

# Kvutzot Overview



“אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל אֵינָנָה דְבַר חִיצוֹנִי, קִנְיָן חִיצוֹנִי לְאֻמָּה, רַק בְּתוֹר אֲמֻצְעֵי לְמִטְרָה שֶׁל הַהֲתַאֲגָדוֹת הַכְּלָלִית וְהַחֻזְקַת קִיּוּמָהּ הַחֲמִרִי אוֹ אֶפְלוֹ הַרוּחָנִי. אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל הִיא חֲטִיבָה עֲצֻמוֹתִית קְשׁוּרָה בְּקֶשֶׁר חַיִּים עִם הָאֻמָּה, חֲבוּקָה בְּסִגְלוֹת פְּנִימִיּוֹת עִם מְצִיאוּתָהּ.”

“The Land of Israel is not something external – an external national asset, a means to the end of collective solidarity and the strengthening of the nation's existence, physical or even spiritual. The Land of Israel is an essential unit bound by the bond-of-life to the People, united by innate characteristics to its existence.”

*Rav Kook, Orot 1:1*

## Israel Machane

### עם ישראל – Am Yisrael

1. Diversity of Israel
2. Community of Israel
3. Nation of Israel

### ארץ ישראל – Eretz Yisrael

1. Building Israel
2. Protecting Israel
3. Advancing Israel



### תורת ישראל – Torat Yisrael

1. Biblical Israel
2. Holy Israel
3. Jewish Israel

# Diversity of Israel



## Aims

- To **understand** the meaning of Kibbutz Galuyot
- To **learn** about different aliyot and olim communities
- To **appreciate** how Israel is a home for all Jews

## Kibbutz Galuyot in the Torah

דברים ל:ג - וְשָׁב יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֶת-שְׁבוּתֶךָ, וְרַחֲמֶיךָ; וְשָׁב, וְקִבְּצֶךָ מִכָּל-הָעַמִּים, אֲשֶׁר הִפְיָצָךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ, שָׁמָּה

Then, the Lord, your God, will bring back your exiles, and He will have mercy upon you. He will once again gather you from all the nations, where the Lord, your God, had dispersed you.”

The idea of kibbutz Galuyot originates as a promise by God to His new nation that wherever they may be around the world, He will bring them back to the land to live as one nation as His people. It is believed to be the first stage of redemption and this is why many believe that a new Jewish state, teaming with Jewish immigrants, heralds the beginning of the Messianic era.

## Kibbutz Galuyot in Modern Israel

The Law of Return, passed in 1950 in the wake of the Holocaust, allows every Jew the right to make Aliyah to the State of Israel and to gain Israeli Citizenship immediately. The Law of Return provides sanctuary to anyone defined as a Jew under the Nuremberg Laws.

## Melting pot vs. fruit salad

Since its birth in 1948, the Israeli State has welcomed over 3,000,000 immigrants from all over the world, Russia, Ethiopia, the UK, the USA, Europe, Yemen... Although around 15,000 Olim enter the country each year, there have been waves of Aliyot which significantly changed the demographics of the country, such as the Russian Aliyah in the 1990's and the Ethiopian Aliyah in the 1980's. Israel has been described as a melting pot for all Jews. Jews who once lived in the cold climates of Russia and ate borcht, now live and work side-by-side with Jews born in Ethiopia who lived in mud huts and ate Injera. But do these cultures merge seamlessly in real life? Are they absorbed into one uniform, Israeli culture or do they keep their traditions and stay separate?

## Discussion points

In Bnei Akiva, we learn about Aliyah from a young age – making the move from our birthplace to the land of Israel – but what happens when we arrive? When citizens of countries all around the world descend on one tiny piece of land what is the outcome? Is there an Israeli culture to which they strive to integrate or do new immigrants hold on to the language, foods and dress that they are familiar with? Are there prejudices and discriminations amongst these immigrant communities or are they all seen as equals?

## Additional Resources

[http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud\\_0002\\_0009\\_o\\_09533.html](http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud_0002_0009_o_09533.html)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Law\\_of\\_Return](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Law_of_Return)

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aliyah>

# Community of Israel



## Aims

- To **learn** about the Kibbutz movement and its contribution to Israel
- To **understand** the meaning of Chalutzit
- To **evaluate** the value of self-sacrifice for the sake of a communal cause

## The Kibbutz Movement

A kibbutz is a collective community in Israel that was traditionally based on agriculture. Today, farming has been partly supplanted by other economic branches, including industrial plants and high-tech enterprises.

The first kibbutz, Degania was started by 10 men and 2 women in 1909 and within 5 years had grown to 50 members. In order to live in Israel, the first Olim had to farm the land but it was swampy in the North, rocky in the Judean mountains and desert in the South. The only way they would be able to make the land habitable would be to work together as a community. Living as a community also provided safety for its members in what was a hostile and volatile environment. The movement flourished and in 1939, 20 years after the first kibbutz was established, 24, 105 people lived in 79 different kibbutzim.

At the time leading up to the independence war of 1948, kibbutzim played a crucial role in defending Israel, training with weapons and patrolling their area. After the state was declared in 1948, the Kibbutzim again had a vital role to play in absorbing the thousands of new immigrants who flocked to Israel, many of whom holocaust survivors.

## Chalutzit

"מה זאת חלוציות? זוהי הכרה בשליחות היסטורית והתייצבות ללא תנאי וללא רתיעה מכל קושי וסכנה - לרשות השליחות הזאת. --- חלוציות - זהו הכשרון המוסרי וההכרח הנפשי לחיות יום לפי צו המצפון ולפי תביעת היעוד"  
דוד בן גוריון

Chalutzit, pioneering, is the term given to the early builders of the State of Israel, often Kibbutznikkim. The Chalutzim were characterised by their willingness to work hard, live as part of close communities and devotion to the communal cause of building the state.

## Discussion Points

Does Chalutzit still exist in modern-day Israel? Is there still a need for a pioneering attitude? Must one sacrifice his personal goals for the sake of the State of Israel? How can we contribute to Israel?

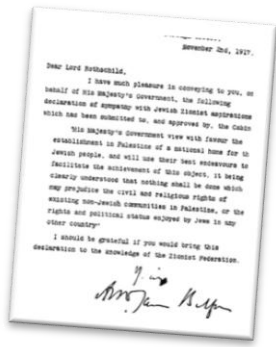
## Additional Resources

<http://www.kibbutz.org.il/eng/>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kibbutz>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YhuFFedMhEE>

# Am Yisrael עם ישראל Nation of Israel



## Aims

- To **explore** the meaning of a Jewish nation
- To **question** Jewishness vs Britishness
- To **see** Israel as a part of Jewish identity

## Balfour Declaration

In 1917 The British government decided to endorse the establishment of a Jewish home in Palestine in a letter from British Foreign Secretary Lord Arthur James Balfour to Lord Rothschild. The contents of this letter became known as the Balfour Declaration.

## British Mandate

In July 1922, the League of Nations gave Great Britain temporary control over the areas of Transjordan and Palestine with what was called the British Mandate. Recognising "the historical connection of the Jewish people with Palestine," Great Britain was called upon to facilitate the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine-Eretz Israel. The Mandatory government did not succeed in maintaining the letter and spirit of the Mandate. Under Arab pressure, it withdrew from its commitment, especially with respect to immigration and land acquisition. The White Papers of 1930 and 1939 restricted immigration and acquisition of land by Jews. After the UN General Assembly adopted the resolution to partition Palestine, Britain announced the termination the Mandate, to take effect on May 15, 1948. On May 14, 1948, the State of Israel was proclaimed.

## Nation

"A large body of people united by common descent, history, culture, or language, inhabiting a particular state or territory." *Oxford Dictionary*

## Zionism as Jewish Nationalism

While Zionism does not have a uniform ideology, but has evolved in a dialogue among a plethora of ideologies, the common denominator among all Zionists is the claim to Eretz Israel as the national homeland of the Jews and as the legitimate focus for the Jewish national self-determination. It is based on historical ties and religious traditions linking the Jewish people as a **distinct nation** to the Land of Israel.

## Discussion Points

What is your nationality? Who would you support in this Football match? England or Israel? We know English football, we can name all the players, and we can sing the songs. It makes sense to support them. But, which symbol do we relate to more – England's three lions, or Israel's menorah? And which national anthem do we feel prouder to sing – 'Long live our noble Queen' or 'To be a free people in our own Land'? And what about the terrible hypothetical scenario of a war between England and Israel? Who would you support in this situation?

## Additional Resources

<http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-3663582,00.html>  
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zionism>



# K4 ארץ ישראל Eretz Yisrael Building Israel

## Aims

- To **learn** about the creation of the state and early Zionist movement
- To **appreciate** the great efforts made to build the State of Israel
- To **understand** the need for a Jewish State

## The first builders of the State

**Theodor Herzl** - Theodor Herzl was an Austro-Hungarian journalist. Growing up Jewish, he believed that assimilation would combat the anti-Semitism he encountered. As a correspondent in Paris, he followed the Dreyfus Affair, a notorious anti-Semitic incident. In 1897 he organized a world congress of Zionism and became the first president of the World Zionist Organization. He is the father of Israel.



**David Ben Gurion** – David Ben-Gurion was the first prime minister (1948–53, 1955–63) and defense minister (1948–53; 1955–63) of Israel. It was Ben-Gurion who, on May 14, 1948, delivered Israel's declaration of independence. His charismatic personality won him the adoration of the masses, and, after his retirement from the government and the Knesset, he was revered as the 'Father of the Nation.'



## Homeland for the Jewish People

The concept of a national homeland for the Jewish people is enshrined in Israeli national policy and reflected in many of Israel's public and national institutions. The concept was adopted in the Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel on 14 May 1948 as the objective of the establishment of modern Israel.

## Building a State

"Pioneers ... and defenders, they made deserts bloom, revived the Hebrew language, built villages and towns, and created a thriving community controlling its own economy and culture, loving peace but knowing how to defend itself, bringing the blessings of progress to all the country's inhabitants, and aspiring towards independent nationhood. In 1897, at the summons of the spiritual father of the Jewish State, Theodore Herzl, the First Zionist Congress convened and proclaimed the right of the Jewish people to national rebirth in what it claimed to be its own country. This right was supported by the British government in the Balfour Declaration of November 2, 1917 and re-affirmed in the Mandate of the League of Nations which, in particular, gave international sanction to the historic connection between the Jewish people and Palestine and to the right of the Jewish people to rebuild its National Home."

*Declaration of the State of Israel*

## Discussion Points

The Zionist Congress voted against a Jewish state in Uganda despite the rapidly growing anti-Semitism – would you have done the same? What would a Jewish homeland outside of Israel look like today?

## Additional Resources

Agnon Nobel Prize Speech - [www.nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/literature/laureates/1966/agnon-speech.html](http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1966/agnon-speech.html)

Declaration-

<http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/foreignpolicy/peace/guide/pages/declaration%20of%20establishment%20of%20state%20of%20israel.aspx>

# ארץ ישראל – Eretz Yisrael

## Defending Israel



### Aims

- To **learn** about the IDF then and now
- To **discuss** the need to defend Israel
- To **discover** ways to help defend and protect Israel through hasbara

### Founding

The IDF was founded following the establishment of the State of Israel, after Defense Minister and Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion issued an order on 26 May 1948. The order called for the establishment of the Israel Defense Forces, and the abolishment of all other Jewish armed forces. Although Ben-Gurion had no legal authority to issue such an order, the order was made legal by the cabinet on 31 May. After initial disagreements, the Irgun, Lechi and the Haganah including the Palmach all disbanded to become the IDF.

### The Spirit of the IDF

The Spirit of the IDF, and the guidelines of operation resulting from it, is the ethical code of the IDF and the expression of the identity, values and morals of the IDF. It contains three fundamental values:

1. Defense of the State - its citizens and residents
2. Patriotism and loyalty to the State - commitment and devotion to the democratic State of Israel and to its citizens and residents
3. Human Dignity - All humans are to be valued, regardless of race, creed, nationality, gender, status or role

### How we can help to defend Israel

Hasbara refers to public relations efforts to disseminate positive information about Israel. The term is used by the Israeli government and its supporters to describe efforts to explain government policies and promote Israel in the face of negative press, and to counter what they see as delegitimation of Israel around the world. Hasbara means "explanation", and is also a euphemism for propaganda.

### Discussion Points

Can Israel really justify spending \$12.5 million each year on its defense budget when there are so many living below the poverty line? Is the focus in Israel on army service really so important? Surely there are many other ways to contribute to society? The government recently passed laws to gradually draft Charedi boys into the army, the army does not need this many additional soldiers but should they 'share the burden' nonetheless?

### Additional Resources

Hasbara - [www.hasbara.com](http://www.hasbara.com)

IDF Spokesperson - [www.idfblog.com](http://www.idfblog.com)

<http://www.wordsandwar.com/2007/06/09/valley-of-tears/>

[http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Society\\_&\\_Culture/IDF\\_ethics.html](http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Society_&_Culture/IDF_ethics.html)

# Eretz Yisrael ארץ ישראל

## Advancing Israel



### Aims

- To **present** the incredible advancements Israel has made and the challenges it still faces
- To **reflect** on Israel as a unfinished project
- To **inspire** a sense of responsibility and empowerment for the future of Israel

### Israel's Achievements

When the first Olim arrived at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Israel was a barren backwater of the Ottoman Empire. Disease was rife and life for the early pioneers was endangered by their hostile neighbours. Yet in the 64 years since the Israeli state was declared, Israel has made huge advancements across many fields. From agricultural scientists developing revolutionary irrigation methods which have since been exported worldwide, to Israeli doctors pioneering new life-saving procedures and medicines. Israel's high-tech sector is considered one of the most advanced in the world, innovating in telecoms, online and computer processors. Israel, which started out as a mostly agricultural settlement, continues in this path with advances in environmentally friendly innovations. Israel is a world leader in solar power generation and sea water desalination.

### Israel's challenges

**Poverty** - Although the standard of living in Israel is high and is constantly improving, Israel still suffers from poverty with roughly 20.5% of Israeli families living below the poverty line in 2008, most of them Israeli Arab and Haredi Jewish families.

**Security** - Since its birth in 1948, Israel has faced near -constant threats to its existence from its neighbours and has fought a war in every decade. A substantial percentage of Israel's budget is reserved for security and Israel's strict conscription policy means that most Israeli's have served in the IDF at one point in their lives.

**Religious/Secular Divide** - The relationship between Israel's religious and secular communities has become increasingly strained over the past several decades. Violent protests, angry exchanges, and glaring headlines all mark what seems to be a growing religious-secular divide.

### Discussion Points

Israel has accomplished so much in such a short amount of time, but the work is not yet over! The swamps have been drained and the cities built up, but what can we still do to develop Israel in 2014?

### Additional Resources

<http://www.haaretz.com/jewish-world/features/israel-s-greatest-threat-is-not-security-it-s-poverty-1.337939>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sde\\_Boker](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sde_Boker)

<http://www.aipac.org/why-israel-matters/israels-achievements>

<http://www.haaretz.com/jewish-world/features/israel-s-greatest-threat-is-not-security-it-s-poverty-1.337939>



K7

# Torat Yisrael תורת ישראל

## Biblical Israel

### Aims

- To **explore** the roots of the Jewish people in Israel
- To **show** the value the Torah gives to the land of Israel
- To **contextualize** the modern State of Israel as part of an ancient tradition

### Key Characters in the Biblical Era

*Avraham Avinu* - Avraham lived around 2100 BC in what is now Iraq. God told him to move to Canaan, which later became Israel. Unlike many people, Avraham believed in the one true God. God rewarded Avraham's faith, making him the father of a great nation.

*Yehoshua Ben-Nun* - After Moshe dies, Yehoshua leads the Israelites into Canaan and begins conquering the land, establishing a sovereign country of Israel for the first time in history.

*Shaul Ha'Melech* - After about 350 years of being ruled by judges, the people of Israel demand to have a king, like the neighbouring countries. By demanding a king, the people are turning away from their faith in God as their king. Saul become king and reigns about 40 years.

*Shlomo Ha'Melech* – Shlomo, son of David, becomes king in about 970 BC. He too reigns for about 40 years. Shlomo builds the Beit Ha'Mikdash in honour of God. The work is completed in about 960 BC.

*King Herod* – Roman King of Judea who rebuilt the Second Temple.

### The Kingdom of Israel

Shaul HaMelech bridged the period between loose tribal organization and the setting up of a full monarchy under his successor, David. King David established Israel as a major power in the region by successful military expeditions, including the final defeat of the Philistines, as well as by constructing a network of friendly alliances with nearby kingdoms. Consequently, his authority was recognised from the borders of Egypt and the Red Sea to the banks of the Euphrates. At home, he united the twelve Israelite tribes into one kingdom and placed his capital, Jerusalem, and the monarchy at the center of the country's national life. Biblical tradition describes David as a poet and musician, with verses ascribed to him appearing in the Book of Tehillim.

### Discussion Points

Does modern day Israel positively reflect on the glory days of Biblical Israel? How much does the Torah requirement to live in Israel apply today? How important is it for us to now identify the locations of places mentioned in the Tanach? Even if we are not sure that this is their exact location?

### Additional Resources

Timeline of Israel's History -

[http://www.zionismontheweb.org/middle\\_east/Israel/timeline\\_of\\_Israel.htm](http://www.zionismontheweb.org/middle_east/Israel/timeline_of_Israel.htm)

Anglo-Israel Archeaological Society – [www.aias.org.uk/](http://www.aias.org.uk/)



# Torat Yisrael תורת ישראל

## Mystic Israel



### Aims

- To **explore** the meaning of 'holiness'
- To **introduce** the concept of Jewish mysticism
- To **ask** what makes the Land of Israel holy



# Israel Machane

### The Holy Land

Many people from different religions all over the world refer to the land of Israel as the Holy Land. Its rich history is linked to the 3 central religions in the world; Judaism, Christianity and Islam and this has led to bitter, tragic wars and disputes over ownership of the land. But what is it that makes the land Holy?

### “Holiness”

Holiness is defined as “something associated with the Divine, considered worthy of spiritual respect or devotion or inspiring awe among believers.” But is it really that simple? Can something be holy if we don't consider it to be? Can something ever stop being holy?

### Notable Mystics

*Rashbi (Rav Shimon Bar Yochai)* – Tanna in ancient Israel, active after the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE. He was one of the most eminent disciples of Rabbi Akiva, and is attributed with the authorship of the Zohar, the chief work of Kabbalah. As such he is known as the ‘father’ of mysticism. *Arizal* - was the foremost Rabbi and Jewish mystic in the community of Tzfat in the Galil region of the Land of Israel. *Baba Sali* – foremost modern day mystic (died 1984). Moroccan Sephardic rabbi and kabbalist who was renowned for his alleged ability to work miracles through his prayers.

### Kabbalah

Kabbalah is the name applied to the whole range of Jewish mystical activity. While codes of Jewish law focus on what it is God wants from man, kabbalah tries to penetrate deeper, to God's essence itself. The rabbis of the Talmud regarded the mystical study of God as important yet dangerous. A famous talmudic story tells of four rabbis, Azzai, Ben Zoma, Elisha ben Abuyah, and Akiva who would meet together to engage in mystical studies. Azzai, the Talmud records, "looked and went mad and Ben Zoma died." Elisha ben Abuyah became a heretic and left Judaism. Rabbi Akiva alone "entered in peace and left in peace." The most famous work of kabbalah, the Zohar, was revealed to the Jewish world in the thirteenth century by Moses De Leon, who claimed that the book contained the mystical writings of the second-century rabbi Simeon bar Yochai. Bar Yochai is sometimes seen not so much as the Zohar's author as the recorder of mystical traditions dating back to the time of Moses.

### Discussion Points

Is the mystic side of Judaism important today or is it a relic of the past? Has the concept of Kaballah been diluted by the likes of Madonna and Lindsay Lohan who have adopted some of its teachings? Is the fact that the genuine Kabbalists are only in Israel a result of the holiness of the land?

### Additional Resources

Kaballah and mysticism - <http://www.jewfaq.org/kabbalah.htm>

Stories of the Baba Sali - <http://dafyomireview.com/article.php?docid=217>



# Torat Yisrael תורת ישראל

## Jewish Israel



### Aims

- To **learn** about the development of the modern Jewish state
- To **appreciate** the value of a *Jewish* state
- To **present** the specific challenges faced by a *Jewish* state

### Statistics in Israel

As of 2009, 8% of Israeli Jews defined themselves as Haredim; an additional 12% as "religious"; 13% as "religious-traditionalists"; 25% as "non-religious-traditionalists" and 42% as "secular". 65% of Israeli Jews believe in God, and 85% participate in a Passover seder. 27% of Israeli Jews say that they keep the Sabbath, while 53% said they do not keep it at all. 50% of the respondents would give up shopping on the Sabbath as long as public transportation were kept running and leisure activities continued to be permitted.

### Staus Quo Letter

In Israel, the term status quo (or secular-religious status quo) refers to the political understanding between religious and secular political parties not to alter the communal arrangement in relation to religious matters, in a predominantly secular population. The established Jewish religious communities in Israel desire to maintain and promote the religious character of the state, while the secular community wishes to reduce the impact of religious regulations in their everyday lives. Occasionally, one political side seeks to make changes to inter-communal arrangements, but these are often met by fierce political opposition from the other side. The status quo preserves the established religious relations in Israel, and only small changes are usually made.

### Buses

Tensions exist about Mehadrin buses, a type of bus line in Israel which runs in and/or between Haredi population centers, in which gender segregation and other rigid religious rules observed by some ultra-Orthodox Jews are applied. Non-Haredi female passengers have complained of being harassed and forced to sit at the back of the bus. In a ruling of January 2011, the Israeli High Court of Justice stated the unlawfulness of gender segregation and abolished "mehadrin" public buses.

### Jewish State?

"These two goals of Israel as a Jewish and a democratic state must coexist and not contradict each other. So, what does that mean, a Jewish state? It is not only a matter of the number of Jews who live in Israel. It is not just a matter of numbers but a matter of values. The Jewish state is a matter of values, but it is not just a matter of religion, it is also a matter of nationality. And a Jewish state is not a monopoly of rabbis. It is not. It is about the nature of the State of Israel. It is about Jewish tradition. It is about Jewish history, regardless of the question of what each and every Israeli citizen does in his own home on Saturdays and what he does on the Jewish holidays. We need to maintain the nature of the State of Israel, the character of the State of Israel, because this is the raison d'etre of the State of Israel." *Tzippi Livni*

### Discussion Points

Is Israel today a Jewish state or simply a state for Jews? How can Israel reconcile and incorporate the values of different factions of Jews? Also, with the new law passed that seeks to draft Charedim into the army, do you think this will change the landscape of Israeli society? If so, how? Do you think it was fair that Charedim were exempt from service as they were learning Torah?

### Additional Resources

<http://books.google.cz/books?id=iVJR9UZnTVAC&pg=PA58&lpg=PA58#v=onepage&q&f=false>  
<https://docs.google.com/viewer?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.kfar-olami.org.il%2Fasaf%2Fpedagogical%2Fzrahut%2Fstatus.doc>