

## Palestinian Ancestral Origins

Like the Lebanese, Syrians, Egyptians, Maghrebis, and most other people today commonly called *Arabs*, the Palestinians are an Arab people in linguistic and cultural affiliation. Like most other peoples today called Arabs, Palestinians descend from the pre-existing ancient inhabitants of their respective region and those who have come to settle it throughout history.

Ali Qleibo, a Palestinian anthropologist, explains: "Throughout history a great diversity of peoples has moved into the region and made Palestine their homeland: Canaanites, Jebusites, Philistines from Crete, Anatolian and Lydian Greeks, Hebrews, Amorites, Edomites, Nabateans, Arameans, Romans, Arabs, and European crusaders, to name a few. Each of them appropriated different regions that overlapped in time and competed for sovereignty and land. Others, such as Ancient Egyptians, Hittites, Persians, Babylonians, and Mongols, were historical 'events' whose successive occupations were as ravaging as the effects of major earthquakes ... Like shooting stars, the various cultures shine for a brief moment before they fade out of official historical and cultural records of Palestine. The people, however, survive. In their customs and manners, fossils of these ancient civilizations survived until modernity—albeit modernity camouflaged under the veneer of Islam and Arabic culture."

Much of the local Palestinian population in Nablus is believed to be descended from Samaritans who converted to Islam.

Ahad Ha'am believed that, "the Moslems [of Palestine] are the ancient residents of the land ... who became Christians on the rise of Christianity and became Moslems on the arrival of Islam."

Israel Belkind, the founder of the Bilu movement also asserted that the Palestinian Arabs were the blood brothers of the Jews. In his book on the Palestinians, "The Arabs in Eretz-Israel", Belkind advanced the idea that the complete dispersion of Jews out of the Land of Israel after the destruction of the Second Temple by the Roman emperor Titus is a "historic error" that must be corrected. While it dispersed much of the land's Jewish community around the world, those "workers of the land that remained attached to their land," stayed behind and were eventually converted to Christianity and then Islam.

Tsvi Misinai, an Israeli researcher, entrepreneur and proponent of a controversial alternative solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, asserts that nearly 90% of all Palestinians living within Israel and the occupied territories (including the Israeli Arabs and Negev Bedouin) are descended from the Jewish Israelite peasantry that remained on the land, after the others, mostly city dwellers, were exiled or left.

### **Arabian origins of the local Bedouin Arabs**

The local Bedouins of Palestine – which are a separately-identified and solely Muslim group, distinct from the non-Bedouin Arabic-speakers of Palestine which consists of members of the Muslim, Christian and other faiths – are said to be more securely known to be ancestrally descended from Arabians, and not just culturally and linguistically Arabized peoples.

## **Samaritan**

Ancestrally, they claim descent from a group of Israelite inhabitants from the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh (the two sons of Joseph) as well as some descendants from the priestly tribe of Levi,<sup>1</sup> who have connections to ancient Samaria from the period of their entry into the land of Canaan, while some suggest that it was from the beginning of the Babylonian Exile up to the Samaritan Kingdom of Baba Rabba. The Samaritans, however, derive their name not from this geographical designation, but rather from the Hebrew term Shamerim שְׁמֹרִים, "Keepers [of the Law]"

John 4:19-25 *The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. <sup>19</sup>Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. <sup>20</sup>Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. <sup>21</sup>Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. <sup>22</sup>But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. <sup>23</sup>God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.*