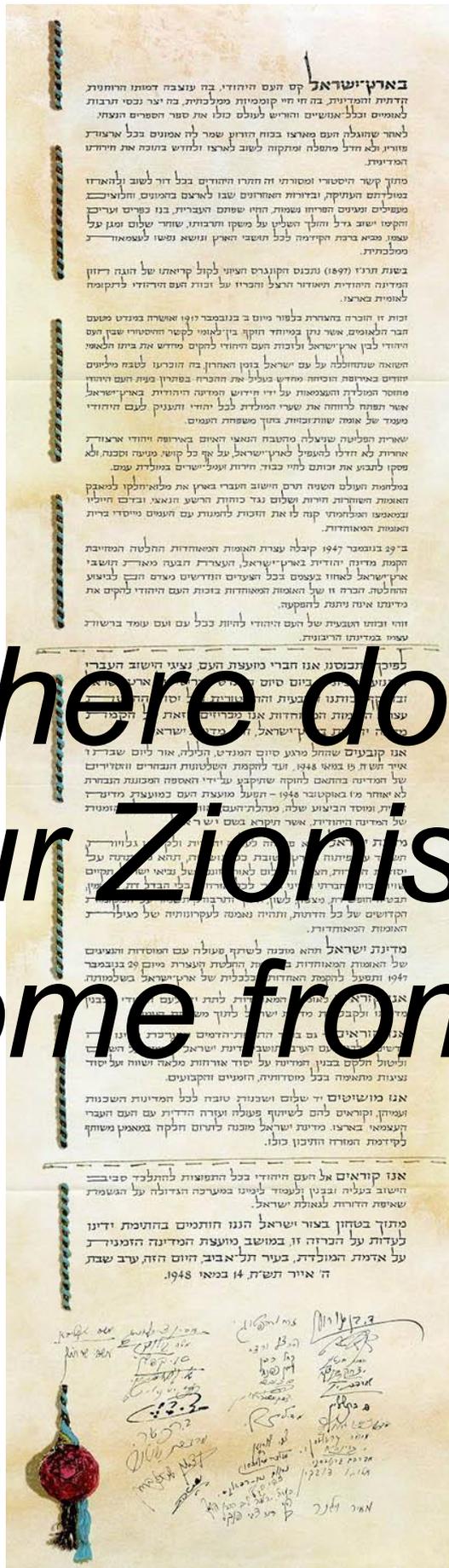


Where does our Zionism come from?



Biblical Origins

And the Lord said to Avram, Go forth from your country, from your birthplace and from your father's house to the land that I will show you.

Bereishit/Genesis 12:1

1 And it was after the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, that the Lord said to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying: **2** Moses my servant has died; and now arise cross this Jordan, you and all this nation, to the land which I give the children of Israel. **3** Every place on which the soles of your feet will tread I have given to you, as I have spoken to Moses. **4** From this desert and Lebanon to the great river, the Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites to the great sea westward shall be your boundary.

Yehoshua/Joshua 1:1-4

- 1 By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat and we wept as we remembered Zion.
- 2 On the poplars within her we hung our lyres,
- 3 for it was there our captors asked us for words of song, and our tormentors – for their amusement – said, “Sing for us from a song of Zion.”
- 4 How can we sing a song of the Lord on foreign soil?
- 5 O Jerusalem, if I should forget you may my right hand wither.

Tehillim/Psalms 137:1-5

Spiritual Zionism

My heart is in the East and I am at the edge of the West.
Then how can I taste what I eat, how can I enjoy it?
How can I fulfil my vows and pledges
While Zion is in the domain of Edom
And I am in the bonds of Arabia?
It would be easy for me to leave behind
All the good things of Spain;
It would be glorious to see the dust
Of the ruined Shrine.

My Heart is in the East, Yehuda Halevi (b.1085 Toledo, Spain; d. 1141 Alexandria, Egypt)

Early Religious Zionism

“The establishment of an agricultural school, a place to study the wisdom of the Land, to educate the young men of Israel and teach them the work of the fields and vineyards alongside their other studies, with Torah and reverence. And this place of study shall be in Eretz Israel...”

Rabbi Zvi Hirsh Kalischer, Derishat Zion, 1862 (b.1795 Prussia; d. 1874 Prussia)

Political Zionism

...Judaism is primarily the expression of a nationality whose history for thousands of years coincides with the history of the development of a humanity and the Jews are a nation which, having once acted as the leaven of the social world, is destined to be resurrected with the rest of civilized nations... We have to restudy our history, which has been neglected by our rationalists, and rekindle in the hearts of our young generation the spirit which was the source of inspiration to our prophets and sages... And then, when the third exile will finally have come to an end, the restoration of the Jewish State will find us ready for it.

Moses Hess, Rome and Jerusalem, 1862 (b. 1812 Bonn, Germany; d. 1875 Paris)

The idea that I have developed in this pamphlet is an ancient one: It is the restoration of the Jewish State. The world resounds with clamour against the Jews, and this has revived the dormant idea.....

.....We have sincerely tried everywhere to merge with the national communities in which we live, seeking only to preserve the faith of our fathers. It is not permitted to us. In vain we are loyal patriots, sometimes superloyal; in vain do we make the same sacrifices of life and property as our fellow citizens; in vain do we strive to enhance the fame of our native lands in the arts and sciences...If we were left in peace, but, I think we shall not be left in peace.....The Jews have dreamed this princely dream throughout the long night of their history. "Next year in Jerusalem" is our old age motto...For this, our minds must be thoroughly cleansed of many old notions. It will be carried out entirely in the framework of civilisation...we shall not dwell in mud huts; we shall build new, more beautiful and modern houses.

Theodore Herzl – The Jewish State (1896) (b.1860, Pest, Hungary; d. 1904, Austria)

Cultural Zionism

Jewish settlement, which will be a gradual growth, will become in the course of time the centre of the nation, wherein its spirit will find pure expression...then from this centre the spirit of Judaism will go forth to the great circumference, to all the communities of the Diaspora and will breathe new life into them and preserve their unity; and when our national culture in Palestine has attained that level, we may be confident that it will produce men in the country who will be able, on a favourable opportunity, to establish a state which will be truly a Jewish state and not merely a state of Jews.

Ahad HaAm (1856-1927) – The Jewish State & the Jewish Problem (1897)

Labour Zionism

What we seek to create here is life - our own life – in our own spirit and in our own way. Let me put it more bluntly: in Palestine we must do with our own hands all the things that make up the sum total of life. We must ourselves do all the work, from the least strenuous, cleanest and most sophisticated, to the dirtiest and most difficult. In our own way, we must feel what a worker feels and think what a worker thinks – then, and only then, shall we have a culture of our own, for then we shall have a life of our own.

Aaron David Gordon (1856-1922) – People & Labour (1911)

Religious Zionism

Jewish original creativity, whether in the realm of ideas or in the arena of daily life and action, is impossible except in Eretz Israel. On the other hand, whatever the Jewish people creates in Eretz Israel assimilates the universal into characteristic and unique Jewish form, to the great benefit of the Jewish people and of the world...a Jew cannot be as devoted and true to his own ideas, sentiments, and imagination in the Disapora as he can in Eretz Israel.....Deep in the heart of every Jew, in its purest and holiest recesses, there blazes the fire of Israel.

Rav Abraham Isaac Kook (1865-1935) – The Land of Israel (1910-30)

Revisionist Zionism

".... Settlement can thus develop under the protection of a force that is not dependent on the local population, behind an iron wall which they will be powerless to break down.a voluntary agreement is just not possible. As long as the Arabs preserve a gleam of hope that they will succeed in getting rid of us, nothing in the world can cause them to relinquish this hope, precisely because they are not a rubble but a living people. And a living people will be ready to yield on such fateful issues only when they give up all hope of getting rid of the Alien Settlers.

Vladimir Jabotinsky (1880-1940) - The Iron Wall (1923)

Reform Zionism?

We recognize, in the modern era of universal culture of heart and intellect, the approaching of the realization of Israel s great Messianic hope for the establishment of the kingdom of truth, justice, and peace among all men. We consider ourselves no longer a nation, but a religious community, and therefore expect neither a return to Palestine, nor a sacrificial worship under the sons of Aaron, nor the restoration of any of the laws concerning the Jewish state.

The Pittsburgh Conference 1885

In the rehabilitation of Palestine, the land hallowed by memories and hopes, we behold the promise of renewed life for many of our brethren. We affirm the obligation of all Jewry to aid in its upbuilding as a Jewish homeland by endeavoring to make it not only a haven of refuge for the oppressed but also a center of Jewish culture and spiritual life.

"The Columbus Platform" - 1937

“ We believe that the Jews constitute not a nation like other nations but a worldwide community of believers, a universal people who possess a common religious tradition and a common spiritual destiny.. they are not seekers of a national home.”

Rabbi Harold Reinhart, West London, Synagogue Review 1945

We are unequivocally Zionist. We have a non-negotiable commitment to the State of Israel and its security. We believe that the pursuit of peace is the highest ideal and priority. We are deeply committed to democracy; human rights and social justice; and religious pluralism.

We are committed to two viable states as the only just and realistic solution to the present situation. We believe Israel should be a Jewish state and a state for all its citizens.

We believe that exponents of moderate, liberal Judaism should ally with moderate, liberal secularists and work together to combat both religious and secular extremism.

www.reformjudaism.org.uk/israel/