Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas have addressed the Annapolis conference, on the first night of the international gathering. As predicted by WorldNetDaily, Olmert did indeed make reference to the Arab Peace Initiative, a symbolic gesture to Saudi Arabia which was in attendance at the conference. Both Abbas and Olmert expressed hope that negotiations could be completed by the end of 2008. Both leaders stated that it was in their common interest that peace should be made between Israel and the Palestinians. They also mentioned the need to combat religious extremism and fundamentalism, and the necessity of further disengagements from territories captured by Israel during the Six Day War. But both leaders seemed to disagree on what exactly would be discussed at the Annapolis peace conference...

**Olmert:** *"The negotiations between us will not take place here in Annapolis but rather in our home and in your home. These negotiations will be bilateral, direct, ongoing, and continuous, in an effort to complete the process in the course of 2008. The negotiations will address all of the issues which we have thus far avoided dealing with. We will do this directly, openly and courageously. We will not avoid any subject. We will deal with all the core issues*

**Abbas:** *"Tomorrow, we have to start comprehensive and deep negotiations on all issues of final status, including Jerusalem, refugees, borders, settlements, water and security and others. We have to support this negotiating process in concrete and direct steps on the ground that would prove that we are moving in an irreversible path toward negotiated, comprehensive and full peace, and to ensure ending all settlement activities, including natural growth, and reopening closed Jerusalem institutions, removal of settlement outposts, removal of road blocks, and freedom of prisoners, and to facilitate our mission in the authority to enforce law and the rule of law.*

Olmert and Abbas also disagreed on how far they would have to go to in order to achieve peace. Olmert commented that the situation which emerged in 1967 would change dramatically. In other words, Israel would be prepared to disengage from most of the land it captured during the Six Day War in return for peace with the Arab nations. On the other hand, Abbas is still clinging to the idea that Israel must give up all the territories captured in 1967 in order for there to be peace between Israel and the Palestinians.

**Olmert:** ***"****I am convinced that the reality that emerged in our region in 1967 will change significantly. This will be an extremely difficult process for many of us, but it is nevertheless inevitable. I know this. Many of my people know this. We are prepared for it.*

**Abbas:** *"But to achieve that does not depend on the Arab and Islamic position by itself, but requires meeting this position by a reciprocal strategic willingness that would basically lead to ending the occupation of* ***all Palestinian occupied territories in 1967****, including East Jerusalem, as well as the Syrian Golan and what remains of occupied from Lebanese territories, and to resolve all other issues relating to the conflict, especially the Palestinian refugees question in all its political, humanitarian, individual and common aspects, consistent with Resolution 194, as emphasized by the Arab peace initiative and the participation of sister states that host refugees and carry huge burdens in this regard... It is my duty to say that, to have peace, we need the fate of the city of Jerusalem to be a critical component in any peace accord that we might reach.*

***We need East Jerusalem to be our capital***

*and to establish open relations with western Jerusalem, and to ensure for all the faithful from all religions their right to exercise their rituals and to access holy shrines without any discrimination and on the basis of international and humanitarian goals.*

It seems Abbas has stuck to his guns (pun intended!). Abbas stated in his speech that the fate of the city of Jerusalem must be a critical component in any peace accord that will be reached. And at the centre of Jerusalem lies the Temple Mount. I don't think the Arabs will give that up without a fight. We know from Scripture that a deal will be made which will see Israel disengage from at least half the city of Jerusalem (Zechariah 14:2). For three and a half years, the Gentile nations will trample the Holy City underfoot (Revelation 11:2). Satan's goal is to hinder the Lord Jesus Christ's return to Jerusalem as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He is seeking to set up his one world government, where he will be worshipped by all instead of God.

Revelation 12:12-13
Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabiters of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman (Israel) which brought forth the man child (Jesus Christ).

Jerusalem, and specifically the Temple Mount, will play a great part in end time events. Praise God that He has not left us in the dark, and has not hidden from us that thing which He will do (Genesis 18:17). The battle is the Lord's, and also the victory. The kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our God and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever (Revelation 11:15). Are you a citizen of His Kingdom? Trust in Jesus Christ for salvation today.

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