

What can we do to Manage
Communication Conflicts Like
the Israeli-Palestinian war?

What can we do to Manage Communication Conflicts with Issues Like the Israeli-Palestinian war?

- Learn/review the communication context of the complex and emotional issue.
- Review/learn more of the background of the Israeli - Palestinian conflict.
- Explore what others have done to understand the situation?
- Think about what we can do.

- The Communication context of complex and emotional issues
 - It is happening NOW!
 - No one knows everything about the issue
 - Everyone comes with preconceived ideas
 - Emotions are at a high level
 - The future of the situation is fuzzy
 - Many many others have spent their **lives** attempting to impact the circumstance

We cannot put off living until we are ready. The most salient characteristic of life is its coerciveness; it is always urgent, "here and now," without any possible postponement.

Life is fired at us point blank.

Ortega y Gasset

Some Historical Background of the Israeli - Palestinian Conflict

Terms
and
Timelines

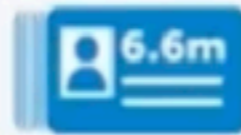
PALESTINIAN LOSS OF LAND 1946 TO 2009



After the Oslo Accords Restrictions on Palestinians in Israel



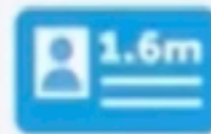
6.6m JEWISH ISRAELIS



JEWISH CITIZENS OF ISRAEL

Free to live throughout Israel and most of West Bank

12.7m PALESTINIANS



PALESTINIAN CITIZENS OF ISRAEL

Barred by committees from living in 68% of towns in Israel



Can Vote



EAST JERUSALEM PALESTINIANS

Israel may revoke residency if living outside of Jerusalem

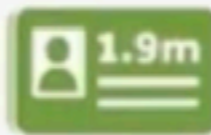


Can't Vote



WEST BANK PALESTINIANS

Barred by Israel from all but 38% of West Bank



GAZA STRIP PALESTINIANS

Barred by Israel from living outside of Gaza since 2007



EXILED PALESTINIANS

Barred by Israel from returning to their homeland since 1948

What happens tomorrow?

- The Middle East situation and especially the Israel-Hamas Conflict are fraught with moral dilemmas.
- All of the protagonists are heavily invested in their ideologies and actions.
- World attention has focused on the conflict ... with emotions running high in many countries and especially on college campuses worldwide.
- Who does get to determine what is reality and what is a rational future?
- We can virtually guarantee there will be more questions than answers and in the meantime ... the conflict will continue.

Two very important levels of conversation to consider

- What is the issue about? — The Content
- How are we going to find out? — the process

What Have Been Some
Effective Approaches to
Discussing the Content
of the Situation?

Model UN

One recent morning at Alvirne High School in Hudson, six students huddled together, discussing an upcoming presentation. Placards with the names of countries — Lebanon, Syria, Qatar — stood on their desks. And a projection read, “General Assembly First Committee: Peaceful Resolution for Israel and Hamas.”

These are elective Model United Nations class students. The course is a simulation: After learning about a real-world conflict, each student represents a different country and form alliances with other nations (in this case, their classmates) to find solutions.



Discussing the Israel-Palestine Conflict in the Classroom: the SNS (Solutions not Sides) Approach

Part 1: 'Exploration' – teaches students about historical narratives surrounding the conflict.

Part 2: 'Empathy' – introduces conflict resolution and helps students reflect on the different needs of Israelis and Palestinians. This part features a film called Rage, Revenge and Repair.

Part 3: 'Empowerment' – students ask Palestinian and Israeli speakers questions, and discuss the pros and cons of different solutions to the conflict.

Robert Reich — Dialogue about the Moral Concerns

- What Hamas did on October 7 was morally despicable.
- Hamas's avowed aim to murder all Jews is morally despicable.
- What the Israeli government has done since then in Gaza is also morally despicable.
- The murder or kidnapping of innocent civilians is morally wrong.
- Israel's policies toward Palestinians have been segregation and discrimination, based on ethnicity and religion, which are morally wrong.
- It is morally wrong to urge genocide against any group — whether they constitute a religion, ethnicity, race, or nation.

Robert Reich — Dialogue about the Moral Concerns

- What Hamas did on October 7 was morally despicable.
- Hamas's avowed aim to murder all Jews is morally despicable.
- What the Israeli government has done since then in Gaza is also morally despicable.
- The murder or kidnapping of innocent civilians is morally wrong.
- Israel's policies toward Palestinians have been segregation and discrimination, based on ethnicity and religion, which are morally wrong.
- It is morally wrong to urge genocide against any group — whether they constitute a religion, ethnicity, race, or nation.



How communicate
Effectively?

Where do we Start?

- Identify what you want out of conversation
- Talk from personal experience
- Show you're listening
 - Look at the speaker (note posture, tone of voice, their eye contact,
 - Summarize back what you have heard
- Build in times for the other(s) to share their ideas
- Know when it's better to conclude this conversation
 - There is always more to be said, and less to be accomplished.

In Closing

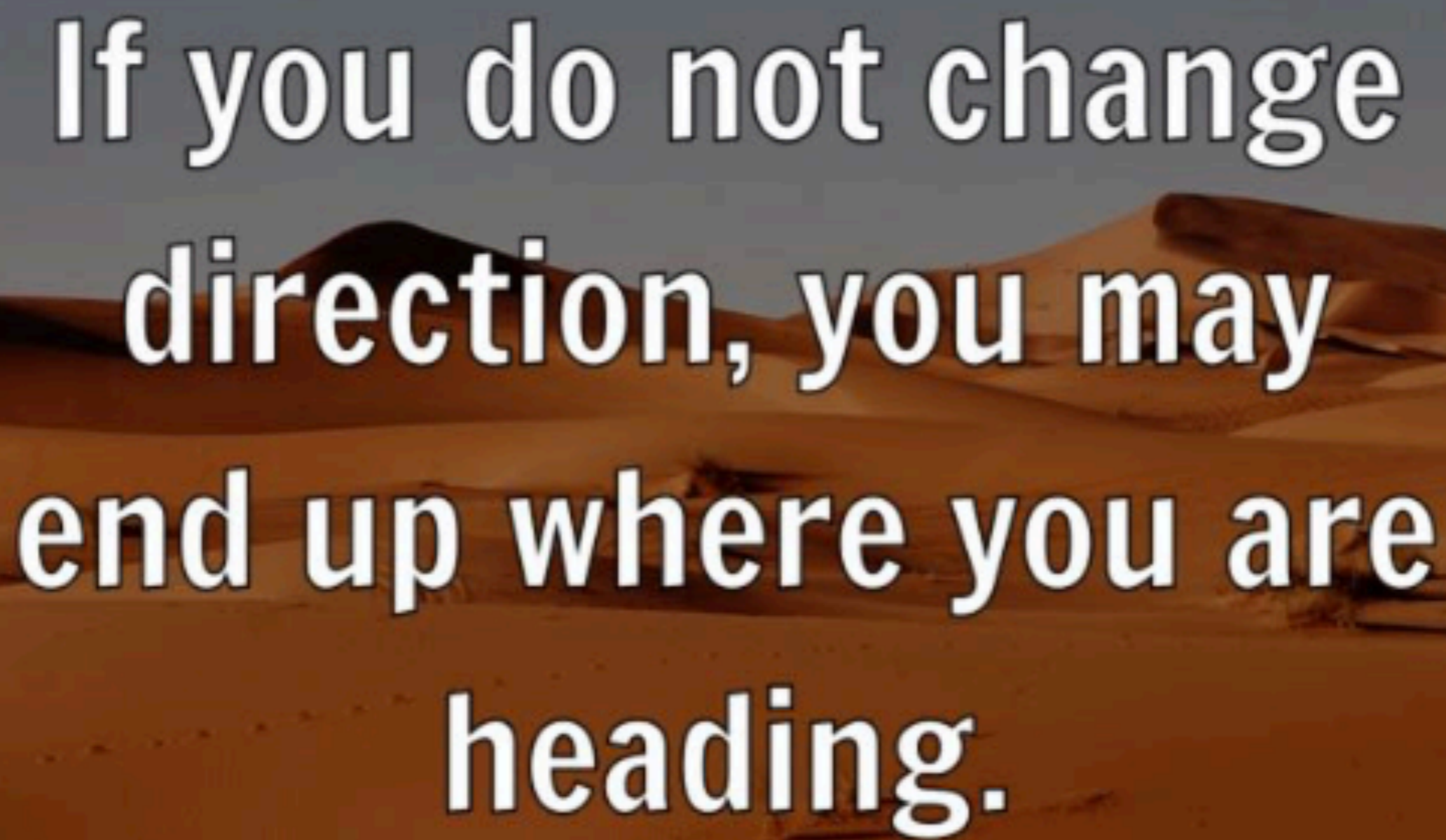
I recommend Sid Simon's THINK acronym, especially as a conversation becomes heated. Before you speak, T.H.I.N.K.

- T - is it True?
- H - is it Helpful?
- I - is it Inspiring?
- N - is it Necessary?
- K - is it Kind?

Break Out Rooms

1. How can I/we share about the Israeli - Palestinian situation?

2. What questions do I now have?

A photograph of a desert landscape with rolling sand dunes under a clear sky. The dunes are a warm, golden-brown color, and the sky is a pale, clear blue. The text is overlaid on the image in a white, bold, sans-serif font with a thin black outline.

If you do not change
direction, you may
end up where you are
heading.

Lao Tzu

Psychological Chasms



- Internal sources create years of hatred and desire for revenge
- Both sides see themselves as victims of the first order
- Palestinians are invisible as individuals to Israeli Jews—and vice versa
- **Justification (rationalization) on both sides goes all the way back to Biblical times**
 - Divergent fates of Abraham's sons...Isaac...and...Ishmael
 - Years of physical and mental separation between the sides
 - Fundamentalist religious philosophies driving both sides to the extremes
 - Both sides are convinced the land from the Mediterranean to the Jordan has been deeded to them by God

Demonization on Both Sides Knows No Bounds

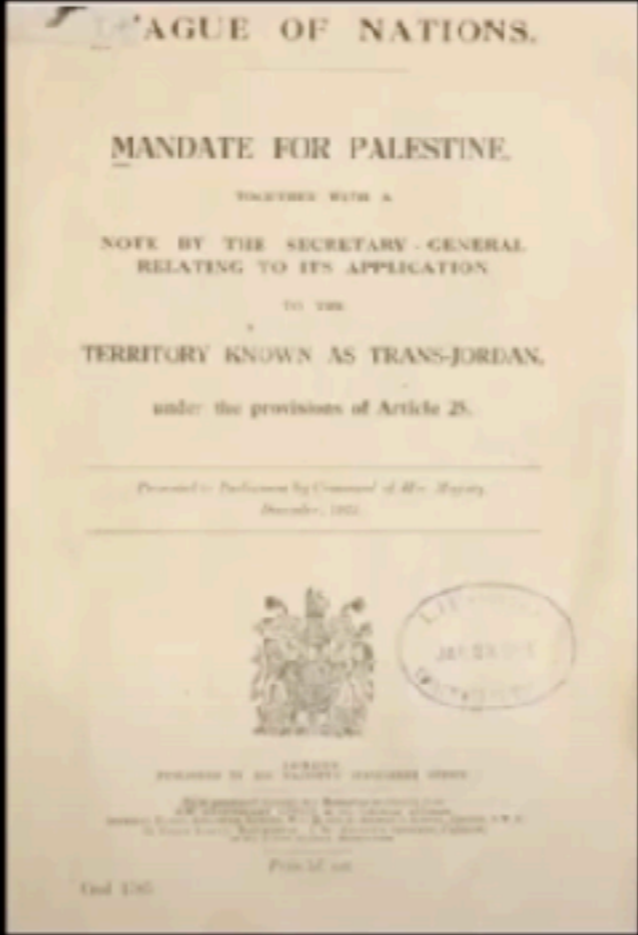
The Middle East Conflict - a Neophyte's Guide

The Balfour Declaration

The British Mandate

The Balfour Declaration
("Balfour's promise" in Arabic)
was a public pledge by Britain
in **1917** declaring its aim to
establish "a national home for
the Jewish people" in
Palestine.

"His Majesty's Government
view with favour the
establishment in Palestine
of a national home for the
Jewish people and will use
their best endeavours to
facilitate the achievement of
this object, it being clearly
understood that nothing
shall be done which may
prejudice the civil and
religious rights of existing
non-Jewish communities in
Palestine, or the rights and
political status enjoyed by
Jews in any other country."



1922



Great Britain's Division of the Mandated Area, 1921-1923

Israel Becomes a Nation

At midnight on May 14, 1948, the Provisional Government of Israel proclaimed a new State of Israel. On that same date, the United States, in the person of President Truman, recognized the provisional Jewish government as the de facto authority of the Jewish state (de jure recognition was extended on January 31, 1949).

FORM DS-122
7-10-46

OUTGOING TELEGRAM

3133 592027/525

CLASSIFICATION
TOP SECRET

Charge Department
Charge to

Department of State
Washington
~~TOP SECRET~~
NO DISSEMINATION

TOP SECRET

Control 3133

May 14, 1948
6 p.m.

US URGENT
EMBASSY
LONDON
1761
NIACI
FOR DOUGLAS

Please inform Bevin or other responsible official Brit Govt that we have reason to believe that provisional govt of new Jewish state will make request at once for recognition and that in present circumstances we feel that we should grant ~~limited~~ recognition to Jewish provisional govt as de facto authority of Jewish state.

MARSHALL
MARSHALL

ACQUITTANCE REC'D
MAY 14 PM 5 55
DCT

DISTRIBUTION DENIED (OFFICES ONLY)

NEA:LWH:END:ETSON:HW
5/14/48
TOP SECRET
TOP SECRET

OR CLEARANCE
CWO-M

867N.01/5-1448

TOP SECRET FILE

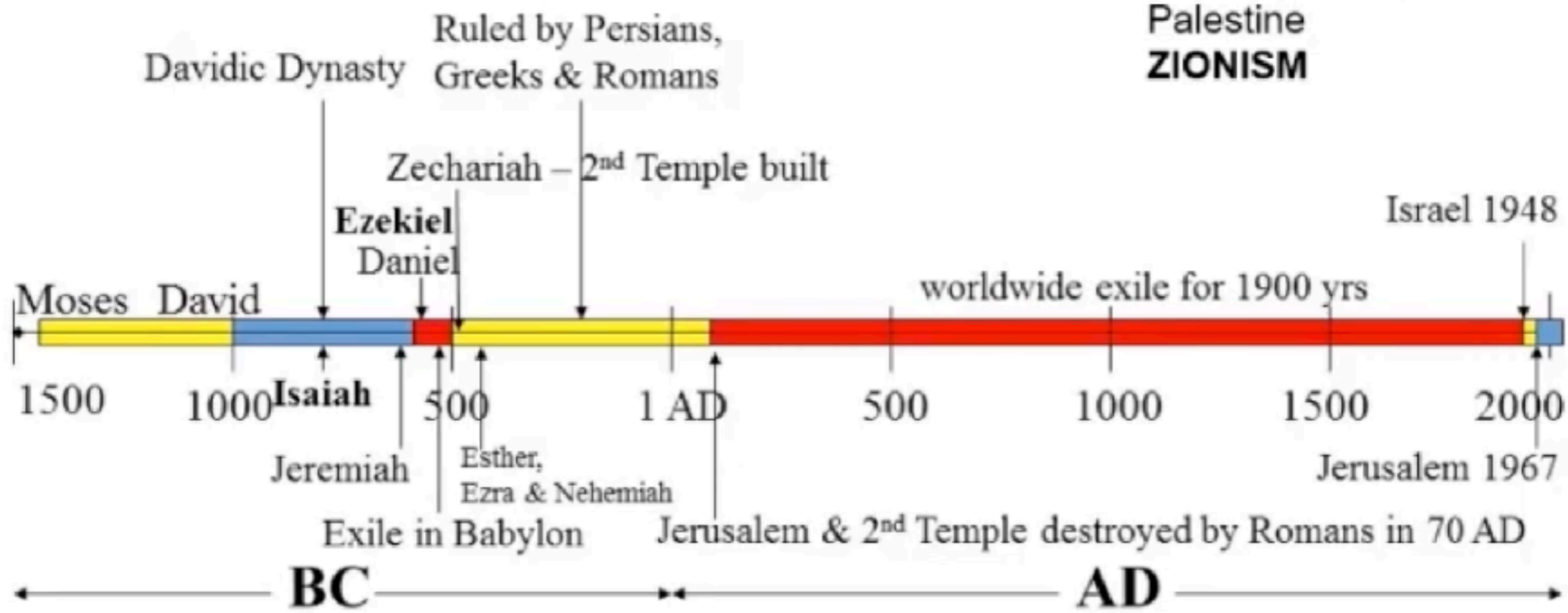
U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : 1947 O-3888

What is Gaza or the Gaza Strip?

- The United Nations (UN) in November 1947 accepted a plan for the Arab-Jewish partition of Palestine
 - Gaza was to be the Arab area
- Gaza is unusual in that it is a densely populated area not part of an *extant* country.
- In stable times, one tenth of the population travels daily to Israel
- The British Mandate ended on May 15, 1948 and on that date **the first Arab-Israeli war started.**
 - Egypt invaded and occupied the town of Gaza
 - Heavy fighting ensued
- The Gaza Strip boundaries were demarcated in the Egyptian-Israeli armistice agreement of February 24, 1949.



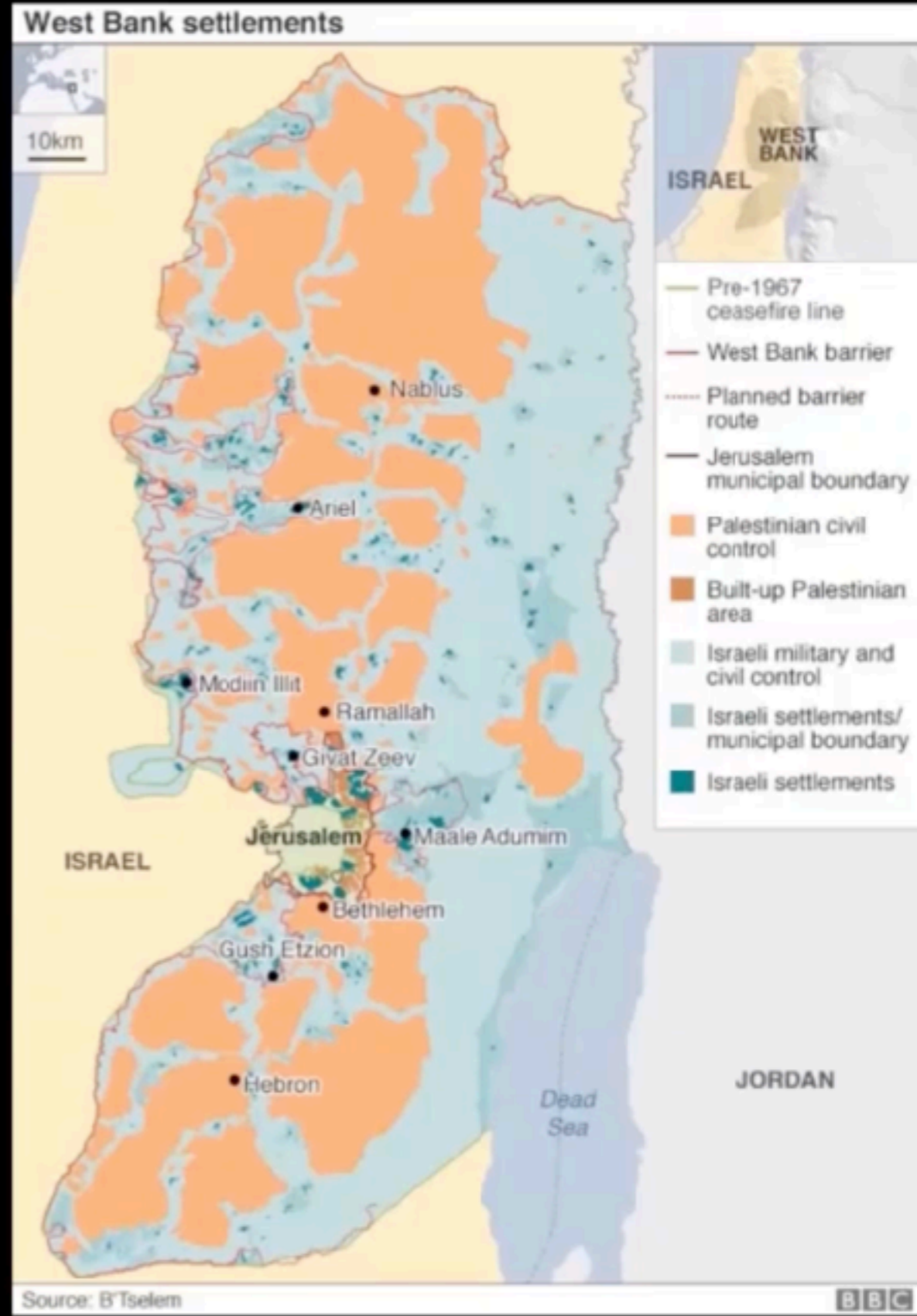
Historical Timeline with major Biblical prophets to Today



64 BC—Rome conquers Palestine
 135 CE—Jewish revolt—"diaspora"
 Predominantly Eastern Europe and Russia.
 1881—Tsar Alexander II assassinated
 The rise of anti-semitism
 1882-1914 55,000 Jews return to Palestine
ZIONISM

- Jewish people living in Israel, but NOT self-ruled from Jerusalem
- Jewish people living in Israel, AND self-ruled from Jerusalem
- Jewish people expelled from Israel and living in exile

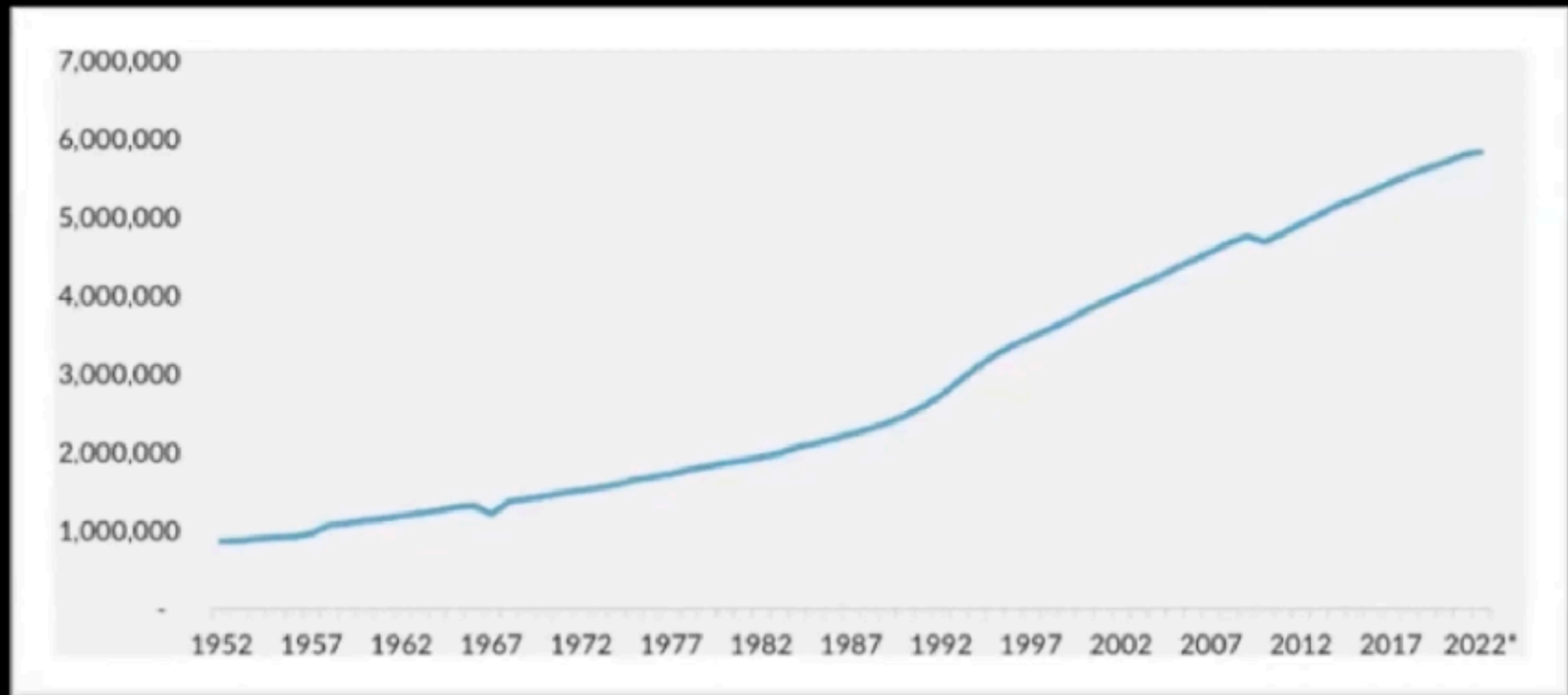
What is The West Bank?



Israeli Settlements in the West Bank



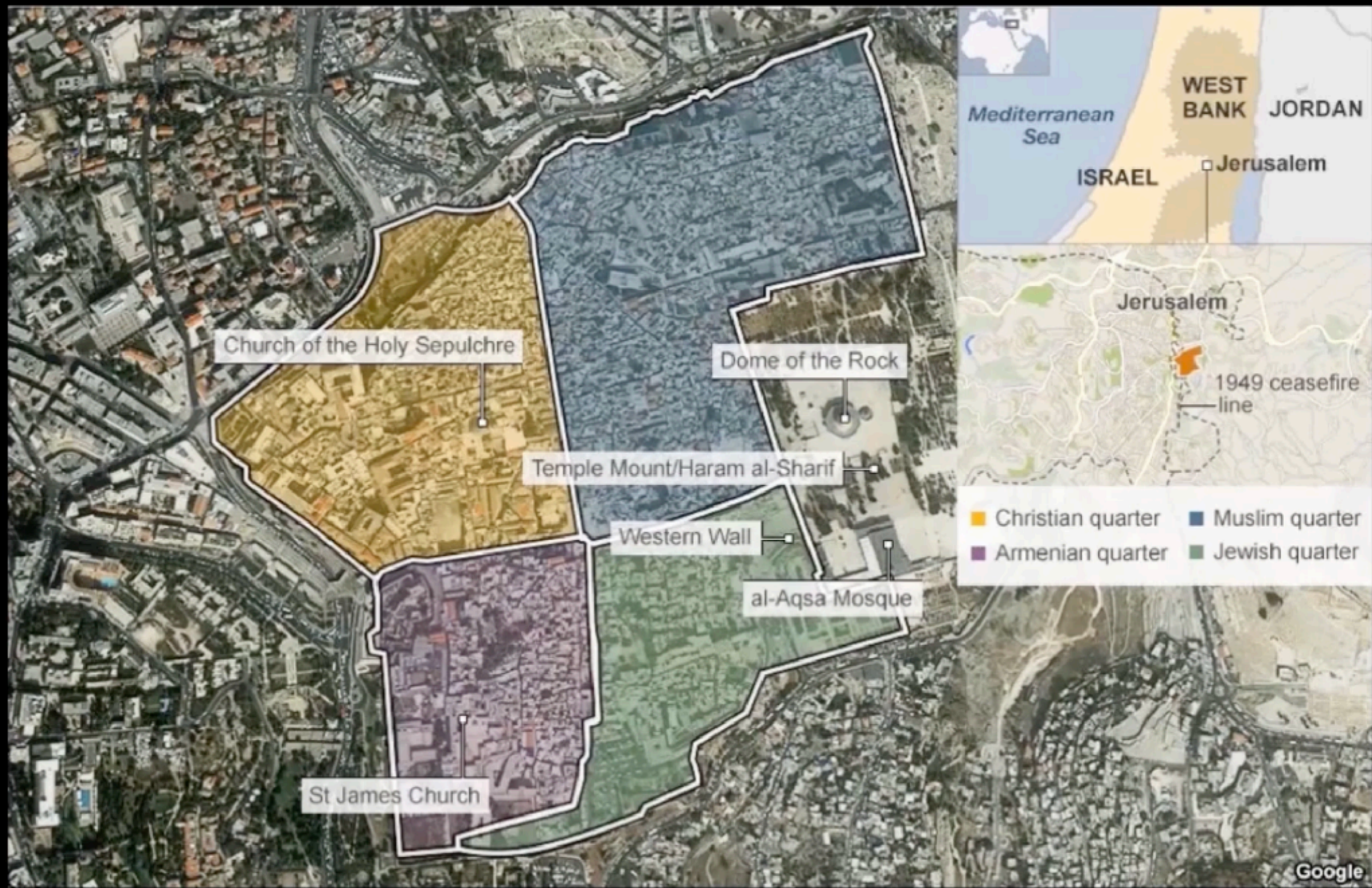
What Was the **Palestinian Diaspora**?



- 700,000 Palestinians were forcibly displaced in the 1948-1949 war in Israel
 - Most initially relocated to Gaza or the West Bank
- Less than 5% returned to their original homestead
- Conditions in Gaza and the West Bank drove steady migration out of Palestine/Israel
 - Gaza frequently referred to by UN agencies a “concentration camp-like”

Jerusalem

One God—Many Religions





Jerusalem Through the Ages



- Jerusalem...a huge difference between imagination and reality
- Muslims, Christians, and Jews have all ruled exclusively
- “Children of Israel”
 - **Jewish**...old temple period
 - Destroyed by Babylonians in 587-586 BC
 - First diaspora
 - Second temple destroyed by Romans in 70 CE
 - Second, massive diaspora (Masada 73 AD)
 - **Muslim**...Dome of the Rock 691 AD
 - Ostensibly 2nd in importance to Al Aqsa Mosque
 - **Christian**...1099 AD Crusades
 - Carnage of the crusades rekindled the concept of “jihad” or “holy war”
 - **Muslim**...1187 Ottomans retook Jerusalem and ruled until 1917.

Jerusalem...Now

- An uneasy cohabitation...to avoid chaos—maintain the “**Status Quo**”

The Western Wall



- **Status Quo** is a set of informal rules set in 1757 during Ottoman rule
- Formalized by an 1852 *firman* by the Ottoman Sultan Abdulmejid I
- 1878 Berlin Treaty--Article 62 of the treaty stated that: “It is well understood that no alteration can be made to the status quo in the holy places.”

Given its status as the prevailing legal framework, parties in the dispute are obliged to refrain from instituting any change to the Status Quo or any of its components. These components include access regulations (including visiting hours, number of visits, areas open for visitation, and rules of conduct therein); control over the area (including excavations and maintenance); religious rituals and prayers (including their number and time); and rules regarding dress, the character of the site, and police and security protocols. Changes to any of these components by one party are a breach of the Status Quo arrangement, **and such a breach carries great potential to cause widespread violence and instability.**



Al Aqsa Mosque