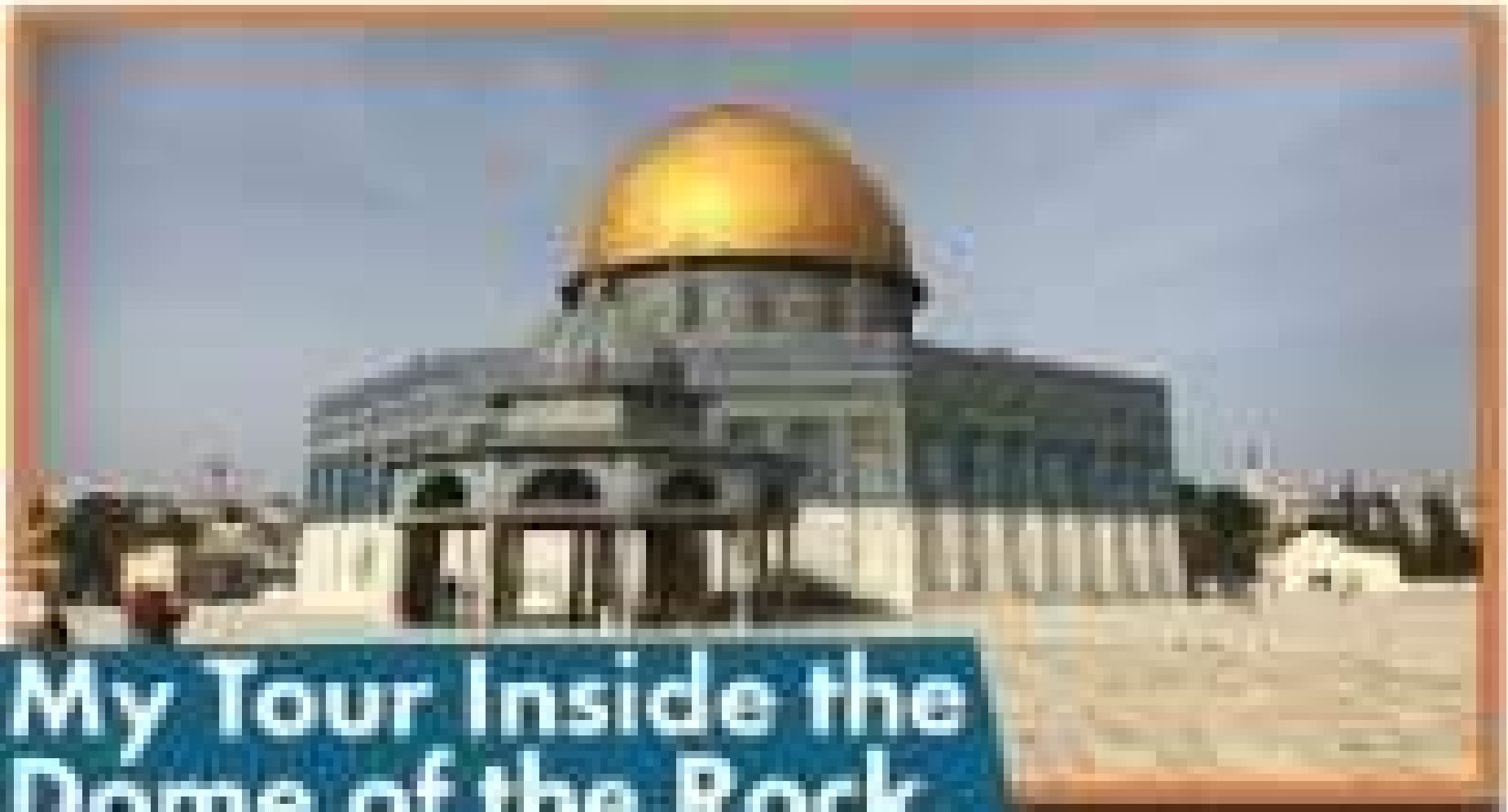
# Dome of the Rock

- **Dome of the Rock Built about 700**
  - **Built over the Rock that is:**
    - **Site of creation of universe**
    - **Site of Abraham's sacrifice**
    - **Site of Mohammed's night journey**
  - **Not a mosque**
  - **3<sup>rd</sup> holiest spot in Islam**

# Dome of the Rock



# Dome of the Rock: Intro & Tour



My Tour Inside the  
Dome of the Rock

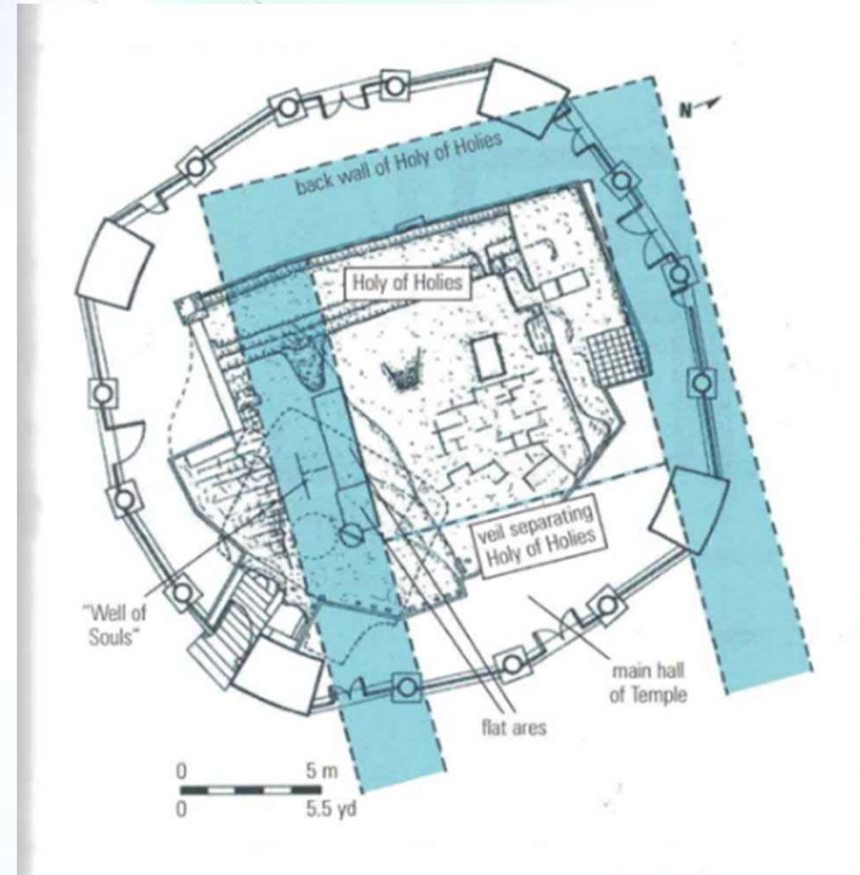
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FCXjQHFQF14>



# Inside the Dome of the Rock



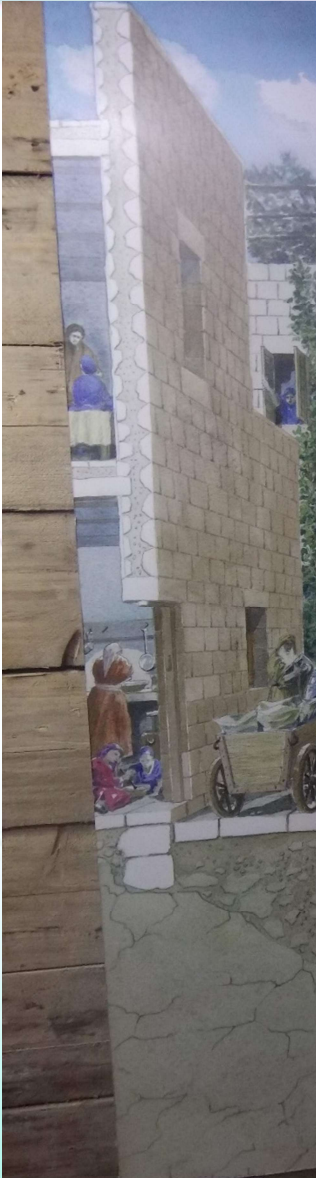
# Inside the Dome of the Rock



# My Day at the Sifting Project



# Path From City of David to Temple Mount



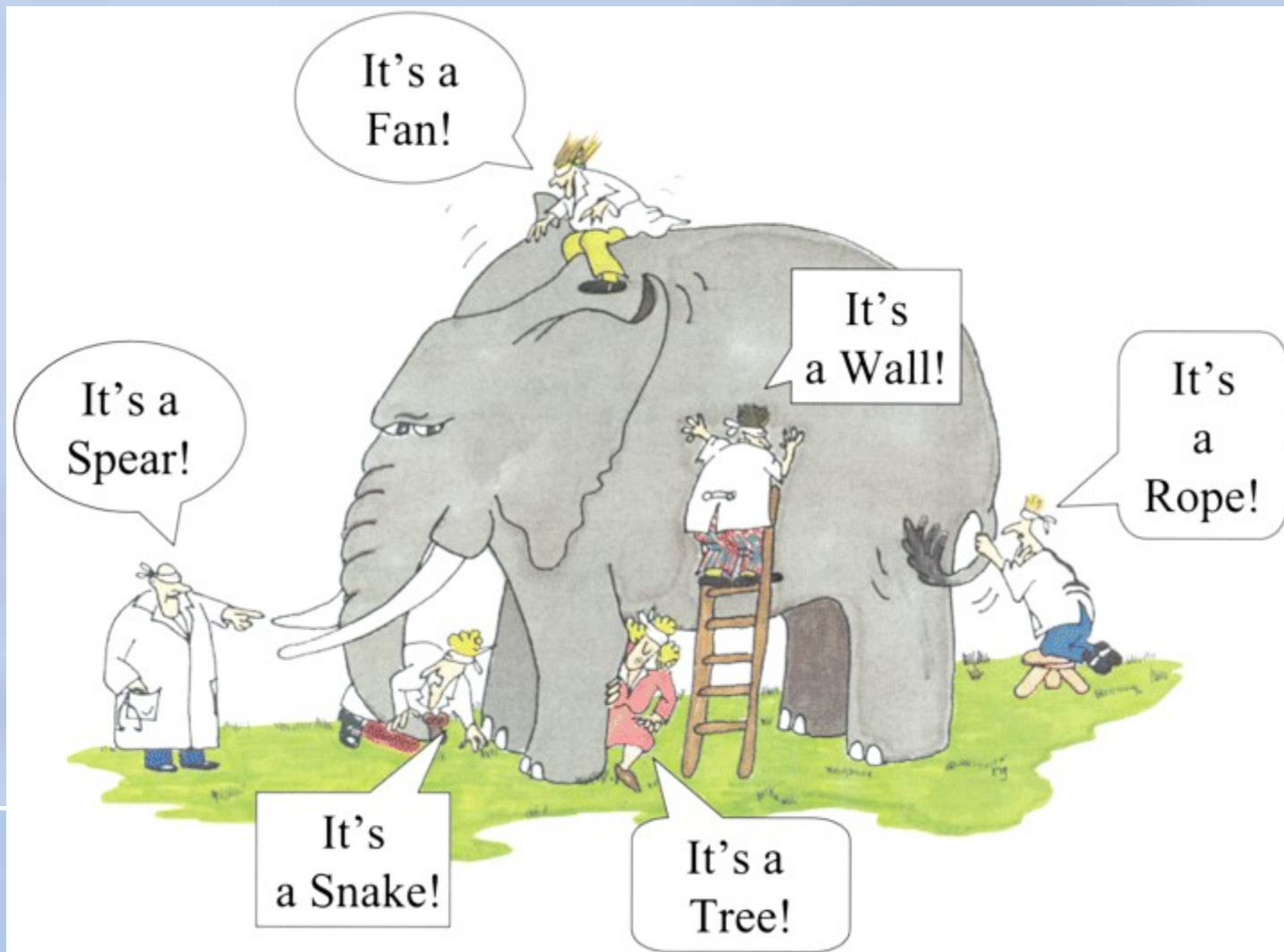
# My Day at the Sifting Project



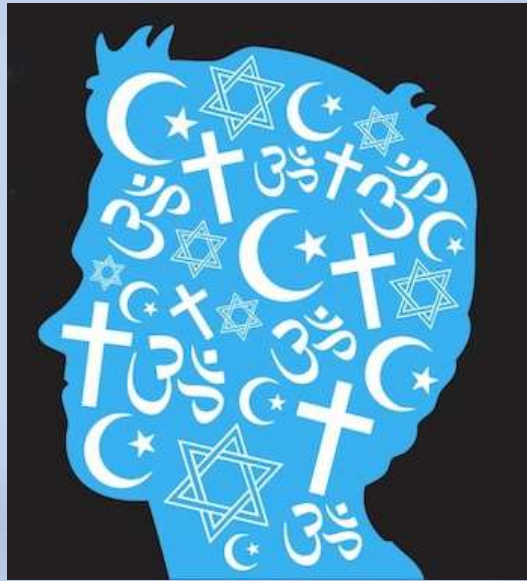
# Not Their Idea of a Rabbi or My Idea of Border Police!



# The Blind & the Elephant



Perhaps we each can see/understand  
only a portion of God's totality.



Our error is in our certainty that our  
view is the only truth.





The blind people all hear the creature speak .... and they all hear the Golden Rule, this rabbi's test for a *Kosher* religion.

# Children of Abraham at Prayer



**Jews and Christians praying at the Western Wall, just across from Robinson's Arch as we hear the Muslim call to worship in the background.**

# Western Wall at This Moment

Here's a [Link](#) to the  
Western Wall Cam

<https://www.skylinewebcams.com/en/webcam/israel/jerusalem-district/jerusalem/western-wall.html>