



# Inheriting the Holy Land: An American's Search for Hope in the Middle East

Jennifer Miller

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Inheriting the Holy Land: An American's Search for Hope in the Middle East Jennifer Miller Writing with fierce honesty, Jennifer Miller has created an extraordinary synthesis of history, reportage, and coming-of-age memoir in Inheriting the Holy Land. Her groundbreaking perspective on the conflict is presented through interviews with young Israelis and Palestinians and conversations with some of the most influential officials involved in the Middle East, including Shimon Peres, Yasir Arafat, James Baker, Benjamin Netanyahu, Colin Powell, Ehud Barak, and Mahmoud Abbas. This book will open eyes, open hearts, and open minds.

Miller grew up in an affluent suburb of Washington, D.C., surrounded by the chaotic politics of the Middle East. Her father was a U.S. State Department negotiator at the Oslo and Camp David peace summits, and dinnertime conversation in the Miller household often included discussions of the Middle Eastern conflict. When Miller joined Seeds of Peace, a program that brings Middle Eastern kids to Maine for intensive sessions of conflict resolution, her real experience with the Middle East began. As she befriended young Palestinians, Israelis, Egyptians, and Jordanians, Jennifer came to realize that their views were missing from the ongoing debate over the Holy Land. By helping these young voices be heard, she knew she could reveal something vitally new and deeply challenging about the future of this torn region.

Miller, however, learned fast that it was one thing to hang out at the idyllic Seeds for Peace camp in Maine and quite another to confront young people on their own turf—in the alleys of East Jerusalem, behind the armed gates of West Bank settlements, in the teeming refugee camps of Gaza. Friendships that had blossomed in the United States withered in the aftermath of yet another suicide bombing. Big-hearted teens on both sides of the conflict shocked Miller with the ferocity of their illusions and the twisted logic of their misconceptions. But she also found rays of hope in places where others had reported only despair—surprising open-mindedness among the ultra-religious, common ground shared by those who had lost loved ones to the violence, a yearning for peace amid the rubble of refugee camps and the shards of bombed cities.

A deft writer, she interweaves her startlingly candid interviews with the vibrant realities of life in the streets. Just as Jennifer Miller was forced to confront her biases as an American, a Jew, a woman, and a journalist, in Inheriting the Holy Land, she similarly challenges readers to reexamine their own cherished prejudices and assumptions.

From the Hardcover edition.



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