

JEWISH HISTORY IN JUDEA/SAMARIA (“WEST BANK”)

HEBRON

Hebron is the most ancient Jewish holy city and has been a **center of Jewish culture and religious Jewish identity for millennia.**

» **It is the second holiest city for the Jewish people.**ⁱⁱ

Jews have lived continuously in Hebron for the past 4,000 years, with the exception of 1929-1967.

» **In 1929, Arab militants massacred Jewish women, children, students, and rabbis in Hebron.** The British evacuated the rest of the city’s Jews. Although this led to a temporary lack of Jewish presence in Hebron, Israel re-established the city’s Jewish community in 1967.

Hebron is home to the oldest Jewish holy site in the world, the Tomb of the Patriarchs and Matriarchs. Jewish tradition maintains that the Jewish patriarchs and three of the matriarchs are buried here.

The Hebrew Bible mentions Hebron 87 times and constantly emphasizes its importance.

King David was anointed King of Israel in Hebron roughly 3,000 years ago. He ruled there for seven years.

Jews are only permitted to live in 3 percent of Hebron today, while Palestinian Arabs control 80 percent and live in 97 percent of the city.

JERUSALEM

The Temple Mount in the Old City of Jerusalem is the **holiest site in the world for the Jewish people.** It is the site of the holy Jewish temples dating back 3,000 years: the First Temple (960 BCE - 586 BCE) and the Second Temple (520 BCE - 70 CE).

Jews have continuously lived in Jerusalem for 3,000 years.

Jerusalem has been the capital of the Jewish people for 3,000 years as well. It is also the capital of the State of Israel and has never been the capital of any other country or empire in the area.

The Hebrew Bible mentions Jerusalem 669 times, while the Quran makes no mention of the city.

While the Old City of Jerusalem was under Arab control between 1948 and 1967, not one Arab leader - with the exception of Jordan’s King Hussein - visited the city.

The ancient Mount of Olives cemetery (in the eastern half of Jerusalem) is the **largest and most important Jewish cemetery in the world,** containing the burial sites of Jewish leaders dating back thousands of yearsⁱⁱⁱ

SHILOH

The ancient tabernacle (the holy sanctuary) stood in Shiloh for about 400 years during the era of the Judges (roughly 3,000 years ago).

Shiloh is located in the heart of Samaria.^{iv}

GUSH ETZION (SOUTH OF JERUSALEM)

Roughly 1,800 years before the Palestinian Authority was established, Jews living in Beitar, a city in the Judean Hills, fought the Romans in the Bar Kochba revolt for **their rights to live freely.** This is one of many examples of Jewish presence in Judea dating back thousands of years.

Jews reestablished a community in this region in 1927,^v but **Jordan expelled the Jews** from the community after it illegally conquered the land in the 1948 War.

References

- i. The Times of Israel: *Abbas Pledges: There will be no Israelis in Palestine*, July 30, 2013
- ii. Jewish Virtual Library: Hebron
- iii. Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs: *The Mount of Olives in Jerusalem*, July 28, 2009
- iv. United With Israel: Archaeologists: *We discover evidence of Israelite tabernacle*, July 3, 2013
- v. Jewish Virtual Library: *The Etzion Bloc (Gush Etzion)*