

HISTORY OF ISRAEL EXPLAINED

EDUCATOR'S GUIDE



WHAT IS ZIONISM?

Section 1: Additional Resources

- Anita Shapira, *Israel: A History*, Part 1, Chapter 1
- Arthur Herzberg, *The Zionist Idea*, Introduction
- Gil Troy, *The Zionist Ideas*, Introduction
- Jewish Virtual Library, "Israel: Zionism," <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/zionism>
- Micah Goodman, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lkBYF4KAir8>
- Daniel Septimus, <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/questioning-zionism/>
- Zack Beauchamp, "What is Zionism?"
<https://www.vox.com/2018/11/20/18080010/zionism-israel-palestine>

Section 2: Discussion Questions

- Daniel Septimus notes that when Zionism was formed, it was knocked from the Reform left because the Reform movement viewed Judaism as a religion and not a people, and it was knocked from the right because the religious community viewed Zionism as blasphemous because the "Zionists were revolting against God's will." If the Jewish people accepted Zionism earlier on, do you think history would have played itself out in the same way or in a different way?
- One of the fundamental disputes between Jabotinsky and Herzl was on the impact Zionism would have on anti-Semitism. Herzl believed Zionism would end anti-Semitism, while Jabotinsky believed Zionism would serve as a protection from anti-Semitism. While it seems like anti-Semitism is not going away, what role do you see the Jewish state playing in combating anti-Semitism, and who do you think is responsible to stop anti-Semitism?
- If Zionism can simply be understood as the Jewish national liberation movement, why do you think some people are opposed to the idea of Zionism?
- Now that Zionism has reached a major goal of developing a Jewish state, what role do you see Zionism playing?

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Section 3: Review

1. Give two examples of Jews returning to Israel in the Middle Ages.
2. Give two examples of Jews remembering Jerusalem during holidays/lifecycle events.
3. Name one major point of contention between Ahad Ha'am and Theodor Herzl.
4. Which one of these is not historically a form of Zionism?
 - a. Political Zionism
 - b. Labor Zionism
 - c. Religious Zionism
 - d. Academic Zionism
5. What is the name of the Russian founder of Hovevei Zion, who predated Herzl and wrote Auto-Emancipation, which encouraged Jews to drive toward national consciousness?
 - a. Yehuda Alkalai
 - b. Leon Pinsker
 - c. Asher Ginsberg, known as Ahad Ha'am
 - d. Samuel Mohilever

Section 4: Reflection Questions

- Famous Israeli author A.B. Yehoshua wrote, "A Zionist is a person who accepts the principle that the State of Israel doesn't belong solely to its citizens, but to the entire Jewish people." As someone who lives outside of Israel, what does it mean to you that Israel belongs to you? Does this resonate with you personally?
- Early Zionist thinker Micha Joseph Berditchevsky writes: "A beaten, tortured and persecuted people is unable to be holy. If we have no national livelihood, if we do not eat the fruit of our soil, but only toil on the lands of strangers, how can we be exalted in the spirit?"
- "His major concern with Zionism is that it required a new psychological perspective: Zionists would need to take ownership of their history and become subjects--as opposed to objects--of history." In what ways has Zionism become a resounding success in this regard?
- Jewish history is full of diversity and difference of opinion. While many Jews supported Zionism, there were many different "flavors" within the movement. Some might say there is no such thing as Zionism, but Zionisms. Which type of Zionism speaks to you the most--cultural, revisionist, political, religious, social--and why?
- Was there a time in your life when you felt very connected to the land or people of Israel? Describe the moment.