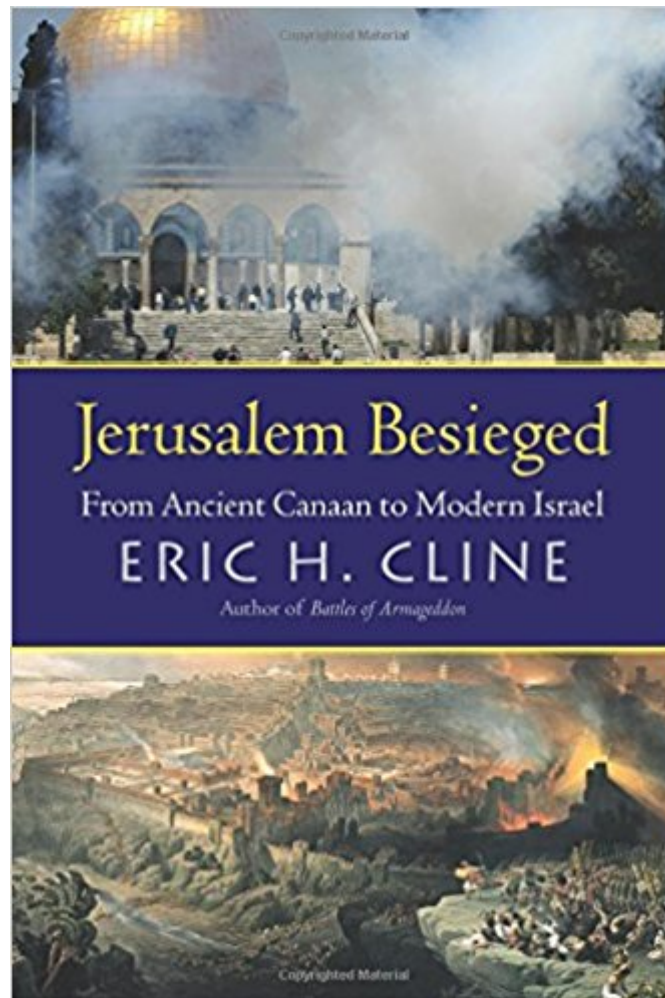




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# **Jerusalem Besieged: From Ancient Canaan To Modern Israel**



## Synopsis

"Jerusalem Besieged is a fascinating account of how and why a baffling array of peoples, ideologies, and religions have fought for some four thousand years over a city without either great wealth, size, or strategic importance. Cline guides us through the baffling, but always bloody, array of Jewish, Roman, Moslem, Crusader, Ottoman, Western, Arab, and Israeli fights for possession of such a symbolic prize in a manner that is both scholarly and engaging."-Victor Davis Hanson, Stanford University; author of *The Other Greeks* and *Carnage and Culture*"A beautifully lucid presentation of four thousand years of history in a single volume. Cline writes primarily as an archaeologist-avoiding polemic and offering evidence for any religious claims-yet he has also incorporated much journalistic material into this study. Jerusalem Besieged will enlighten anyone interested in the history of military conflict in and around Jerusalem."-Col. Rose Mary Sheldon, Virginia Military Institute"This groundbreaking study offers a fascinating synthesis of Jerusalem's military history from its first occupation into the modern era. Cline amply deploys primary source material to investigate assaults on Jerusalem of every sort, starting at the dawn of recorded history. Jerusalem Besieged is invaluable for framing the contemporary situation in the Middle East in the context of a very long and pertinent history."-Baruch Halpern, Pennsylvania State University"A sweeping history of four thousand years of struggle for control of one city"[An] absorbing account of archaeological history, from the ancient Israelites' first conquest to today's second intifada. Cline clearly lays out the fascinating history behind the conflicts."-USA Today"A pleasure to read, this work makes this important but complicated subject fascinating."-Jewish Book World"Jerusalem Besieged is a fascinating account of how and why a baffling array of peoples, ideologies, and religions have fought for some four thousand years over a city without either great wealth, size, or strategic importance. Cline guides us through the baffling, but always bloody, array of Jewish, Roman, Moslem, Crusader, Ottoman, Western, Arab, and Israeli fights for possession of such a symbolic prize in a manner that is both scholarly and engaging."-Victor Davis Hanson, Stanford University; author of *The Other Greeks* and *Carnage and Culture*

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## Customer Reviews

Cline, an associate professor of ancient history and archeology at George Washington University, begins his history of Jerusalem with mythical, biblical and archeological clues to its past, and the Roman histories of Josephus. Cline's narrative thread is the battles over control of a dusty village that took on increasing emotional content as it became a contested religious site. Cline claims "assimilation, annihilation and acculturation" through 10 empires and occupancies have left no one in the area today with "a legitimate pedigree definitively extending back to any of the original inhabitants." Of the alleged 118 conflicts over Jerusalem, few lacked a religious basis. Until 1917, Cline shows, Westerners controlled Jerusalem for less than a century. Beyond the Solomonic years, Jews have controlled the old city only since 1967. Perhaps no fragment of global real estate has been so volatile over so long a history. Despite sanguinary, even horrific detail from past memoirs and narratives, Cline's retelling is flat and repetitious, and the numerous references to Saddam Hussein, physically absent from this history, overreach in attempting immediate relevance. While a useful, well-annotated, textbookish guide to Jerusalem's violent past and present, it will not replace Karen Armstrong's stylish *Jerusalem. One City, Three Faiths* (1996). 10 color photos not seen by PW, 24 maps. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"A beautifully lucid presentation of four thousand years of history in a single volume. Cline writes primarily as an archaeologist-avoiding polemic and offering evidence for any religious claims-yet he has also incorporated much journalistic material into this study. *Jerusalem Besieged* will enlighten anyone interested in the history of military conflict in and around Jerusalem."-Col. Rose Mary Sheldon, Virginia Military Institute

A very readable, detailed history with extensive notes. I particularly found useful the timelines indicating the "conquerer."

The book is vast in scope: it covers from the Bronze Age to the Modern Age. The book is written as a narrative of Jerusalem, and succeeds in conveying the events of history surrounding Jerusalem in a way that keeps Jerusalem at the center, and this is done well. You will learn a lot about Jerusalem, specifically, and its quite enjoyable reading. I have two major points of contention. 1. He claims that the Umayyad Dynasty began in 638, with the taking of Jerusalem. This simply cannot be true. Caliph Umar was in charge during 638, was the Caliph who ordered the taking of, and received the surrender of, Jerusalem. There is not even room to argue that he was the beginning of the Umayyad Dynasty. He is neither from the Banu Umayyah nor from Damascus (this doesn't happen until the Umayyad Dynasty begins, officially). Caliph Ali isn't killed until 661, which is considered the end of the Rashidun Caliphate, and thus the beginning of the Umayyad cannot be 638. There are arguments to be made that it began shortly before 661, as Mu'awiyah had amassed a serious military and administration in Damascus by this time, but certainly not in 638, certainly not before Uthman is killed, certainly not before the Battle of the Camel, or the Battle of Siffin. 2. He follows Karen Armstrong's definition of jihad, which forgoes any notion of the Greater Jihad and Lesser Jihad, the former being an internal battle and the latter being the existential or external battle. All those and the binding of the book is s\*\*\*, the first 50 pages have fallen out. They're glued in, so I guess that's to be expected, and it's not even good glue.

For 4000 years, Jerusalem's sovereignty is fought over by Egyptians, Assyrians, Persians, Canaanites, Jews, Greeks, Romans, Christians, and various Muslim states. You will understand the Christian concept of "Armageddon" evolving from these hundreds of battles fought in and around Jerusalem, not far from the eponymous mountain (Har Megiddo). Highly recommended for those interested in gaining a foundation for the modern day struggle for this "Eternal City" - for the struggle over Jerusalem is anything but modern. An exciting, yet painful history to read.

I enjoyed reading this work of history. The multi-faceted, multi-perspectival approach was enlightening and helpful. I appreciated his unique voice and writing style. My only negative interaction with the material was that often when Biblical references are cited, there are instances of some insulting caveats: "if the Biblical sources are to be believed." I did not see that mentioned against other sources, thereby revealing a clear bias against the Bible. In my view, these are unnecessary qualifications unless the intent is to draw question upon the most-proven book in

history to which this book and its author would do well to pay appropriate homage by, at the very least, omitting such libelous remarks. In the words of a popular proverb: "Eat the fish, spit out the bones"

Good over view of Jerusalem time line. Not a lot of in depth detail of events ,but hard to do in one book. Only criticism is to much mention of Saddam and Osama . I always like more maps!

I found this book to be a very informative and enjoyable read. I had no idea of the number of times Jerusalem was attacked.The historic information and the manner in which it is presented makes it an exciting experience. I found my knowledge of many of the incidents in scripture were made more complete as I read this book.

I JUST STARTED READING THIS BOOK. I'M INTO THE FIRST CHAPTER. SO FAR SO GOOD. ABSOLUTELY NO COMPLAINTS.THANK YOU,ROGER

Amazing and interesting book.Gaves a lot of excellent information

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