

## 100 Years of Middle East Conflict - Honorable Peace: How Can Lasting Peace Be Secured between the Muslim World and Israel

**Gottfried Hutter**

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*Written to win over skeptics, 100 Years of Middle East Conflict - Honorable Peace forwards a peaceful suggestion for solving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.*

Gottfried Hutter's *100 Years of Middle East Conflict - Honorable Peace* sets out to accomplish the impossible: achieve peace between Jews, Muslims, and Christians in the Middle East.

Mixing history, theology, and political science, Hutter sets out in detail all of the dimensions of the current conflict in the Middle East, specifically between Palestinians and Israeli Jews. Contemporary issues, including illegal settlements in the West Bank, infighting between Hamas in Gaza and Fatah in the West Bank, and what it calls the enduring "insanity" of the two-state solution, are all extensively addressed. Faith comes in because of Hutter's background as a Roman Catholic theologian: the book presents the shared Abrahamic origins of Judaism, Islam, and Christianity as the way out of eternal conflict.

Written in clear, if not plain, language, the text is academic and well-researched, though presented as if intended for a non-scholarly audience. It could be used as a primer on the current situation in Israel, and takes a holistic view that includes everything from ancient history (the book goes all the way back to the arrival of the ancient Israelites to the Holy Land, recounted in Exodus) to the all-important age of the British Mandate of Palestine. It provides enough information about Jewish, Muslim, and Christian theology to also function as a divinity lesson for those not familiar.

The book works toward a conclusion that suggests a faith-forward type of governance, contending that in the Quranic interpretation of Israel, the Holy Land is a place for tolerance and acceptance of all three major faiths. It seeks to convince Palestinians that God commands them to respect their Jewish neighbors and suggests that an Israel that includes all three faiths must begin with public apologies from the Israeli government toward the Palestinian people, both Muslim and Christian.

This makes the difficult seem simple, breaking a complicated history into digestible chunks and proposing a solution to the conflict that is likewise reasonable and rational. It glosses over the reality that secular movements in Israel have also shown a willingness to despise Palestinians or Jews based on their blood, rather than on religion, though. Those who reject faith or who see religion as the problem in Israel, not the solution, will not find the book's conclusions satisfactory.

*100 Years of Middle East Conflict - Honorable Peace* forwards a peaceful suggestion for solving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict using argumentation designed to win over cynical skeptics.

BENJAMIN WELTON (July 29, 2019)

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