

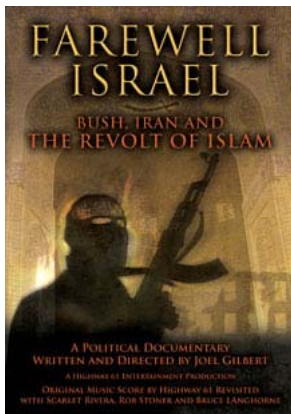
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The Peaceful Critic Reviews "Farewell Israel"



Bush, Iran and the revolt of Islam...



"Farewell Israel: Bush, Iran and the Revolt of Islam," written and directed by Joel Gilbert, is an in-depth journey through time from the birth of Islam and its 1,200 year reign over the civilized world to the last 300 years of Islamic decline that has resulted in domination by the West and, according to Gilbert, the ultimate humiliation of at the hands of the Jewish state of Israel.

With a story told largely through narration by veteran voiceover actor Lance Lewman, "Farewell Israel" intersperses its historical perspective with a rather intense political analysis of the current state of political and religious affairs in the world, especially post 9/11 and involving President George W. Bush's gross misinterpretation of 9/11 as a "War on Freedom" and a U.S. response that, according to Gilbert, played right into the hands of Al Qaeda.

Gilbert, one of the few Westerners generally regarded as an authority on Jewish/Islamic relations, projects a rather grim view of the current political climate in the belief that Western and Israeli misunderstanding of Islam are leading down a road towards war that Gilbert believes will

STARRING

Narrator Lance Lewman

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY

Joel Gilbert

MPAA RATING

NR

RUNNING TIME

145 Mins.

PRODUCTION BUDGET

Grade: C+



US Box Office: (Straight to Video)

The Peacemaker's Perspective

This documentary examines the potential for peace in the Mideast, current US policies, the history of Islam and why it seems that the destruction of Israel is inevitable in the eyes of the filmmaker.

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have tragic consequences for the West and, even moreso, for Israel.

Gilbert's documentary, from a historical perspective, is an incredibly well-researched, clearly organized and enlightening film that presents as part academic introduction to Islam and also sort of plays off as a myth-buster in relation to stereotypical Western misunderstandings. The film would easily be at home in an academic setting and, despite its rather grim tone, would also serve the religious institution well in providing a deeper, more historical perspective on a faith that so few Westerners understand.

While the film works wonders as a historical perspective, Gilbert's experience in researching and lecturing on Islamic/Jewish relations hinders his effectiveness when turning the film towards a more socio-political bent. Whereas the historical aspects of the film are incredibly well researched, Gilbert's political assertions too often sound like educated, yet obviously based assertions that lack the solid academic perspective that he offers during the film's early historical survey.

It's not so much that his assertions sound invalid, but rather that Gilbert is so clearly convinced of his assertions that he fails to put the same energy into developing a convincing discussion to support the assertion. While this approach may work with those who are well versed in Islamic history, it's hard not to wonder if the average American won't simply misinterpret the material and, thereby, perpetuating the misunderstanding of which Gilbert so clearly warns.

Gilbert, who has previously directed three films on Bob Dylan's career and music, directs "Farewell Israel" with a straightforward style incorporating modest CGI special effects, archival footage, considerable interview footage with current Iranian President Ahmadinejad and an accompanying musical score by Highway 61 Revisited.

While the visuals are, indeed, often impressive, "Farewell Israel" often feels as if it belongs on the History Channel. Complete with what appears to be ideal short chapters, "Farewell Israel" runs a lengthy 2 1/2 hours and, with only occasional breaks from Lance Lewman's narration the film occasionally drags in pacing.

"Farewell Israel," while not a strong candidate for embracing by the general public, is an intriguing addition to personal, academic and seminary libraries with its in-depth historical presentation of Islam and how that history impacts today's political climate and, in Gilbert's eyes, the inevitability of war between Islam and the West and, even moreso, the inevitable attempt by the Islamic East to eliminate "unjust" nation of Israel through Islamic eyes.

At times rather grim, yet incredibly enlightening, informative and straightforward, "Farewell Israel: Bush, Iran and the Revolt of Islam" will be

available on DVD in November. For more information on the film, visit the film's website at [Farewell Israel](#).

© **Written by Richard Propes**
The Peaceful Critic



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