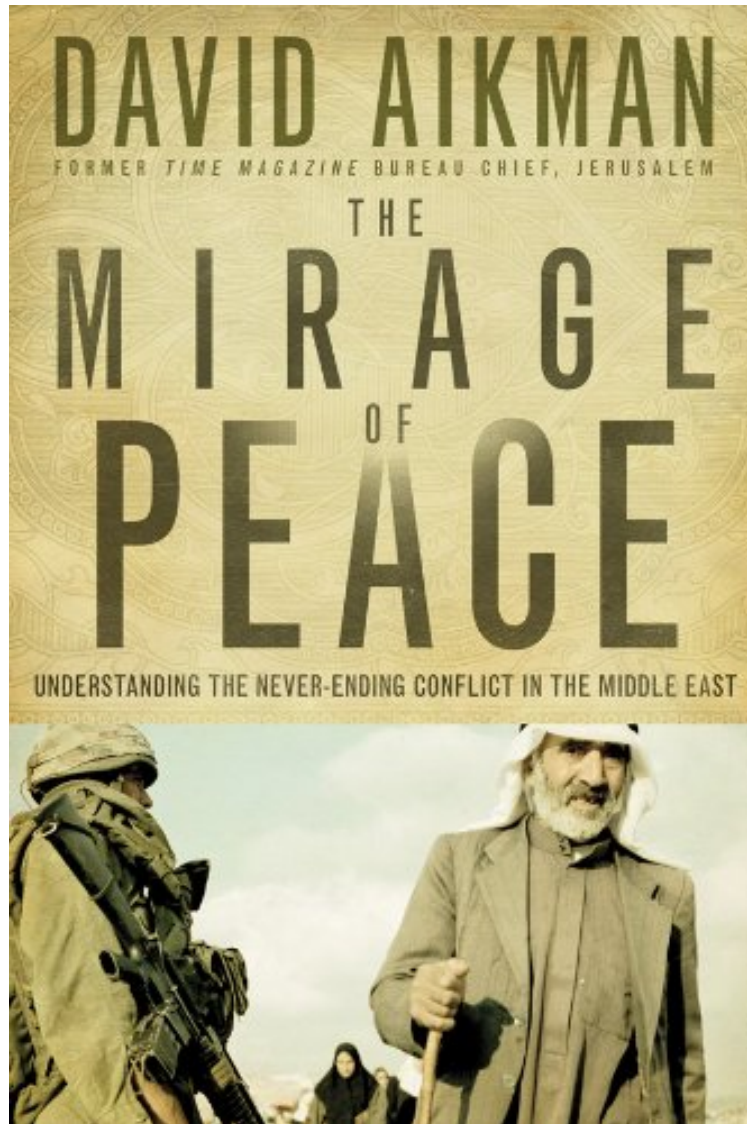


(Free pdf) The Mirage of Peace: Understanding the Never-Ending Conflict in the Middle East

The Mirage of Peace: Understanding the Never-Ending Conflict in the Middle East

David Aikman

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David Aikman : The Mirage of Peace: Understanding the Never-Ending Conflict in the Middle East before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Mirage of Peace: Understanding the Never-Ending Conflict in the Middle East:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Aikman is excellent communicator and historian. By JotDavid Aikman deserves more attention. He has written a number of wonderful books. 11 of 11 people found the following

review helpful. Highly Informative, Very Useful
By E. [Holmes] Asbenson
I'm glad to have added the very useful "Mirage of Peace" to my personal library. It's joined two or three other books as my top recommendations towards gaining a good survey-level knowledge of the history and politics of the Middle East. In the interest of full disclosure, I studied under Dr. Aikman. That does not necessarily lead to a positive student-professor endorsement, but in my case I was able to question and probe the vast depths of David Aikman's personal experience and considerable knowledge. I was consistently impressed by his thoughtful, inquisitive perspective on world events. "The Mirage of Peace" is arranged as a survey of the nations that comprise the Middle East. Aikman moves nation-by-nation, examining major events and motivators in the history of each state and how these factors affect their relations with neighbors and the surrounding region. While some nations, most notably Egypt, have a past stretching back hundreds or thousands of years, many were pulled together by European powers out of the ashes of the Ottoman Empire in the aftermath of WWI. Others have a still more recent past, such as the resurrection of an Israeli state after WWII. With that being said, the overall focus of the book is the late 19th century through the late 20th, with some discussion of both the Gulf War and the ongoing Iraq War. Many of the events Aikman covers on he not only studied but lived through and reported on during his years as a journalist, giving his narrative a better sense of culture and place than many academic pieces I've read on the subject. This book represents an incredible, lucid compendium of information on the countries that comprise the region and the wars and wounds that still motivate them today. I can't think of a better survey to recommend for readers planning interaction with the nations of the Middle East--whether for business, study, policy, or pleasure. Aikman is excellent at reminding the reader of intersections with previously introduced information where appropriate, juggling numerous players without confusion. The format is also such that a reader could find their nation(s) of interest and glean from that chapter without having to cross-reference other sections--though of course I recommend reading the whole book.

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Why is this Happening?
By Orville B. Jenkins
This is an excellent background and analysis of the factors behind the current countries and conflicts in the what is now called the Middle East. For foundational perspective, Aikman provides a short history of how the land has been seen and how the area has been referred to by the west over the centuries until the recent usage of the name "Middle East." Aikman is a journalist who brings his knowledge of the region and his perception of people and movements in the various cultures. Here he reconstructs the lines of culture, religion, politics, economics and ethnicity that has led to the individual political entities we know today. He believes it is necessary to understand the peoples and nations of the Middle East as they understand themselves in order to understand what is going on there, and why things happen as they do. I found his country by country approach very helpful in filling gaps in common knowledge and current perceptions. The broader events of history are connected to the specific areas we now know as the nation-states in the area. This gives us an insight into how regional and world events are perceived in that particular country. Similarly, readers will appreciate the differences between the various nations of the region. This historical understanding adds depth and brings insight to the current complexities. It is good to get world events and the broad movements into context as they affected individual peoples and as they led to the particular political entities that have come and gone over the centuries. Aikman does a particularly admirable job of clearly identifying the decisions, good and bad, of the European colonial powers in the middle East over the last few centuries and especially in the last two centuries that have contributed to the competing views of reality and clamors for power. This is informative and fair.

Former TIME Magazine Jerusalem bureau chief David Aikman takes a sober, balanced impactful look at the Middle East, bringing a journalists mind and a believers heart to his examination of a region aflame. In this timely and informed exploration of current Middle East issues that goes beyond headlines and sound bites, Aikman fills in the blanks for thoughtful Christians, accurately tracing recent history and fairly portraying the leaders who have made that history. With a firm grasp on a biblical understanding of Israels past, present and future, he turns a critical eye on the political and religious policies of the regions prime players, resorting neither to blind pro Israeli sentiment nor to reactionary pro Palestinian bias. Aikman challenges us to a uniquely Christian approach to the Middle East, respect, reason and love, rather than unqualified tolerance on the one hand or religious crusading on the other.

From the Back Cover
Morning headlines announce renewed violence and fresh calls for peace negotiations, while pundits on talk radio and cable TV shout conflicting opinions at anyone who will listen. Between perplexing contradictions and inflammatory rhetoric, it is often difficult to find out whats really going on in the Middle East. Former TIME magazine Jerusalem bureau chief David Aikman, who has spent decades reporting on Mid-East issues, takes a sober, balanced look at a region aflame. He brings a journalists mind and a believers heart to his exploration of the political and religious factors in play, and goes beyond the medias chronic over-simplification to carefully examine recent history and the leaders who have made that history. Aikman turns a critical eye on the policies of the regions prime players, resorting neither to blind pro-Israeli sentiment nor to reactionary pro-Palestinian bias. He challenges fellow Christians to a similar approach to the Middle East: respect, reason and love, rather than unqualified tolerance on the one hand or religious crusading on the other. Discover the truth behind the headlines: Gods restoring hand is at

work in a region of the world torn apart by centuries of strife.