



Fact Sheet

Hebron

Hebron (Heb: Hevron, Arab: (Al-Khalil), is the largest city in the West Bank, 30 km south of Jerusalem. Its population comprises 130,000 Arabs, 530 Jews in the Jewish Quarter, and three Christians. An additional 6,000 Jews reside in the adjacent community of [Kiryat Arba](#). Situated in the biblical region of Judea, Hebron is the second holiest city in Judaism after Jerusalem.

Sites:

Hebron is considered the oldest Jewish community in the world. The most famous historic site in Hebron is the Cave of the Patriarchs (*Ma'arat Hamachpela*) which, according to Genesis, Abraham purchased from Ephron the Hittite to bury his wife Sarah. Subsequently Abraham, Isaac, Rebecca, Jacob and Leah were also buried in the cave (the remaining Matriarch, Rachel, is buried outside Bethlehem). For this reason, Hebron is also referred to as 'the City of the Patriarchs' in Judaism, and regarded with Jerusalem, Tiberias and Tzfat as one of Judaism's four holy cities, and revered by Muslims also as the burial place of Abraham (Ibrahim).

Over and around the cave itself; synagogues, churches and mosques have been built throughout history. The Isaac Hall is now the Ibrahim Mosque, while the Abraham Hall and Jacob Hall serve as a Jewish synagogue. For 10 days each year (during various holidays) the entire building over the cave is reserved for Jewish worship; similarly, 10 days each year are reserved for Muslim worship only.

In medieval Christian tradition, Hebron was one of the three cities, the other two being Juttah and Ein Karem, that boasted of being the home of Mary's cousin, Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist and wife of Zacharias.

Significant modern era dates in Hebron's history:

1929 – Hebron Massacre. Arab rioters murder 67 Jewish residents and wound 60. Jewish homes and synagogues are vandalized.

1936 – British government moves the Jewish community out of Hebron because of security concerns.

1967 – Israel returns to Hebron. The old Jewish Quarter and synagogues have been destroyed in the absence of the Jewish community.

1968 – Rabbi Moshe Levinger and a group rent the Park Hotel in Hebron and refuse to leave. This action leads to the government decision to allow Levinger's group to resettle in the new neighborhood of Kiryat Arba, near Hebron, in 1972.

1979 – A group of Jewish settlers take over the former Hadassah Hospital, which eventually becomes Beit Hadassah at the heart of the Jewish community in Hebron. They are forced by the government to remain inside the building for a year under difficult conditions.

1980 – Palestinians open fire from Hebron rooftops killing six and wounding 16 Jewish worshipers on their way back from Shabbat evening prayers.

1994 – Dr. Baruch Goldstein, a physician and resident of Kiryat Arba, opens fire on Muslims at prayer in the Ibrahim Mosque killing 29 people before he was beat to death by worshipers.

1995 – The Israel-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and Gaza Strip is signed allowing for the deployment of the Temporary International Presence in Hebron.

1997 – The Hebron Protocol on Redeployment is signed by Israel and the Palestinians.

2010 – Israel decides to include the Cave of the Patriarch (and Rachel's Tomb) on the list of National Heritage Sites even though they are considered to be over the 'green line'. Tensions evolve into sporadic clashes between Palestinian protesters and IDF soldiers.

Excerpt from Agreement on Temporary International Presence in the City of Hebron 9 May 1996

- 1. Pursuant to Article VII of the Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, dated September 28, 1995, the two sides agree to the establishment of a Temporary International Presence*

redeploy from Hebron, whereupon it will be superseded by a new agreement to be negotiated by the two sides and the TIPH established by this Agreement will be replaced by a new TIPH to be established under the new agreement ("the new TIPH").

<http://mfa.gov.il/mfa/foreignpolicy/peace/guide/pages/agreement%20on%20temporary%20international%20presence%20in%20h.aspx>

<https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/hebron.html>

http://www.tiph.org/en/About_Hebron/Hebron_today/

This is current as of 2014.