



The End of Days: Fundamentalism and the Struggle for the Temple Mount

Gershom Gorenberg

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In this provocative work, seasoned journalist Gershom Gorenberg portrays a deadly mix of religious extremism, violence, and Mideast politics, as expressed in the struggle for the sacred center of Jerusalem. Known to Jews and Christians as the Temple Mount and to Muslims as the Noble Sanctuary, this thirty-five-acre enclosure at the southeast corner of Jerusalem's Old City is the most contested piece of real estate on earth. Here nationalism combines with fundamentalist faith in a volatile brew. Members of the world's three major monotheistic faiths--Judaism, Christianity, and Islam--hold this spot to be the key to salvation as they await the end of the world, and struggle to fulfill conflicting religious prophecies with dangerous political consequences. Adroitly portraying American radio evangelists of the End, radical Palestinian sheikhs, and Israeli ex-terrorists, Gorenberg explains why believers hope for the End, and why prominent American fundamentalists provide hard-line support for Israel while looking forward to the apocalypse. He makes sense of the messianic fervor that has driven some Israeli settlers to oppose peace. And he describes the Islamic apocalyptic visions that cast Israel's actions in Jerusalem as diabolic plots. The End of Days shows how conflict over Jerusalem and the fiery belief in apocalypse continue to have a potent impact on world politics and why a lasting peace in the Middle East continues to prove elusive.

The End of Days: Fundamentalism and the Struggle for the Temple Mount Details

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From Reader Review The End of Days: Fundamentalism and the Struggle for the Temple Mount for online ebook

Rae says

The author examines the interplay between Christian fundamentalists and the role of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem at the time of the Second Coming. This was interesting but I wanted more information about the Mount and its history.

It's kind of bizarre that some fundamentalist Christian groups are trying to make something happen on the Mount in order to force a fulfillment of scriptural prophecy. That's weird.

Chris Bartholomew says

This is a great book that filled in a troubling gap in my understanding of the powers that influence our government. A book everyone should read, but almost no one will!

Suzi says

A quick read on Millennialists (Muslim, Christian and Jewish) and the consequences their beliefs have on what is occurring in the Middle East today. Apparently "normal" people with no doubt in their minds that their actions are God-driven and pure are depicted without malice. Gorenberg is able to laugh through his tears as he describes religiously motivated horrors and absurdities. This is a good over-view of a volatile situation which most Americans choose to ignore how many of you know of Tim LeHaye's books or their perennial place on the NYTimes Best Seller List?

Denise says

The influences of End Time believers on Israel and Palestine during the twentieth century. Mentions include Millerites, Red Heifer prophecy, Millennialists, Third Temple hopeful, Waco, Heaven's Gate, Herbert Armstrong, Jerry Falwell, and Pat Robertson.

Jacqueline says

Gershom Gorenberg: Being consistently thoughtful about everything.

Sirpa Grierson says

Why does the peace process keep collapsing in the Middle East? Gorenberg carefully reviews the seemingly

unending struggle for the temple mount in Jerusalem. The Christian fundamentalists, the Muslims, and the Israelis all have interest in the area, with groups within each of these expressing opinions (and actions) ranging from political expediency to religious radicalism. Published by Oxford Press, this is a well-researched and very thought-provoking book. Highly recommended. Even a casually interested reader would enjoy reading about Melody, the red heifer or the tunnels unearthed beneath the city.

Joe says

A must read for those who want to know about the history of and the conflicts surrounding the temple mount.

Ross says

I love this book. It's wildly interesting and shows how nutty the folk in Jerusalem are about the Temple Mount.

Matt says

A look at a very strange world.

Matt Pitts says

Very interesting topic, but a bit arduous throughout.

WT Sharpe says

This is a very disturbing look at how fundamentalists of every stripe are standing in the way of a lasting peace in the Middle East. I suspect the low ratings many have given this book stem from their expectation from the title that this is yet another propaganda piece in the mold of the Left Behind series, and to their disappointment it is not a book of apologetics. It is an eyeopening look at frightening trends in the world.

Julie says

Gorenberg explains in an academic and apolitical fashion as to what all the fuss is about the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. Think of it as "The Apocalyptic Views of Christianity, Judaism and Islam for Dummies". A must read for anyone who wants to better understand the current events in Israel. A very easy read for anyone with or without a religious/political background.

J says

It's been three months or more since I read this, so my memory has dimmed.

In a way that's good, as I can now remember only simple, over-arching themes and/or facts.

First fact, as long as Islam and Judaism both lay claim to the Temple Mount site for housing key religious sites, there will be endless turmoil over managing and visiting the mount.

Second, while Christians who await the titled "end of days" 1) highly respect the Jews as God's chosen people, and 2) support the Jewish claim to the Temple Mount site, and therefore 3) appear to be staunch allies of Israel ... in fact, most Jews see something amiss and condescending in the Christians' underlying assumption that the Jews eventually will see Jesus as Messiah.

Third, Israel naturally takes comfort in the political support from American Christians, even if the Christian motivation is off.

Last, the author appears to be a fairly secular Jew since at times he pokes fun at the efforts of devout Hasidic Jews to determine whether various scriptural prophecies are coming true.

The book's prime example is its opening section, "Cattlemen of the Apocalypse," which details the intense monitoring of a dairy heifer named Melody, born bright red in 1996 in northern Israel (the Jezreel Valley), to see if she was the prophesied entirely red heifer that would usher in renewed animal sacrifice on the mount, where the Third Temple is to be built.

(BTW - no, as Melody matured some stray white hairs grew in, ending her chances as THE prophesied end-time red heifer. And thus her exclusion kicked a can down the road to Apocalypse, eliciting from some Jews a sigh of relief.)

Prof.del says

Biased and nothing like I expected it to be. Glosses over atrocities committed by the Zionist settler movement. However, some interesting points about the mad fundamentalists on all sides.worth a read.

David Rush says

For a modest book it packed such an army of characters in the 250 pages that I have trouble remembering who was who. The book mostly talks about the Temple Mount / Dome of the Rock as the focal point for extreme religious energy.

In the U.S. You can get an earful of millennialism (pre-mil usually) just by scanning "Christian" tv, but I gather there is a strong current of Messianic thought in Israel which is just as intense if not more so than the Christian version. AND it turns out a there is a growing branch of this kind of stuff in Islam, which strangely has gained popularity only recently and seems to unknowingly pick up the same structure as Christian End Times enthusiasts.

Interestingly (but obviously if you think about it) each side sees the others as being the crazy ones. And it is a given for every evangelical view that the Mosque on top of the Temple Mount is a sacrilege, the Muslims feel the same about any encroachment on their holy site. But all three believe a final battle will come and God will clear away the other guys.

It is a triangle of zealotry with each side thinking in the end only they will be left standing.

My one sentence synopsis is...

“This book shows there is not shortage of crazies, be they Jewish, Muslim or Christian and if any of them get worked up enough they have no problem with all the other “non-believers” being blown away, either with guns or by God.”

Here are just a few quotes from a few of the pages I dog-eared.

By the time we get to Hal Lindsey deciphering those name in 1970 as referring to Russia and the "Iron Curtain countries," who will invade Israel and might be destroyed by nuclear weapons, we have reason to wonder what is literal about the reading. The man who says, "I had those who read their ideas into the scripture by using allegory," seems as capable as any allegorist of reading what he wants into scripture. 245

A parable from the Jewish mystical tradition known as hasidism: A man was once walking through a forest at night and came to a house. Looking through the window, he saw people flinging their arms and legs about in grotesque motions. How awful, he thought, they're having seizures, they must all have a terrible illness, or perhaps they're mad. But the man outside the window didn't hear the singing inside, and didn't know they were dancing. If you don't hear the music of faith, says the story, you'll see the dance as disease. To take the point further, if you don't pay attention to the particular song being sung, you may notice only "seizures" and not which dance you're seeing out of the many possible. 236

Beneath the sci-fi veneer, for instance, the Heaven's Gate dream of ascent to heaven looked a lot like the Rapture...

“(they) had been making apocalyptic predictions for years. They couldn't sustain expectation forever, so they had to take irrevocable action.” This is the ultimate dogmatism: Any price is worth paying save the price of admitting that the Idea was wrong. 227
