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## Syria – An Ancient Biblical Empire 'Bombed into Stone Age'

WRITTEN BY: ASHOK DHILLON



Ashok Dhillon has over 45 years of front-line business experience in Canada and International markets. His extensive experience gives him in-depth knowledge and intuitive insights into macro and micro, national and international, geo-political and economic realities and trends.



*Damascus before the war*

According to historians, along with Iraq, Syria is the most ancient of cradles of settled civilization, with habitation dating back over 10,000 years. Its fertile plains, mountains and deserts have been home to the most diverse cultures, races and religions, right into the modern times. Its capital, Damascus, is one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities of the World. Its antiquity sites of former great empires are some of the grandest and most awe inspiring, and its history boasts the distinction of having the Patriarch Abraham, of Biblical fame, and father to the Arabs (*through his first born Ishmael*) and Jews (*through his second son Isaac*) walk its plains; and Jesus, the most famous human, spoke its past dominant language, Aramaic, which was spoken in his time by the majority of peoples in the entire region, including all the Jews.

Aramaic is an ancient and important language belonging to the Semite family of languages, and goes back some 3500 years. Up to about 700 to 1400 AD, Aramaic was the dominant language in Syria, Iraq, Arabia and Canaan (*Part of Syria, Lebanon, Israel and Jordan*). It was predominant from Eastern Arabia to the Mediterranean Sea, and encompassed parts of Central Asia, Persia, and Turkey, and reached as far as Hadrian's Wall in Roman Briton through Assyrian soldiers in the Roman Army, India through Saint Thomas, and around 780 AD or earlier possibly entered China.

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Modern day Hebrew and Arabic are closely related to Aramaic like its practitioners the people, Jews and Arabs (*acknowledged first cousins*), both known as Semites (*children of Shem, one of Noah's son*), with Hebrew using the 'square' alphabet of Aramaic. Today, some form of Aramaic is spoken in almost all parts of the Worlds, including in Israel.

Ancient Syria was home to a vast number of diverse races throughout its long history that read as the who's who of empires past, and complete Old Testament Biblical recountings.

The current Syria is home to Sunni Muslims which are in majority, and Shiites, Christians, Alawites, Druze, Salafis, Yazids, Mandeans and Ismailie – who are the minorities. Many Jews had lived in Syria, but over the years almost all have left, even against strict restrictions imposed by the Syrian Government after the Arab – Israel War in 1948. Today it is estimated, perhaps less than 20 remain.

Modern Syria has been ruled by the Ba'athist, Alawite Assad family since 1970.

Hafez al Assad, a Syrian Air Force officer, became President in 1970 and ruled Syria with a firm but stable hand till his death in June of 2000. He was a prominent and respected political figure in the Arab World, who took Syria from a politically volatile, small, underdeveloped, inconsequential country, to being a major player amongst Arab nations. All his life, as President of Syria, Hafez al-Assad strived for Pan-Arabian Unity (*unification of all Arabs*), and the containment of Israel. In both those endeavors he largely failed. Yet he built Syria into a modern State that was respected in the Arab World as a power to contend with, in the Middle East. After the death of his oldest son in a car accident, who had been the heir apparent, the second son, Bashar Al Assad, a medical doctor by profession, specializing in Ophthalmology, in England, was summoned home. Not interested in politics his entire life, up to that point, he nevertheless had to pick up the mantle of the family dynasty established by his father.

Bashar al-Assad became President of Syria after his father's death in July 2000.

Bashar al-Assad has ruled Syria since, through two elections (2007 & 2014) that were heavily rigged to give him overwhelming majorities, not too dissimilar to his friend Putin's elections. And just like Putin, Bashar al-Assad rules as a Dictator, who goes through the elaborate ruse of holding sham elections, pretending to being a democratically elected leader.

What the two Assads (*the father and son*) brought to Syria was political stability, largely religious freedom, as both were secular rulers, being from a minority Alawite community in a Sunni majority Country, and modern development - at the cost of zero tolerance for opposition, and the absence of true democracy.

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Source: [businessinsider.com](http://businessinsider.com)

Syria is no stranger to wars and conquests, being situated historically where it is, and being inhabited for almost as long as it has been. But this 'civil' war is different. It has displaced over 4 million Syrians from their homes and country.

Started in March 2011, after the advent of 'Arab Spring', by locals protesting the brutality of Assad's repressive police and security forces, it expanded into a full-fledged civil war, as each protest brought greater suppression, and each ever more brutal suppression brought out even more protestors, who started peacefully enough, but as the violence against them escalated, quickly armed to defend themselves, and then, battle the ever repressive government forces and the regime.

Now, the 'civil war' has grown into a sectarian proxy war between Assad's Shia/Alwaite rule, and those Shia outside forces that support it, such as Iran, Shia Hezbollah, and World (*military*) Power Russia - and the Sunni majority in Syria, and its outside Sunni supporters, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Jordan, Turkey, and their Western backers, the World 'Super Power' the United States of America, and Britain, France, Sunni militias from Iraq, and the Sunni composed ISIS, who is willing to battle and terrorize any and everyone.

The tragic result of this expanded multi-party, give no quarter war, is the almost total devastation and destruction of an ancient and historically important country that was the cradle of human civilization, with the most precious antiquity sites (*pre Old Testament*), and yet was a functioning modern Arab State with a diverse population that practiced diverse religions, and lived in a country that had natural and historic beauty that surpassed most other countries.

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*Palmyra: Ancient Unesco World Heritage Sites*



The trouble, it seems, was that apart from being ruled by a dictator, it was ruled by a Shia minority through the Alwaites. And it would seem, from simple observation, as we certainly don't have any privileged information, that there is an understanding of some sort between the US, its Western allies, and its close friend Saudi Arabia, and Israel, for the destruction of Shia ruled countries and the ultimate total domination of the Moslem World by the overwhelming Sunni Moslem majority.

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Iraq was the first to be destroyed, and now its Syria being systematically reduced to rubble, which leaves only Iran, as the last largest Shia ruled country. As has been apparent, Israel under Netanyahu, and the Saudis have been at the US to take down Iran for quite a number of years now. So far, Barack Obama has managed to avoid and perhaps defer the destruction of Iran, which has earned him nothing but scorn from the Republicans, and the eternal enmity of Netanyahu.

The argument that these were wars to liberate the people of Iraq and Syria from their brutal dictators (*Saddam Hussein and Bashar al-Assad*) doesn't ring true, as Saudi Arabia, America's closest friend, has been ruled by an equally repressive dictatorial family (*the Saudi Royal Family*), that absolutely brooks no political opposition, for far longer.

Saudi Arabian regime is far more archaic and repressive than any other in the Middle East, compared to whom Saddam and Assad were downright modern, progressive and liberal in their secular rule.

Execution by public beheadings has been carried out by the Saudis regularly, well before the emergence of ISIS (*also Sunni*), but never condemned by the US and the West in the same outraged manner as with ISIS.

And, it has always been a mystery, as to why, when the 19 perpetrators of '9/11' were primarily Saudi (17) and Yemeni (2), Saudi Arabia was not attacked by an outraged America, but, it chose to destroy Iraq and Afghanistan and their rulers instead, who really had nothing to do with '9/11'.

Now as Syria is reduced to rubble, the same question persists, why let Syria be destroyed when quick and determined action by the US and the West, the UN, and Russia, early on in the conflict, could have saved the Country and over 250,000 innocent civilian lives, and over 4 million people displaced as refugees, modern cities from being reduced to rubble, and priceless antiquities looted or destroyed. Such horrendous cost, to remove one man?



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The daily horrors that the hapless Syrian people suffer in this grotesque global power play, are unimaginable and heart rending, and should be totally unacceptable to the common people of the World in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

Yet, in spite of global access to the horrific images of systematic destruction of an entire country, its people, and its children, the World simply watches and is content to let the politicians wrangle endlessly in palatial settings while horror is unleashed on innocents. In this day and age, the global populations should be more proactive in objecting to such horrific conflicts, and such destructive power plays that reduce an entire country to rubble.



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