

INTRODUCTION
TO THE
RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN THE
JEWISH PEOPLE
AND ERETZ
ISRAEL



Dear Livnot-nik

Welcome to the second educational pack we are sending you. In this pack we are going back to the beginnings of modern day Zionism and our connection and relationship to the land of Israel.

Just like last time, each one will read the whole thing, but will focus on one or two sections, which they will be in charge of explaining to the rest of us when we meet.

The sections that you are in charge of are-

Again we wish to say that these packs and this style of pack are new and we are looking for as much feedback as possible from you to tell us how to improve these packs. We want to know how to make them more user friendly and whether the level of the information needs to be either raised or lowered. Any feedback will be greatly appreciated.

We hope that you will enjoy reading through this pack, and we will be speaking to you soon,

Your movement team

TIMELINE OF JEWISH HISTORY & ZIONISM

(Key moments relating to Israel)

<i>Approx. 2000 BCE</i>	Abraham promised the land of Canaan (Israel) and goes there
<i>Approx. 1200 BCE</i>	After the exodus from Egypt the Jewish people receive the Torah at Mount Sinai
<i>Approx. 1000 BCE</i>	King David makes Jerusalem the capital of Israel
<i>Approx. 950 BCE</i>	Building of the 1 st Temple by King Solomon
<i>586 BCE</i>	Destruction of 1 st Temple by Babylonians
<i>520 BCE</i>	Building of 2 nd Temple
<i>Approx. 160 BCE</i>	Maccabean revolt (story of Chanukah)
<i>70 CE</i>	Destruction of 2nd Temple by Romans – Jewish exile began (Galut is Hebrew for exile)

We now jump about 1800 years. During this period, whilst there was a small Jewish presence in Israel, the majority lived throughout the world in exile.

The land of Israel went from Christian rule to Muslim rule (during which the Dome of the Rock was built on the Temple Mount – 691 CE) and ‘ownership’ of the land continued to be a source of conflict between them.

During these years there were both highs and lows for the Jews living outside of Israel. From the Golden Age of Spain (950 – 1150 CE) to the expulsion and blood libels/persecution in, amongst others, England (1290 CE) and Spain (1492 CE). It was during this period that the Haskala – enlightenment – (starting 1789 CE) led to the beginning of the reform movement and subsequent streams of Judaism.

<i>Approx 1810</i>	Moses Montefiore began to create settlements within Israel
<i>1881 – 1903</i>	1 st Aliyah – mainly from Russia due to the pogroms (approx 25000 people)
<i>1894/5</i>	Dreyfuss Trial – Herzl attended as a reporter
<i>1896</i>	Theodore Herzl writes ‘Der Judenstaat’ – ‘The Jewish State’ – calling for the creation of a Jewish homeland
<i>1897</i>	1st Zionist Congress in Basle – leading to the start of ‘Political Zionism’ and the Jewish aim of creating a Jewish state.

From here until the creation of the state (1948) there were many varying opinions as to how to go about creating the state, as well as what that state should be (even including where it should be).

In the Beginning...

On this page you will find the very first verse of the Torah and an accompanying commentary by Rashi.

So who was Rashi? Rashi was probably the most outstanding biblical commentator of the Middle Ages. Born in France in 1040, he was a fantastic scholar who eventually (at the age of only 25) founded his own academy for Torah study. His commentaries have become so prominent due to his concern for detail – he would examine and expand upon every single word within a text – whilst at the same time ensuring he used the fewest possible number of words. His commentary has become so popular over time that today there are over 200 commentaries on his commentary!!

Bereishit (Genesis)

Chapter 1 – Verse 1

א בְּרֵאשִׁית, בָּרָא
אֱלֹהִים, אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם,
וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ.
1 In the beginning God created the
heaven and the earth.

Rashi Commentary on This Verse

1. (1) R. Yitzchok said: The Torah should have begun with [the verse] “This month shall be your first month,” which is the first commandment given to *the people of* Israel. Then why does it [the Torah] begin with "In the beginning" and the account of creation? This is because [of the concept contained in the verse,] "He declared the power of His works to His people (*i.e. he gave an account of creation*) in order to give to them the inheritance of nations." Thus, should the nations of the world say to Israel, "You are robbers, for you have taken by force the lands of the Seven Nations of Canaan," they [Israel] will say to them: "All the earth belongs to G-d. He created it and gave it to whomever He saw fit. It was His will to give it to them and it was His will to take it from them and give it to us."

THE PROMISE

PARSHA LECH LECHA is where we see both the commandment of Abraham to go to Canaan as well as the promise that from him would come a great nation. Whilst reading, it is worth considering what the Covenant between Abraham and Hashem is and what purpose it has.

א וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-אַבְרָם, לֵךְ-לְךָ מֵאֶרֶץְךָ וּמִמּוֹלַדְתְּךָ וּמִבֵּית אָבִיךָ, אֶל-הָאָרֶץ, אֲשֶׁר אֲרָאֶךָ.
1 Hashem said unto Abram: 'Go for yourself, from your land, and from your relatives, and from your father's house, unto the land that I will show you.'

ב וְאֶעֱשֶׂה, לְגוֹי גָדוֹל, וְאֶבְרַכְךָ, וְאֶגְדַּלְךָ שְׁמֶךָ; וְהָיָה, בְּרַכָּה.
2 And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing.

ג וְאֶבְרַכְךָ, מְבָרְכֶיךָ, וּמְקַלְלֶיךָ, אָאֵר; וְנִבְרַכּוּ בְּךָ, כָּל מִשְׁפְּחוֹת הָאָדָמָה.
3 And I will bless them that bless you, and him that curses you I will curse; and in you shall all the families of the earth be blessed.'

ד וַיֵּלֶךְ אַבְרָם, כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר אֵלָיו יְהוָה, וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶתוֹ, לוֹט; וְאַבְרָם, בֶּן-חֲמִשָּׁה שָׁנִים וְשִׁבְעִים שָׁנָה, בָּצִאתוֹ, מִחָרָן.
4 So Abram went, as Hashem had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him; and Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed out of Haran.

ה וַיִּקַּח אַבְרָם אֶת-שָׂרַי אִשְׁתּוֹ וְאֶת-לוֹט בֶּן-אָחִיו, וְאֶת-כָּל-רְכוּשָׁם אֲשֶׁר רָכְשׁוּ, וְאֶת-הַנַּפְשׁ, אֲשֶׁר-עָשׂוּ בְּחָרָן; וַיֵּצְאוּ, לָלֶכֶת אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן, וַיָּבֹאוּ, אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן.
5 And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.

Connection to the Promised Land after Abraham

After Abraham was promised Canaan by G-d and settled there, the following generations spent their lives living both in and out of this land. The immediate generations after Abraham, which included our forefathers Isaac and Jacob, stayed in the Promised Land and raised their families there.

The first Jew that we know of to leave Canaan was Joseph. He was sold by his brothers to Ishmaelites and ended up in Egypt. After a short spell as a slave and a period in jail, Joseph held an important position within the Egyptian government and after terrible years of famine was reunited with the rest of his family who moved to Egypt to be with him.

Many generations passed with no real presence in Canaan and the Jewish descendants of Joseph ended up slaves within Egypt under a strong and ferocious Pharaoh called Rameses II. Moses, born to a Jewish slave, was put in a basket as a baby and placed in the Nile to avoid being murdered by the Egyptians. A princess of Egypt discovered Moses and after being raised as a royal within Egypt, realised that his people, the Jews, were being treated terribly and with the help of G-d and numerous plagues and miracles, led the Jewish people out of slavery and away from Egypt.

The Jewish people, with Moses as their leader, wandered through the desert for 40 years, during which time the Torah was given to the Jewish people at Mount Sinai. Moses was not allowed to enter the Promised Land, so Joshua led the Jewish people into Israel and after many battles, most notably at Jericho, the Jewish people settled back in Israel.

The Jewish people lived in Israel with many different leaders over the years. The first group of leaders were called the judges. After the judges had led for many years, Saul was anointed the first King of Israel. A few years after this, King David was the ruler of Israel and in approximately 1000 BCE he made Jerusalem the capital of the land.

About 50 years after this, with King Solomon as ruler of Israel, the 1st Temple was built. The Temple stood there till in 586 BCE the Babylonians destroyed it and many Jewish people were exiled from Israel. This was the first time a large number of Jews were not living inside Israel since the days as slaves in Egypt.

The exile didn't last long and by 520 BCE the 2nd Temple was already being built. For about 550 years most Jewish people were living inside Israel and this was the case until 70 CE when the Romans destroyed the 2nd Temple and exiled the Jewish people from Israel. Unfortunately this time the exile wasn't short and even though there was some Jewish presence within Israel, it was minimal and to this day the Temple has not been rebuilt.

The Temple Times

The connection the Jewish people had to the Temple was and still is immense. Today nearly 2000 years since the 2nd Temple was destroyed it is still the centre of Jewish lives. Every day in our prayers, we face towards the direction of the Temple and during marriage ceremonies the groom smashes a glass to remind us of the destruction of the Temple, so that even at the happiest of occasions we still remember that we cannot be without some sadness. These are the feelings of the Jewish people now, nearly 2000 years after the destruction of the 2nd Temple, back then they were so much stronger, so when the Temple was destroyed, it was as if the heart of Judaism was also destroyed.

The Temple was the centre of Jewish life. Jews used the Temple for three main purposes. The first was as a religious site. This is where three times a year (Succot, Pesach and Shavuot) Jewish people made a pilgrim to Jerusalem to the Temple to offer up sacrifices and show their appreciation towards G-d. This was not the only time when people came to the Temple for religious reasons. There were sacrifices and prayers going on nearly all the time. At this point in history, there were not such things as synagogues, so people used to go to the Temple to say their prayers and to converse with and thank G-d.

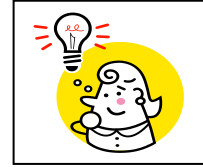
The Temple was far more than just a religious building for the Jewish people in those days; it was also the economic centre for the country. People used to be in and out of the Temple continuously and because of this it was a great place for people to do business. During weekdays the Temple grounds were bustling with people trading, buying and selling crops and animals. The Temple really was the centre of the whole economy of the Jewish people and Israel.

As the Temple was the centre of both the religion and economy of the Jewish people, it therefore also became the social centre. People were in and out of the Temple on a daily basis and it became the place to go to meet with other Jewish people to socialise and to even possibly meet their prospective husband or wife.

The centre of the whole of Judaism really was in the heart of the Temple, so when it was destroyed more than just the walls came down, the whole of Judaism nearly collapsed. Most Jewish people were exiled from Israel. These people didn't know what to do. The only way they knew of praying, socialising and making a living was through the Temple and the land they had just been thrown out of. It was a long and hard road for the Jewish people to travel down and one that hasn't even come to its end yet. The destruction of the 2nd Temple really was and still is a tragedy and an event that the Jewish people may never truly get over.



Zionist Thinkers



Who were they and what did they think?

THEODOR HERZL (1860 – 1904)

Who was he?

Theodor Herzl was born in 1860 to a liberal Jewish family in Budapest. He studied law at Vienna University and became a journalist. It was whilst working as a correspondent in France and covering the Dreyfus Trial [1894] (see earlier) that he became aware of what he saw as the ‘Jewish Problem’ and he devoted the rest of his life to organising the Zionist movement and to placing the Zionist goal on the world agenda. He published his initial ideas in a booklet called ‘Judenstaat’ in which he set out the importance of a Jewish State. He started the Zionist newspaper (Die Welt), established the first Zionist Congress in Basle in 1897 and became the first President of the World Zionist Organisation. He continued to work to advance the idea and ideals of Zionism until his death in 1904.

Type of Zionism – Political Zionism

Thoughts on Zionism

Herzl believed that a homeland could only be realised through political activity. He saw a homeland and the concept of Jewish nationalism as the solution to the ‘Jewish Problem’ (anti-Semitism). In order to fulfil the necessity for Jewish self-determination there was a need for a political framework. In his own words at the first Zionist Congress “Zionism seeks to secure for the Jewish People a publicly recognised, legally secured, home in Palestine”.

Herzl’s rationale for Zionism stemmed from a profound need to save Jews. He would take religious concepts such as redemption and translate them into a nationalistic framework - showing a need for ‘saving’. In one of his books (Alt Neuland) he almost prophesied the Holocaust – an event that proved to the world the need for a Jewish homeland.

For Herzl, the country was about the Jewish people having a refuge and a national identity and he believed that once created, the state would be a democratic, secular state.



VLADIMIR JABOTINSKY

(1880 – 1940)

Who was he?

Vladimir Jabotinsky was born in Odessa, Russia, in 1880. He wasn't brought up in a Jewish environment and after a secular education in Russia; he went on to study law in Rome and Berne. In 1903 he helped start a Jewish self-defence group and due to the impending pogroms, he immersed himself in Zionist activities, coming as a delegate to the 6th Zionist congress. He continued to work towards the fulfilment of what he saw as the Zionist goals and established programmes in Russia advocating both settlements in Eretz Yisrael alongside educational and political activities in the Diaspora. It was his idea to set up a Jewish legion to support the allies in liberating Israel during WWI and reached the rank of Lieutenant, receiving a decoration for leading the first company to cross the Jordan. When the British Government took over the running of Israel after the war, Jabotinsky became a strict opponent to their rule. This put him in opposition to the main Zionist agenda, and in 1923 he resigned from the executive of the Zionist organisation. Instead he set up the World Union of Zionist Revisionists and served as its President. In 1930 the British refused him entry to Palestine and he therefore lived in Paris until his death in 1940.

Type of Zionism – Revisionist Zionism

Thoughts on Zionism

Jabotinsky remains one of the most controversial figures in Zionism – constantly evoking heated debate and creating his own directions.

He was a believer in the need for a Jewish State in which the Jewish People were a majority. He believed that many of the problems arose in Diaspora because the Jews were always a minority. He believed that all 'People' had the right to their own state and to fulfil his vision he pushed for rapid mass migration (Aliyah). He wanted the Jews to be able to defend themselves and initiated Jewish military and police units. When the British limited the number of people allowed entering Israel, Jabotinsky initiated illegal immigration. He wanted the Jews to build a self-image of pride, which could only be accomplished, by physically building a nation with a Jewish majority.

His concern was not for the culture of the state, rather he saw this as a luxury that should wait until the creation of the state. He focused on getting Jews to come to Palestine and settle there – moving towards the Jewish majority he believed essential.



AHAD HA'AM (1856 – 1927)

Who was he?

Born Asher Zvi Ginsberg in Sikoira, Russia, he grew up in an aristocratic family within the Jewish ghetto. He was close to the local Hassidic Rabbi and had a religious upbringing. His formal education was so pious that he was not even taught the Russian alphabet at school!! It was when he published his first article in 1889 that he began to use the name Ahad Ha'am (meaning 'one of the people'). In 1921 he settled in Palestine where he remained until his death.

Type of Zionism – Cultural Zionism

Thoughts on Zionism

Ahad Ha'am himself never began a political movement, though his ideas and writings had a tremendous impact on the leaders of the day. He saw the Jewish problem, not as a political one, rather a cultural one. He feared that Judaism was under threat of being engulfed by secular society. To rekindle Jewish culture, there was a need to rekindle the Jewish national spirit. To do this it was essential to take Jewish culture from the Diaspora and place it in its native homeland where it can naturally flourish.

He saw Israel as having the potential to be the centre of the nation from which the spirit of Judaism will radiate to all communities of the Diaspora. He didn't believe Jews would give up their Western style of life for Israel and believed that the majority of Jews would remain "scattered in foreign soils". As long as there were to be strong links between Diaspora and Israel the cultural revival of Judaism would be fulfilled.

He believed it essential to have strong educational foundations to Zionism. He believed in the Zionist ideal of rebuilding Jewish identity in Eretz Yisrael, stressing its spiritual and ideological aspects.



RAV KOOK **(1865 – 1935)**

Who was he?

Born in Greiva, Latvia, Rav Abraham Isaac Kook was educated at a traditional Yeshiva. In addition to his study of the Jewish texts, he believed it important to understand the social problems of contemporary society because these problems had a powerful impact on the assimilated majority of Jews. In 1904 he went to live in Israel, serving as the Rabbi of Jaffe. During WWI, having been caught in Europe and not able to return to Israel, he became a rabbi in London. After the war, upon his return to Israel, he was appointed Chief Rabbi of Jerusalem, and later the first Ashkenazi chief rabbi of Palestine. As an active leader within Eretz Yisrael he tried to build and strengthen the bridges between the secular Zionist movement and the religious world.

Type of Zionism – Religious Zionism

Thoughts on Zionism

Rav Kook believed that the state should be established and conducted in accordance with the principles of the Torah. He saw the return to Israel as the first step in saving Judaism and the Jews. The Jew in Diaspora had no real foundation in his eyes and would not be able to ‘fight’ the impulse to assimilate into secular culture. The land of Israel itself was holy and this would help the Jewish religion thrive. He disagreed with the concept of secular Zionism and was concerned about how others tried to split the national element from the religion element within Judaism. The Jewish spirit was one whole and should not be split in two.

For Rav Kook, Zionism was 100% about religion and the return to Israel was the beginning of the redemption.



A.D. GORDON **(1856 - 1922)**

Who was he?

Aaron David Gordon was born to a wealthy family in Russia. Whilst attending a 'secular' school, he had private tuition in Talmud, Torah and Hebrew. He had always believed that the condition of the Jewish People living in Diaspora was abnormal.

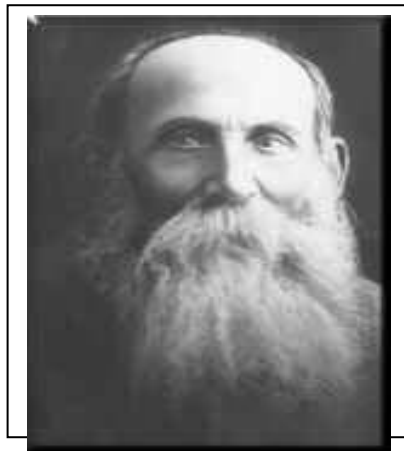
At the age of 47 he left Russia for Palestine and insisted he would become a labourer on the land.

Type of Zionism – Socialist Zionism

Thoughts on Zionism

A.D. Gordon saw Zionism as an attempt to create an economic infrastructure for a Jewish community in Palestine founded on the Jew's own labour. He believed that the Jewish people needed a state because they have worked in other lands and had not brought their own salvation; therefore they must attain a state, attach themselves to the land and eat the fruits of their own physical labour. He saw communal labour as the basis of a national structure.

He believed that Zionism was more than a political and socialist movement, rather it included a profound vision of spiritual and physical redemption – which would save both the Jewish people and restore Judaism. Without this, the political revolution would remain hollow and meaningless.



Zionist Congress

The first Zionist Congress took place in Basle in 1897. It brought together people from all over Europe and the world with many different various views. What bonded these people was the fact that they were all Zionists and they all wanted a homeland for the Jewish people.

At the first meeting, which was chaired by Theodore Herzl, those present tried to come up with a series of aims for the united Zionist cause. Even though there were people from all over the political and Zionist spectrum, aims were drawn up and the Zionist movement had a united direction to go towards.

The Basle Declaration

The first Zionist Congress in Basle adopted this official statement of Zionist purpose in August 1897.

The aim of Zionism is to create for the Jewish people a home in Palestine secured by public law.

The Congress contemplates the following means to the attainment of this end:

1. The promotion, on suitable lines of the colonization of Palestine by Jewish agricultural and industrial workers.
2. The organisation and binding together of the whole of Jewry by means of appropriate institutions, local and international, in accordance with the laws of each country.
3. The strengthening and fostering of Jewish national sentiment and consciousness.
4. Preparatory steps towards obtaining government consent, where necessary, to the attainment of the aim of Zionism.



Questions for Discussion

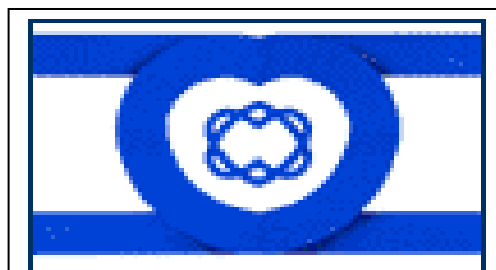
As said in the accompanying letter, these are not questions that need an answer, rather questions which will hopefully stimulate discussion around the Jewish People's and your relationship to Israel. We will go over these questions together, but it would be helpful for you to look at them now and think about them, that way we will have a productive discussion.

OWNERSHIP

1. Is Israel a Promised Land for the Jewish People?
2. What ownership do you believe we have over the land?
3. What is the land and what are its borders?
4. How does this affect issues such as the Peace Process and who has the right to live in Israel?
5. Before Israel, the Jewish People were offered Uganda as a homeland. What do you think about this? Is Israel important because it is a Jewish homeland or because of where that homeland is?

VISIONS

1. What are the reasons for it being important for the Jewish People to have a homeland? How do you relate to these as rationales for a Jewish state?
2. What are the different visions proposed by the different Zionist thinkers and which ones do you relate to?
3. What should Israel be?
4. What do you think of the definition of Zionism as per the Basle Declaration? How would you define Zionism?
5. How does your vision of Israel relate to the present State?



The Israeli Flag