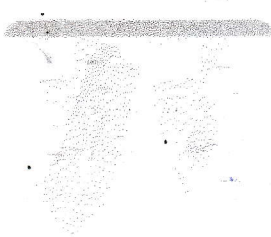


## Elementary Encyclopedia

### Palestine



Palestine is a region in the Middle East. It lies between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea. Many different peoples have lived in Palestine over thousands of years. In 1948 most of Palestine became part of the country of Israel.

#### The Holy Land

Palestine is sometimes called the Holy Land. It is a sacred place for three major religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Palestine is important to Jews because the ancient kingdom of Israel was located there. Jews believe that God promised the land to them. Palestine is important to Christians because Jesus lived and worked there. Palestine also has several sites that are holy to Muslims.

#### Early History

Long ago Palestine was called Canaan. Tribes of people called Canaanites controlled the area for more than 1,000 years. In about 1200 BC Hebrew, or Jewish, tribes began to arrive. In about 1000 BC King Saul began to unite these tribes into the kingdom of Israel. The next ruler, David, united all the tribes, expanded the kingdom, and made Jerusalem the capital. In about 922 BC the kingdom split into two weaker states. Both fell under the rule of more powerful neighbors.

During the time that Jesus lived, Palestine was part of the Roman Empire. By the AD 300s Christians ruled the eastern part of the Roman Empire, which included Palestine. Many Christians began arriving in Palestine, especially in Jerusalem.

Muslim Arabs invaded in the 600s. Muslims controlled Palestine for