Generations of Jewish men and women have made a profound impact on the social, cultural, economic and scientific progress of our region, our country and our world. Grounded in the ancient principles of their faith, their lives represent stories of hope, determination, struggle and achievement—an inspiring American chapter in the nearly 4,000-year history of the Jewish people.

An American Story

Welcome to the Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage. We invite you and your students to learn, experience and share the story of:

- **Cleveland History** and the Immigrant Experience that shaped our lives and changed the world;
- **Jewish Holidays and Traditions** that play a dynamic role in the life of a diverse people;
- **Local Heroes**, past and present, who made their mark in industry, government, education and the arts;
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It is our aim that your visit here will inspire you and your students with the hope and determination of those who have left their mark upon our city, our country and our world.
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As long as the Jewish spirit is yearning deep in the heart, With eyes turned towards the East, toward Zion Then our hope—the two-thousand-year-old hope—will not be lost: To be a free people in our own land, The Land of Zion and Jerusalem.

*Ha Tikvah (The Hope)* Israel’s National Anthem

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**ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS**

- What is the history of the Holy Land?
- Why is Israel so important to the Jewish people?
- Why is Israel important to people of many faiths?
- How did the events of World War II influence the development of the State of Israel?
- What are some of the key events and developments in the establishment of the modern State of Israel?
- What is life like in contemporary Israel?
- What relationship does the Cleveland Jewish community have with Israel?

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- Why is it important to study history?
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WHAT IS THE HISTORY OF THE HOLY LAND?

The strip of land along the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea between Egypt and Syria has long been one of the most coveted and contentious locations in the world.

The ancient Israelites established a modest kingdom on the site, under the leadership of King Saul, about 3,000 years ago. His successor, King David, moved the capital to Jerusalem and expanded the nation’s borders. David’s son Solomon built a magnificent Temple there, which became a pilgrimage site for people living throughout the land.

After Solomon, the kingdom split in two—Israel in the North and Judah in the South, with its capital still in Jerusalem. Israel fell to the Assyrian army in 701 BCE, and in 586 BCE the Babylonians conquered the southern kingdom, destroyed the Jerusalem Temple and exiled many of the inhabitants to Babylon.

Seventy years later, under Persian rule, the Judeans received permission to rebuild their Temple in the Land of Israel. In the 2nd century BCE, they even regained some independence under the Hasmonean kings.

But in 70 CE, the Romans crushed a rebellion and destroyed the Temple yet again. Many Jews were exiled to Rome, and Jewish self-rule in the Land of Israel was ended—for nearly 2,000 years.

Why are Jews called Jews?
The religion of the kingdom of Judah became known as Judaism, and the people who belonged to it became known as Jews. Until then, they had been known as Hebrews.

What is the Jewish Diaspora?
“Diaspora” is the Greek word for dispersion. When uncapsitized, it refers to members of any ethnic group living outside their traditional homeland; but when written with a capital “D,” it is usually a reference to Jews living outside of Israel. The Jewish Diaspora began with the Babylonian exile in 586 BCE.

Nonetheless, Jerusalem and the Land of Israel remained spiritual centers for the religion. Although sacrifices could no longer be offered in the Temple, prayers for its restoration were recited daily and the agricultural pilgrimage holidays were still celebrated wherever Jews lived. Many believed that in the time of the Messiah, all Jews would return to their homeland and David’s royal dynasty would be reinstated.

Some Jews remained in the land of Israel (particularly in the northern areas) throughout late antiquity and the Middle Ages, but their numbers were small. A much larger percentage of the world’s Jewish population was scattered across Europe, Asia, and North Africa. This is known as the Jewish Diaspora.

Between 1882 and 1903 some 30,000 Jews immigrate to Palestine. Theodore Herzl founded the World Zionist Organization. Some 40,000 Jews settle in Palestine after murderous pogroms in Russia. The national meeting of the Federation of American Zionist organizations was held in Cleveland. The Balfour Declaration. 35,000 young pioneers from Russia, Poland, and Romania immigrate to Palestine. Jewish settlers form the Haganah, an underground military organization. The League of Nations names the British Mandate over Palestine. 80,000 Jews settle in Palestine. Widespread rioting among Arabs results in nearly 100 Jewish deaths. 250,000 German and other European Jews immigrate to Palestine before the start of World War II. British quota restrictions force thousands to immigrate illegally.
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BCE stands for “Before the Common Era,” and is equivalent to BC. CE, or “Common Era,” is the same as AD.

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250,000 German and other European Jews immigrate to Palestine before the start of World War II. British quota restrictions force thousands to emigrate illegally.
Israel was officially reinstated in 1948. In an era of rising nationalism, Jews seemed conspicuously stateless. Zionists believed that Jews could be safe only if they had a nation of their own, like other ethnic groups. As Zionism grew, it incorporated a number of different ideologies. Political Zionists hoped to use political means to create a Jewish state that would be a safe haven from antisemitism. Cultural Zionists wanted to create a unified Jewish culture, which would have its center in Israel. Socialist (or Labor) Zionists envisioned a cooperative Jewish homeland based on the ideals of socialism. Religious Zionists called for a Jewish state governed by Jewish law. And Revisionist Zionists took a militaristic approach to gaining Jewish sovereignty in the Land of Israel.

The land has had many names over the years. Originally referred to in the Bible as the Land of Canaan, it was later known as the Land of Israel and then split between the ancient kingdoms of Israel and Judah. The Romans called the area “Palestina” (from the ancient Philistines who lived along the coast), and Palestine became the common name for the region in modern times, until the name Israel was officially reinstated in 1948.

**WHAT IS ZIONISM?**

Although Israel remained central to Jews throughout the Diaspora, their interest in the land was primarily religious, not political. It was not until the late 19th century that the re-establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine was even considered a practical possibility.

European Jewry faced many challenges in the 19th century. Although emancipation brought Jews out of the ghettos and into European society, antisemitism remained and even increased. European Jews disagreed about what was the best solution to this problem. Some believed emigration — mainly to the West — was the answer. Some had faith in new political movements, such as socialism. And some felt the only option was complete assimilation into secular life. But others—the Zionists—looked to Jewish nationalism for the answer.

**What are the similarities between Judaism, Christianity and Islam?**

All three religions originated in the Middle East between 1000 and 3000 years ago. All three are monotheistic—believing in one God—and all share some common traditions going back to Abraham. All are ethical religions concerned that their followers should lead morally correct lives, in accordance with the will of God.

In 1917, the British government issued the Balfour Declaration, which promised further efforts to establish a Jewish national home in Palestine. Named for British Foreign Secretary, Lord Arthur James Balfour, the Declaration was endorsed by France, Italy, Japan, and the League of Nations. Palestine was now part of the British Mandate in the Middle East and Britain was given temporary control of the region.

Jewish immigration to Israel continued in the 1920s and 30s. Then, in 1939, the British issued a document known as the “White Paper,” which closed the borders. Tensions between Jews and Arabs living in Israel had escalated, and the British felt pressure from the international Arab community. During and after World War II, however, Jews continued to immigrate to Palestine, though now they had to do it illegally. The British were now enemies of the Zionists, and Zionist militias, such as the Haganah, fought an underground war against them.

**How is Zionism similar to other nationalist movements?**

Nationalism is any movement that promotes political independence for a group of people based on ethnicity or geography. Nationalism began to dominate global politics in the 19th and 20th centuries, and included such movements as Zionism and Black Nationalism. The Black Nationalist movement was started by Marcus Garvey in the early part of the 20th century. He advocated for unity among people of African descent and an independent nation in Africa.

Meanwhile, the Land of Israel passed into other hands. In the 7th century CE, the land fell under Muslim control. The site of Solomon’s Temple became known as “Al-Aqsa” (“the furthest mosque”)—the third holiest site in the Islamic religion. Israel remained under Muslim rule for most of the next 1,300 years—except for the period of the Crusades, when Christian knights briefly assumed power. Jerusalem is, of course, holy to Christians as well, as it figures prominently in the life and death of Jesus. During World War II, more than 65,000 Jews fled to Palestine.

**HOW AND WHY WAS THE STATE OF ISRAEL ESTABLISHED?**

Herzl and other Zionist leaders tried to find a political solution to the question of a Jewish homeland. They met with officials of the European colonial powers to negotiate a piece of land for the Jewish state, but their efforts were not immediately successful. In the meantime, other European Jews were taking a different approach: immigration. During the last two decades of the 19th century, about 30,000 Jews moved from Eastern Europe to Palestine to establish agricultural settlements. This is known as the First Aliyah. Aliyah is Hebrew for “going up,” and is used to mean “moving to Israel.” These early pioneers, or halutzim, faced many hardships in Israel and many ended up returning to Europe. However, the Second Aliyah was more successful, and by the end of World War I, close to 100,000 Jews were living in Palestine.

During World War II, more than 65,000 Jews fled to Palestine. Arab rioters murdered 61,000 Jews in the 1948 war against them.

**1947**

Abba Hillel Silver addresses the United Nations in favor of the establishment of Israel.

**1948**

Dr. May 14; the United States officially recognizes a sovereign Jewish nation called Israel.

**1956-1973**

Israel fights three wars against Arab countries bent on its destruction.

**1972**

Palestinian terrorists murder 11 Israeli athletes and coaches at the Olympic Games in Munich, Germany.

**1979**

Egyptian president Anwar Sadat signs a peace treaty with Israel, the first between the country and any of its Arab neighbors.

**1981**

Yasser Arafat assumes leadership of the Palestinian Liberation Organization.

**1989**

Israel, the first Jewish state, is recognized by the United Nations.

**1991**

The Israeli Air Force rescues some 14,000 threatened Ethiopian Jews in a 36-hour airlift to Israel.
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The first Zionist leader to mobilize people toward a practical Zionist goal was Theodore Herzl. Herzl was a Viennese journalist living in Paris and a secular Jew. His Zionist spirit was awakened in 1894 by the case of Alfred Dreyfus—a Jewish officer in the French army who was falsely accused of treason. Like many other European Jews, Herzl realized that something must be done to protect the Jewish people from rising antisemitism. In 1896, he published a pamphlet called “Der Judenstaat”—(The Jewish State). The following year, he founded the World Zionist Organization and held the first Zionist Conference in Basel, Switzerland.

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Finally, with the help of the United States, a solution was reached. On November 29, 1947, the United Nations voted to partition Palestine into two states—an Arab state and a Jewish state. Unfortunately, the Arabs did not accept this plan, and war broke out. After months of fighting, the State of Israel declared its independence on May 14, 1948.

It is not a coincidence that the State of Israel was established just three years after the Holocaust. Of course, the Zionist Movement began 50 years earlier and the political machinery was already in place long before World War II. Nonetheless, the events of the Holocaust gave powerful credence to the Zionist claims and helped turn world opinion in their favor.

**WHAT IS LIFE LIKE IN ISRAEL TODAY?**

The Zionist program succeeded in creating a haven for world Jewry in their ancient homeland. Over the past five decades, Israel has welcomed waves of immigration from Yemen, Morocco, Ethiopia, the former Soviet Union and elsewhere, often providing refuge for entire Jewish communities under threat. It has not been easy. Tensions remain high between Jews and Arabs both within and outside of Israel. Conflicts exist between religious and secular Jews and between Israelis of different backgrounds and ideologies. But, many believe that the region is slowly moving toward peace.

Israel is a democracy, with a national parliament known as the *Knesset*. Although most Israelis live in cities, many also live on communal settlements called *kibbutzim*. These began as agricultural settlements, but most are now involved in industrial or high-tech industries. Because of ongoing tensions with Israel’s neighbors, all Israeli citizens are required to serve in *Tzahal*, Israel’s defense forces.

Most of the world’s Jews do not live in Israel. Still, for many it is a kind of home. Diaspora Jews help sustain the land through their ongoing support. Members of the Cleveland Jewish community have helped build hospitals, schools, and libraries throughout Israel. They engage in cross-cultural programs with their sister city Be’er She’an. Hundreds of Cleveland families have immigrated to Israel to fulfill their dreams of living in the ancestral homeland.

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What is Yom Ha’atzmaut?
Yom Ha’atzmaut is Israel’s Independence Day and a time for great celebration among Israelis and Jews around the world. It marks Israel’s declaration of independence on May 14, 1948, although it is celebrated on the anniversary of the Hebrew date—the 5th of Iyar.
CLEVELAND VOICES

Abba Hillel Silver was the rabbi of Cleveland’s Tifereth Israel Congregation and one of America’s strongest advocates for the Zionist cause. Silver met with Presidents Roosevelt and Truman to lobby for American support for the creation of a Jewish state. On May 8, 1947, he delivered an address before the United Nations Assembly advocating the establishment of a Jewish homeland.

David Berger grew up in Shaker Heights and immigrated to Israel in 1970. A competitive weight lifter, he joined the Israeli Olympic team. In 1972, Berger traveled to Munich for the Olympic Games, where tragedy struck. Berger and ten of his teammates were murdered by Palestinian terrorists. A sculpture outside the Jewish Community Center in Beachwood honors David’s life.

Rachel (Rae) Landy came to Cleveland as a young girl in 1890. In 1904, she graduated from Cleveland’s Jewish Women’s Hospital as a member of the first nurses training class. Nine years later she was sent to Palestine by Hadassah, a Zionist health and education organization. From 1913 to 1915, Landy helped set up Palestine’s first public health and sanitation systems.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

For Lower Grades

- Having to leave your home and community can be sad and scary. What are some of the reasons people move away from their homes? Why did many Jews feel they had to leave their homes and go to Israel? What were they hoping to find there?
- What do you think is the most difficult part of moving to a new land—learning a new language? Eating new foods? Getting used to the weather? Finding a new job?
- Imagine that your family, friends and schoolmates all decided to move to a new land together. What would be the most important thing to do first? Create a police force and fire department? Start a farm? Build houses and apartments? Start a synagogue or church? Build a movie theatre? Start a school?
- America is a land of immigrants. That means everyone (except Native Americans) came from somewhere else. Ask your parents or grandparents where your ancestors came from.

For Upper Grades

- Why did Zionism, which originated in the 19th century, become increasingly popular in the 1920s and 30s?
- Why would a Jew whose ancestors have not lived in Israel for 2,000 years want to return there? Do other ethnic groups, such as the Chinese or African Americans, feel the same way about their ancestral homeland?
- Have you ever heard this area described as “The Holy Land?” Research why it is called that and why it is so important to Jews, Muslims and Christians. What events took place there that makes it a destination for pilgrims of many faiths?
- Do you ever hear about Israel in the news? What are your general impressions of the country?
- Have you or any of your friends or relatives been to Israel? What did you/they see or do there? Did you/they enjoy it? Were you/they afraid to be there?
- Why do you think there are still tensions among Arabs and Israelis today? What do you think can be done to bring peace to the region? Is there anything kids can do?
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VOCABULARY

Aliyah Literally meaning, “going up,” it is used as a synonym for “moving to Israel.”

Antisemitism Hatred of Jews.

Balfour Declaration Named for the British official Lord Balfour, the Balfour Declaration was issued by the British government in 1917. It officially recognized the Jewish people’s right to a home in the Land of Israel.

Diaspora The Greek word for dispersion. When uncapitalized, it refers to members of any ethnic group living outside their traditional homeland; but when written with a capital “D,” it is usually a reference to Jews living outside of Israel. The Jewish Diaspora began with the Babylonian exile in 586 BCE.

Haganah From the Hebrew word for “defense,” the Haganah was the Jewish underground defense force in Palestine from 1920 to 1948.

Halutz (plur. Halutzim) A pioneer, especially a Jewish immigrant to Palestine who helped work the land and build settlements in the years before the state was established.

Theodore Herzl was born in Budapest in 1860, but moved to Vienna as a child. He was not strongly connected to Judaism as a young man, but became consumed with the Zionist plight after covering the Dreyfus Affair as a journalist in Paris. He began to believe that Zionism was the only effective response to antisemitism. Herzl organized the first Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland in 1897 and quickly became one of the most important Zionist leaders. He worked tirelessly for the cause until his death in 1904.

Kibbutz (plur. Kibbutzim) A cooperative settlement in Israel.

Knset Israel's parliament or legislative assembly, made up of 120 representatives who are elected for a four-year term.

Socialism Socialism is an ideology that promotes a classless society designed to serve the common good, in which all members have an equal share in the economy.

Tzahal The Israeli Defense Force, established in 1948.

White Paper A document issued by the British government that essentially closed Palestine to Jewish immigration on the eve of World War II.

Yom Ha’Atzmaut Israel Independence Day, celebrated on the 5th day of the Hebrew month Iyar.

Zionism, Zionist Zionism is the movement to establish a Jewish state in the Land of Israel. It comes from the Hebrew word “Tzion,” which is a biblical name for Jerusalem. Modern Zionism began in the late 19th century and included several different ideological factions.

RESOURCES

Books for Teachers


Laqueur, Walter. A History of Zionism: From the French Revolution to the Establishment of the State of Israel. Schocken, 1972, 2003. This massive scholarly review is a fundamental text on the subject—especially recommended for those who want to explore the topic in greater depth.

Oz, Amos. In the Land of Israel. Harvest Books, 1993. Acclaimed Israeli author Amos Oz traveled the land of Israel in the early 1980s, talking with both Jews and Arabs. Oz conveys the incredible richness and complexity of Israeli society through these fascinating interviews.


Books for Students

Altman, Linda Jacobs. The Creation of Israel (World History Series). Lucent Books, 1998. This rich resource includes a timeline, carefully drawn maps, excerpts from primary and secondary sources, and suggestions for further reading. It focuses primarily on the period from the 1890s up to 1948. Upper elementary and middle school.


WEBSITES

http://www.israelemb.org/kids/index.html This site for kids, created by the Israeli Embassy, offers an animated virtual tour of Israeli life and history.

http://web.israelinsider.com/home.htm An independent, nonpartisan online newsmagazine about Israel.

http://www.zionism-israel.com/ “Zionism and Israel: Issues and Answers” from the Zionism and Israel Information Center

http://www.jafi.org.il/education/israel/ Resources and links from the Jewish Agency for Israel, Department of Zionist Education

http://www.myisraelsource.com/ A helpful resource for educators teaching about Israel.
Palestine from 1920 to 1948. Haganah was the Jewish underground defense force in
the cause until his death in 1904.

Alfred Dreyfus was a Jewish officer in the French
military. In 1894, he was falsely accused of treason and served four years in prison before being acquitted. The “Dreyfus Affair,” as the episode came to be known, helped inspire future Zionist leader Theodore Herzl to action.

Aliyah (plural: Kibbutzim) A cooperative settlement in
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Knesset Israel’s parliament or legislative assembly, made up of 120 representatives who are elected for a four-year term.

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tury and included several different ideological factions.

The Greek word for dispersion. When
uncapitalized, it is usually a reference to
Jews living outside of Israel. The Jewish Diaspora began with the Babylonian exile in 586 BCE.

Diaspora

From the Hebrew word for “defense,” the
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VOCABULARY

Antisemitism Hatred of Jews.

Balfour Declaration Named for the British official
Lord Balfour, the Balfour Declaration was issued by the
British government in 1917. It officially recognized the
Jewish people’s right to a home in the Land of Israel.

Burstein, Chaya M. A Kid’s Catalog of Israel. Jewish
Publication Society, 1988. This volume is packed with info and fun facts about the
land, language, people, and culture of Israel. It includes stories about Zionist heroes and Israelis today, as well as activities, songs, further resources, and an excellent
glossary. Elementary.

Burstein, Chaya M. Our Land of Israel. UAHCS, 1995. Burstein connects modern Zionist history and contempo-

ary life in Israel through stories of diverse Israelis living
today. The book offers plenty of useful background infor-
mation and includes lively photos and drawings, as well as student activities. Elementary.


RESOURCES


Bamberger briefly takes readers from prehistoric times through the biblical and medieval periods before concen-
trating on the history of modern Zionism and the establish-
ment of the State of Israel. He finishes with a short section on contemporary Israel. Behrman House has also published a supplementary teachers’ guide by M. Schachter and Priscilla Fishman, with maps and black-and-white photos. Upper elementary to middle school.

Books for Teachers


Laequeur, Walter. A History of Zionism: From the French Revolution to the Establishment of the State of Israel. Schocken, 1972, 2003. This massive scholarly review is a fundamental text on the subject—especially recommended for those who want to explore the topic in greater depth.

Oz, Amos. In the Land of Israel. Harvest Books, 1993. Acclaimed Israeli author Amos Oz traveled the land of Israel in the early 1980s, talking with both Jews and Arabs. Oz conveys the incredible richness and complexity of Israeli society through these fascinating interviews.


Rosenthal, Donna. The Israelis: Ordinary People in an
Extraordinary Land. Free Press, 2003. Rosenthal, a journalist, relies on dozens of interviews to move past the media hype and stereotypes—creating a nu-
anced and engaging portrait of the Israeli people.

Books for Students

Altmann, Linda Jacobs. The Creation of Israel (World History Series). Lucent Books, 1998. This rich resource includes a timeline, carefully drawn maps, excerpts from primary and secondary sources, and suggestions for further reading. It focuses primarily on the period from the 1890s up to 1948. Upper elementary and middle school.

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The Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage joins an elite group of world-class institutions as a living testament to the courage, conviction, aspirations and achievements of Cleveland’s Jewish community. The stories of individuals and families – past and present – come to life through state-of-the-art exhibitions, interactives and films, oral histories, photographs and artifacts. The Museum includes The Temple–Tifereth Israel Gallery, an internationally-recognized collection of Judaica, and a special exhibition gallery featuring significant exhibitions of national and international acclaim.

The Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage is a partnership between The Maltz Family Foundation, the Jewish Community Federation’s Centennial Initiative and The Temple–Tifereth Israel with research support from the Western Reserve Historical Society.