

TELL A FRIEND »

Enter your email address

Donate Now »

Give a monthly gift »

SIGN UP

ABOUT
Sid Roth

ARTICLES
Learn More

RADIO
Messianic Vision

TELEVISION
It's Supernatural!

RESOURCES
Shop the Store

ARTICLES
Learn More

Most Recent Articles

Israel Updates

Supernatural Healing

Powerful Prayer

Jewish Roots

Jewish Questions about Jesus

One New Man

How to Experience the Presence of God

They Thought for Themselves

Messianic Vision Newsletter

Other Videos

Links

Israel Update

The Battle Over Jerusalem

By Sarah Ann Haves

A key issue expected to be in the forefront of Israel's diplomatic discussions with the United States, Europe, and the international community is the status of Jerusalem. The current disagreement regarding a settlement freeze, in dispute between U.S. and Israeli officials, points not only to building construction in the West Bank (Judea and Samaria), but also to the building of apartments in East Jerusalem.

On July 19, 2009, at a weekly government cabinet meeting, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said, "I would like to re-emphasize that united Jerusalem is the capital of the Jewish people and of the State of Israel. Our sovereignty over it cannot be challenged.... We cannot accept the idea that Jews will not have the right to live and purchase in all parts of Jerusalem. I can only describe to myself what would happen if someone would propose that Jews could not live in certain neighborhoods in New York, London, Paris or Rome. There would certainly be a major international outcry. Accordingly, we cannot agree to such a decree in Jerusalem. This has been the policy of Israeli governments over the years and it is also the policy of our government."

While a majority of Israelis are in agreement about Israel's sovereignty over Jerusalem, virtually all governments of Arab states, along with the Palestinian Authority, claim that the Palestinians must have their own state with East Jerusalem as its capital. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has agreed to a de-militarized Palestinian state, but he has not agreed to shared control over Jerusalem.

Under previous Israeli governments, negotiations have been freely conducted with Palestinian officials over West Bank withdrawals. Israel has offered land swaps in exchange for keeping major settlement blocs. Yet, the key issue of Jerusalem has not been publicly talked about to any great length. Netanyahu plans to follow the Road Map to its end -- which means, discussing the fate of Jerusalem, but only in final status talks with the Palestinians and Arab states. The recent controversy over Israeli building construction in East Jerusalem suggests that, despite what compromises Israel is willing to make over West Bank settlements, the status of Jerusalem will remain non-negotiable until the peace process reaches that final stage.

U.S., Palestinian, and European leaders have had difficulty with Israel's stringent diplomatic policy regarding the Holy City. However, there has been a continued, unified Israeli consensus that Jerusalem should not be divided, and that is shared by many Jews around the world who have a special affinity for the city.

While Jerusalem was discussed privately between Israel and the Palestinians during former Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's reign in office, the media leaked information about the talks, and part of Olmert's coalition threatened to quit if the government didn't stop the negotiations. Despite former Foreign Minister Tzippi Livni's insistence that Jerusalem wasn't a main topic of conversation with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, reports indicate that she and Olmert were willing to divide the city in two ways: (1) Some

Search:

Arab neighborhoods would be given over to Palestinian control. (2) The "Holy Basin" (holy sites) would be under international control. But, these discussions were not contained in legally binding letters or documents; nothing was voted on in the Knesset; and, there was no successful achievement in peace talks on the future status of the city.

Most westerners understand only part of the controversy over Jerusalem. Critics of Israel who defend the Palestinian position explain that Israel can keep control over the western part of the city. These critics don't take into account that the Temple Mount, an essential landmark in Israel's biblical history, is located in East Jerusalem, as is the Western Wall, the only authentic outer wall still standing since the Second Temple was destroyed in 70 AD.

Pro-Israel supporters, while understanding the controversy over East Jerusalem, and the importance of the holy sites to the Jewish people, may not realize that the Palestinians are not just talking about controlling parts of the Old City within the walls. They want to control well-established Jewish neighborhoods outside the walls, such as French Hill, Ramot, East Talpiot, Gilo, Har Homa, and Pisgat Ze'ev. These Jerusalem neighborhoods that were built after the 1967 Six Day War have continued to be referred to as "settlements" by the Palestinians.

Recently, Palestinian leader Salaam Fayad announced that the Palestinian Authority will invest tens of millions of dollars in Jerusalem's Arab neighborhoods. The Palestinians now consider Jerusalem a top national priority. They have adopted the same words that the Israeli government has used to describe sovereignty over the city. The Palestinians claim that Jerusalem will be the "eternal" capital of *their* state. Like the U.S. State Department, the Palestinians have called for an end to Israeli settlement construction, not just in the West Bank, but also in Jerusalem and its surroundings.

On July 22, 2009, at a press conference in New York City, visiting Mayor of Jerusalem Nir Barkat proclaimed: "Jerusalem is the capital of Israel -- the heart and soul of the Jewish people... We will stand strongly against any intervention to try and divide Jerusalem. I am proud that there has never been greater freedom of religion in the city of Jerusalem than under the flag of Israel -- where everyone is free to practice their beliefs in public and visit their holy sites. The future of Jerusalem is quite clear. It must stay the undivided capital of the State of Israel."

Yet, international leaders have commented that Israel's current government is not accepting the fact that the Palestinians, as well as Arab states, will never agree to a Palestinian state without East Jerusalem as its capital. Some officials, like European Union foreign policy chief Javier Solana, have called for the United Nations Security Council to push forward the recognition of a Palestinian state even without a final status agreement. That would politically legitimize Palestinian claims. Such a move would give the Palestinians recognition before the United Nations as a full member state. It would be their claim, equally against Israel's claim, regarding the final status of Jerusalem.

Exacerbating the Israeli-Palestinian dialogue over this issue is the fact that Netanyahu has had to contend with U.S. President Barack Obama's political leanings toward the Palestinians. Israeli foreign policy analysts see Obama as more supportive of the Palestinian position than any U.S. president going back to the Carter Administration.

Obama's White House press secretary announced in June 2009, in response to Netanyahu's famous Bar-Ilan speech, Obama's vision for the Middle East: "Two states, a Jewish State of Israel and an independent *Palestine*, in the historic homeland of both peoples". If Obama believes that the Palestinians have equal rights to the Promised Land then he, most likely, has concluded that they are entitled to shared control of Jerusalem.

Without a biblical world view, there are no boundaries as to what the Obama Administration might do to pressure Israel into releasing sovereignty over the city. One way that the U.S. has already pressured Israel is by imposing greater restrictions on how Israel can spend the military aid it receives from America. This might develop into a military freeze on needed advanced weapons systems. It could include restrictions on the sale of the F-35 jet stealth fighter that Israel hopes to add to its air force arsenal. The fighter jet would give Israel a qualitative edge over its enemies.

Regardless of the amount of pressure that America puts on Israel, there are biblical reasons that the Jewish State cannot release control over Jerusalem. When Obama gave his famous Cairo speech in June 2009, Israeli leaders were shocked that he omitted Israel's legal and historical rights to the land. But, these same leaders did not speak openly of the biblical rights of the Jewish people to live in Israel and to dwell in Jerusalem.

There are over 800 references to Jerusalem in the Strong's Concordance. God has chosen the city for Himself, to put His name there. (1 Kings 11:36; 2 Chronicles 6:6). The House of the Lord is built in Jerusalem (1 Chronicles 6:32, Ezra 1:2-5; Ezra 5:15). David gathers all Israel together in Jerusalem to bring up the ark of the Lord to its resting place (1 Chronicles 15:3). The God of Israel gives rest to His people that they might dwell in Jerusalem forever. (1 Chronicles 23:25). The tribes of Israel seek the Lord in Jerusalem, sacrificing to the God of their fathers. (2 Chronicles 11:16; Psalm 122:3-5). God saves His people, brings them back from other lands, and there is deliverance in Jerusalem among the remnant that the Lord calls. (Zechariah 8:7-8; Joel 2:32; Isaiah 52:7-10).

God, Himself, returns to Zion and dwells in the midst of Jerusalem (Psalm 135:21; Zechariah 8:3). He roars from Zion and utters His voice from Jerusalem (Joel 3:16; Amos 1:2). The word of the Lord goes forth from Jerusalem (Isaiah 2:3; Micah 4:2). Jerusalem is called the Throne of the Lord and all the nations are gathered to it (Jeremiah 3:17; Zechariah 8:22). God sets Jerusalem in the midst of the nations and the countries all around her. (Ezekiel 5:5). His name is declared in Zion and His praise in Jerusalem. (Psalm 102:21).

Pro-Israel supporters should consider it imperative to be watchmen on the walls, praying for the peace of Jerusalem, and giving the Lord no rest until He establishes Jerusalem as a praise in the earth. (Psalm 122:6-9; Psalm 137:5-6; Psalm 147:12-14; Isaiah 62:6-7).


Israel's sovereignty over Jerusalem goes back thousands of years, something that the Palestinians can't claim as their inheritance. Yet, the dispute over Jerusalem may be the catalyst that breaks down all peace talks and leads to a battle which causes the nations of the earth to stumble over God's will for His Holy City.

"Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness to all the surrounding peoples, when they lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem. And, it shall happen in that day that I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples; all who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces, though all nations of the earth are gathered against it."
 Zechariah 12:2-3

Ms. Haves is a news analyst, reporting from Israel on political, diplomatic, military and spiritual issues affecting the nation.

(c) 2009 Messianic Vision all rights reserved. This article is not reproducible except with permission from Messianic Vision.

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture taken from the New King James Version. Copyright ©1979, 1980, 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Search the site 

[About Sid Roth](#) [Articles](#) [Messianic Vision](#) [It's Supernatural!](#) [Shop the Store](#) [Donate](#)
[How to Know God](#) [About Us](#) [FAQ](#) [Site Overview](#) [Privacy Policy](#) [Contact Us](#)

© 2009 Sid Roth's It's Supernatural!

