



Jerusalem in the Twentieth Century

Martin Gilbert

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"The twentieth century has often been a bloody one for Jerusalem. But it has also been a century of creativity and satisfaction, exuberant life, determination, civic achievement, and perpetual hope." —from *Jerusalem in the Twentieth Century*

Jerusalem today is a vibrant, flourishing city, the capital of an independent nation, and the vital center of worship for three world religions. Yet, one hundred years ago—a mere moment in time to a city celebrating its 3,000th anniversary—Jerusalem was a provincial town, an outpost of the Ottoman Empire ruled from Constantinople. The extraordinary transformation of Jerusalem, from the twilight of Turkish rule to the advent of the twenty-first century, is an epic struggle of passionate political, cultural, and spiritual forces. Often tragic, always fascinating, the remarkable history of contemporary Jerusalem is essential to our understanding of the Middle East.

The story of modern Jerusalem is unparalleled in its dramatic juxtaposition of growth and prosperity with unyielding, bitter, and violent strife. It is a city, in the words of author Martin Gilbert, "cursed, even amid its great social, religious, and cultural renaissance, by recurring conflict." The Balfour Declaration of 1917, with its promise of a Jewish National Home, ushered in an era of rapid expansion in self-governing institutions, particularly in the areas of health and education. Yet, the seeds of disagreement were sown when, even though Jerusalem's majority population had been Jewish since the mid-nineteenth century, the British appointed an Arab as mayor. The hard-fought Battle of Jerusalem in 1948 and the victorious creation of the State of Israel were followed by the devastating division of the city—until the Six-Day War of 1967 stunned the world and brought about an uneasy reunification. In 1994, the triumphant signing of the Israel-Jordan peace treaty ended forty-six years of hostility. However, uncertainty remains as, today, the tentative hope of the peace accords, punctuated by the harshness of Intifada, seems more fragile than ever in the wake of the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, and the election of Benjamin Netanyahu.

Covering every facet of the legendary city's life—political, cultural, architectural, intellectual, religious, and social—*Jerusalem in the Twentieth Century* is history at its most lucid and compelling. And who better than Martin Gilbert to encompass the full scope and meaning of this protean city in a dynamic era? Here, the distinguished historian and acclaimed author of *Jerusalem: Rebirth of a City* has created a vivid, authoritative work, rooted in contemporary sources and scholarship, and drawing equally on his own vast, intimate knowledge of the city and its people.

Acclaim for Martin Gilbert's earlier work *Jerusalem: Rebirth of a City*

"Mr. Gilbert has written a lively book, full of excellent quotations—roundly outspoken and often eloquent."
—John Gross *The New York Times*

"His mastery of the source material and his artful use of these materials produce a riveting, charming, and moving account—proving that Mr. Gilbert is not only a first-rate historian but a good storyteller." —*The Washington Times*

"Mr. Gilbert's scholarship is impeccable." —Colin Thubron *Sunday Telegraph* (London)

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