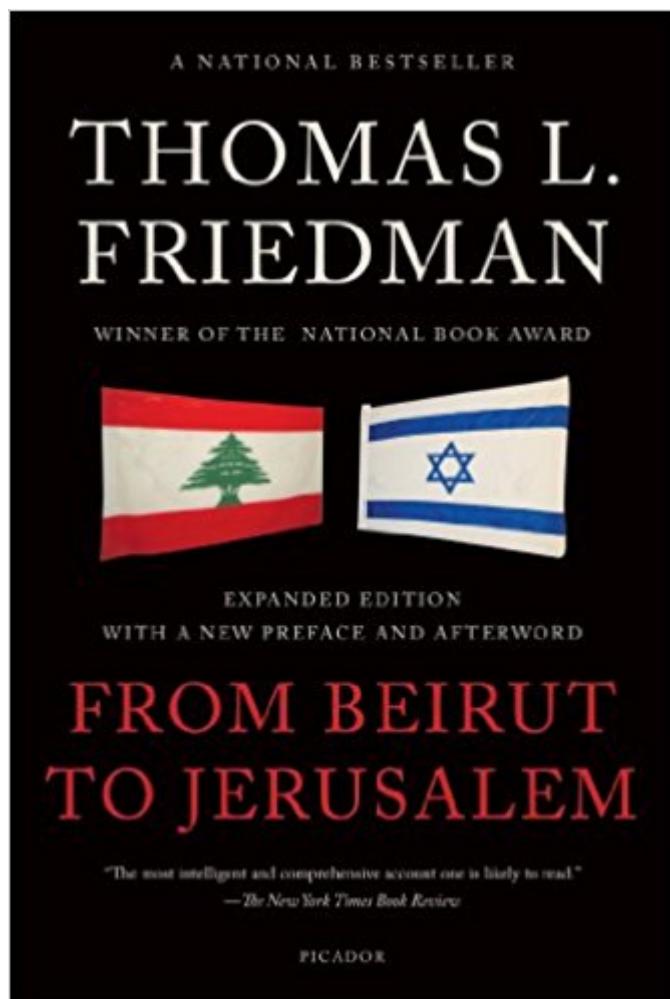


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# From Beirut To Jerusalem



## **Synopsis**

"If you're only going to read one book on the Middle East, this is it."---Seymour M. Hersh One of the most thought-provoking books ever written about the Middle East, *From Beirut to Jerusalem* remains vital to our understanding of this complex and volatile region of the world. Three-time Pulitzer Prize winner Thomas L. Friedman drew upon his ten years of experience reporting from Lebanon and Israel to write this now-classic work of journalism. In a new afterword, he updates his journey with a fresh discussion of the Arab Awakenings and how they are transforming the area, and a new look at relations between Israelis and Palestinians, and Israelis and Israelis. Rich with anecdote, history, analysis, and autobiography, *From Beirut to Jerusalem* will continue to shape how we see the Middle East for many years to come.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

"Friedman, who twice garnered the Pulitzer as a New York Times correspondent in Lebanon and Israel, further delineates the two countries in this provocative, absorbing memoir cum political and social analysis," commented PW. The work won the National Book Award. Copyright 1990 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

There have been any number of books that have worked hard at interpreting the melange called the Middle East. This one, however, makes a difference because it's so well written and captures the psychological mannerisms of the people of Lebanon and Israel--the first step to understanding some of the mysterious "why" that seems to elude the American public and government. Friedman's

credentials are impressive: he spent six years of journalistic service for the New York Times in Beirut and Jerusalem, has won two Pulitzer prizes, and is now the Times 's chief diplomatic correspondent. His writing is vastly descriptive, incredibly illuminating, very educational, and marvelously persuasive. His advice to U.S. diplomats is that since "Middle East diplomacy is a contact sport," they must bargain as grocers, or, in other words, realize that everything has a price and the sale can always be made with enough hard work. This title is highly recommended for all libraries. See also Sandra Mackey's Lebanon: Death of a Nation , reviewed below.- Ed. -- David P. Snider, Casa Grande P.L., Ariz.Copyright 1989 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I hope that all the members of Congress, the Military, the Special Interest/Lobbies read this insightful body of work. It is tragic that impartial observers like Tom Friedman seem to be ignored by our government and by many others, as well. The die is cast, so to speak, and now we have to thank the likes of George Bush and his cronies for further inflaming the Middle East. I wonder if any of them even attempted to read/understand this book. I doubt it. Empires and emperors are usually blinded by their own magnificence. I recommend Tom Friedman's magnificent work. It's a different spin on the word. Let's be optimistic, pro-active, and strive for a lasting peace between Israel, the Palestinians, and all others enmeshed in this "continuum". I'd like to see the next chapter be one recounting the progress being made, and not another account of violence and reprisals.

Tom Friedman writes a balanced, horrifying and sometimes even (absurdly) humorous memoir of his time in war-torn Lebanon and in Israel during the two intifadas. The insanity that prevails in the Middle East unfortunately taught the world nothing as US adventurism-again based on no understanding of these cultures whatsoever-has exacerbated the situation even further as has the widening of the Shiite-Sunni tribalism, this time in the guise of ISIS-and of course the Palestinian-Israeli conflict which has now become apartheid redux. When will we ever learn?

Anyone trying to understand the problems in the Midde East and their origins should buy and read this book. The author writes from many years of experience living in the area and dealing with both Jews and Arabs, and he provides great insight into both the differences and similarities between them.

Thirty years before My Promised Land (Ari Shavit's wonderful book) Tom Friedman also takes us on

the grand tour. In Lebanon he relates to us an up close and personal taste of life amid war and chaos and suffering. In Israel, he wanders through the mist of questions that exist even in his own mind concerning the path being taken by Israel's leaders. We can see the country through the minds of Americans from a distance and through the minds of the various religious and non-religious citizens of Israel. Mr. Friedman is an impassive and, at the same time, an interested party. He shows us the many conflicts that arise when a country becomes independent and is still finding its way in the world. Americans can relate to that story....we are still developing our own country and trying to hoist ourselves up to the bar of our own ideals. Israel's story, though, seems to be unique in the history of mankind and we must wish them well. Tom Friedman is still teaching and informing the public on many fronts. He is a master.

I knew nothing about the Middle East but when preparing to tour Syria and Jordan focussing on historical monuments, this book was recommended to me. The author opened up a very different land to my own with very different beliefs and lifestyles. Most importantly the author explained the very different way of political thinking and the role of 'strong men' in keeping the peace even if temporarily. This book should be compulsory reading for any westerner planning to work in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and nearby countries.

The biggest take-home of this book's documentation of the depth of Israeli-Palestinian hostilities is the revelation of the severity of the mutual "positions" each country holds "privately." Friedman's long-standing coverage of the Middle East gives credibility--and horror, as he reveals both countries feel at bottom that the entire region is theirs to keep. The pieces of the previously undisclosed puzzle may even earn our compassion--though finding resolution seems more than hopeless, and though Friedman attempts to give hope by book's end, it's clear the sleight of hand underlying all former negotiations has made pea-soup of all peace-makers' efforts. Faith in the local leadership, on both sides, is hard to take hold. Why the British and United Nations' members ever thought one wrong could be balanced by another, usurping Palestinian lands for "historical peoples" is beyond modern understanding (holocaust notwithstanding). I am glad Palestine took the initiative to be recognized by the U.N. Perhaps there this transparency can lead to new perspectives and resolutions--though it seems the only sturdy resolution is finding a piece of the earth where one or the other can fully call home .Friedman has done us all a great service--and the middle East in particular--in opening these windows so the light may shine through.

During my service in Armenia, I came across this book in the Peace Corps library. Having enjoyed "The World is Flat" I decided to try it out. Part of my rating is based on the fact that it is not only well-informed but very readable, unlike many non-fiction books. His work as a journalist for the NY Times is surely a benefit to the readers who like me might be exploring this topic in depth for the first time. I never felt buried in facts. I also liked the fact that he was stationed there during the 80's and saw things "up close and personal." And finally, it gave me an understanding of "Politics as Theater." Neither side seemed that interested in real compromise but just tipping the Scales of Sympathy on the World's Stage their way. When the GOP and Obama faced off over Fiscal Cliff in December, the same dynamics seemed to be in place. Even though Friedman is portraying events that are now over 25 years past, it is a vivid time capsule of how deeply embedded are the dysfunctional dynamics between these two countries. It also gave me some historical perspective on the Armenian attitude toward Turkey that I encountered daily in the adult population. The historical lesson I came away with was that building your National Identity around "being right" does not give the next generation very much room to negotiate for a better future.

It would be interesting to get a Middle East update from Thomas Friedman. His book is an excellent first-hand history regarding the conflicts in both Beirut and Israel.

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