

On Sacred Soil

The following sample material has been compiled to help you reaffirm the case that the modern State of Israel was created in Palestine because of the historic connection between the Jewish people and the Land of Israel, and not solely in response to the Holocaust.

The Jewish people have had a continuous presence in the Land of Israel for nearly 3500 years.

- Circa 1400 B.C.E. – Joshua leads the Israelites into Canaan.
 - 866 B.C.E. – King David declares Jerusalem capital of Israel.
 - 825 B.C.E. – King Solomon builds the First Temple in Jerusalem.
 - 423 B.C.E. – Destruction of the First Temple by the Babylonians.
 - 325 B.C.E. – The Second Temple is built in Jerusalem.
 - 70 C.E. – Fall of Jerusalem and destruction of the Second Temple.
 - 135 C.E. – Defeat of Bar Kochba by the Romans.
 - 231-254 C.E. – Early Church Father and theologian Origen “visited Erez Israel a number of times and came into contact with leading Jewish scholars there.”¹
 - 614 C.E. – “The Persian army of Chosroes II approached Jerusalem in 614 and besieged it with the help of its Jewish allies.”²
 - 670-740 C.E. – “During the first century after the Arab conquest, the caliph and governors of Syria and the Land [Palestine] ruled entirely over Christian and Jewish subjects.”³
 - 985 C.E. – The Arab writer Muqaddasi states that “The mosque is empty of worshippers...The Jews constitute the majority of Jerusalem’s population.”⁴
 - 1099 C.E. – A synagogue is burned during the Crusader conquest of Jerusalem. Jewish correspondence following the destruction of Jerusalem marks “the earliest account on the conquest in any language.”⁵
 - 1267 C.E. – Ramban moves to Jerusalem.
 - 1492 C.E. – Mass immigration of Jews to Palestine following the Spanish expulsion.
 - 1881 C.E. – Beginning of the First Aliya.
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Throughout the ages the Jewish people have kept Jerusalem and Zion foremost in their prayers.

Preceding the Shema:

וְהִבִּיאֵנוּ לְשָׁלוֹם מֵאַרְבַּע כְּנָפוֹת הָאָרֶץ. וְתוֹלִיכֵנוּ קוֹמְמֵיֹת לְאַרְצֵנוּ

Bring us in peacefulness from the four corners of the earth and lead us with upright pride to our land.

In the Amidah:

תִּקַּע בְּשׁוֹפָר גָּדוֹל לְחֵרוּתֵנוּ. וְשֵׂא נֶס לְקִבְּץ גְּלוּתֵינוּ. וְקַבְּצֵנוּ יַחַד מֵאַרְבַּע כְּנָפוֹת הָאָרֶץ. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה
ה', מְקַבֵּץ נְדָחֵי עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל

Sound the great *shofar* for our freedom, raise the banner to gather our exiles and gather us together from the four corners of the earth. Blessed are you, God, who gathers in the dispersed of the people of Israel.

וְלִירוּשָׁלַיִם עִירְךָ בְּרַחֲמִים תָּשׁוּב. וְתִשָּׂא בְּתוֹכָהּ בָּאֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתָּ. וּבְנֵה אוֹתָהּ בְּקִרְוֹב בְּיָמֵינוּ בְּנֵן עוֹלָם. וְכַסָּא דְדוּד מְהֵרָה לְתוֹכָהּ תִּכְיֶין. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' בּוֹנֵה יְרוּשָׁלַיִם.

And to Jerusalem your city, may You return in compassion, and may You rest within it, as You have spoken. May You rebuild it soon in our days as an eternal structure, and may You speedily establish the throne of David with in. Blessed are You, God, the builder of Jerusalem.

Psalm 126:

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת. בְּשׁוּב ה' אֶת שִׁיבַת צִיּוֹן הֵייוּנו כַּח לְמִים: אִזּו יִמְלֵא שְׂחֹק פִּינוּ וּלְשׁוֹנֵנוּ רִנָּה. אִזּו יֹאמְרוּ בְּגוֹיִם הַגְּדִיל ה' לַעֲשׂוֹת עִם אֱלֹהֵי: הַגְּדִיל ה' לַעֲשׂוֹת עִמָּנוּ. הֵייוּנו שְׂמֵחִים: שׁוּבָה ה' אֶת שְׁבִיתֵנוּ כְּאֶפְיָקִים בְּנִגְבִּ: הַזְרְעִים בְּדָמְעָה בְּרִנָּה יִקְצְרוּ: הַלֹּחֵץ יִלַּךְ וּבִכָּה נִשְׂא מִשָּׁךְ הַזֶּרַע. בֹּא יְבֵא בְּרִנָּה. נִשְׂא אֶלְמַתֵּיו

A song of ascents. When God will return the captivity of Zion, we will be like dreamers. Then our mouth will be filled with laughter and our tongue glad with song. Then they will declare among the nations, ‘God has done greatly with these.’ God has done greatly with us, we were gladdened. O God – return our captivity like springs in the desert. Those who tearfully sow will reap glad song. He who bears the measure of seeds walks along weeping, but will return in exultation, a bearer of his shaves.

Psalm 137:

עַל נְהָרוֹת בְּכַל שָׁם יִשְׁבְּנוּ גַם כָּכִינוּ, בְּזָכְרֵנוּ אֶת צִיּוֹן: עַל עַרְבִים בְּתוֹכָהּ, תִּלְיֵנוּ כְּנֹרוֹתֵינוּ: כִּי שָׁם שְׁאַלְנוּ שׁוּבֵינוּ דְבָרֵי שִׁיר וְתוֹלְלֵינוּ שְׂמֵחָה, שִׁירוּ לָנוּ מִשִּׁיר צִיּוֹן: אֵיךְ נִשִּׁיר אֶת שִׁיר ה', עַל אֲדָמַת נֶכֶר: אִם אֲשַׁפְּחֶךָ יְרוּשָׁלַיִם, תִּשָּׂפַח יְמִינֵי: תִּדְבֹק לְשׁוֹנֵי לְחִפֵּי אִם לֹא אֲזַכְּרֶכִי, אִם לֹא אֲעַלֶּה אֶת יְרוּשָׁלַיִם עַל רֹאשׁ שְׂמֵחָתִי: זָכַר ה' לְבָנֵי אָדָם אֶת יוֹם יְרוּשָׁלַיִם, הַאֲמָרִים עָרוּ עָרוּ עַד הַיְסוּד בָּהּ:

By the rivers of Babylon – there we sat and also wept when we remembered Zion. On the willows within it we hung our lyres. There our captors requested words of song from us, with our lyres playing joyous music, ‘Sing for us from Zion’s song!’ ‘How can we sing the song of God upon the alien’s soil?’ If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its skill. Let my tongue adhere to my palate if I fail to recall you, if I fail to elevate Jerusalem above my foremost joy. Remember, God, for the offspring of Edom, the day of Jerusalem – for those who say ‘Destroy! Destroy! To its very foundation.

Musaf for the High Holidays, Passover, Shavuot and Sukkot:

וְקָרַב פְּזוּרֵינוּ מִבֵּין הַגּוֹיִם. וּנְפֹצוֹתֵינוּ כְּנֶס מִיִּרְכַּתֵּי אֶרֶץ. וְהִבִּיאֵנוּ לְצִיּוֹן עִירְךָ בְּרִנָּה. וְלִירוּשָׁלַיִם בֵּית מִקְדָּשְׁךָ בְּשִׂמְחָת עוֹלָם

Draw our scattered ones near, from among the nations, and bring in our dispersions from the ends of the earth. And bring us to Zion, Your City, in glad song, and to Jerusalem, home of Your Sanctuary, in eternal joy.

As the First Aliyah brought large groups of European Jews to Palestine, the leadership of the Zionist movement expressed their claim to a Jewish state in their ancestral homeland.

“Zionism seeks for the Jewish people a publicly recognized legally secured homeland in Palestine.”

- From the program of the First Zionist Congress, Basel, Switzerland 1897.

“My plan is simple enough. We must obtain the sovereignty of Palestine – our never-to-be-forgotten, historical home.”

- Theodore Herzl, quoted in The New York Times, August 31, 1897.

“That the Zionist Congress firmly maintains the principle for the foundation of the colony in the Jewish-father-land, Palestine, or in that vicinity. The congress thanks Great Britain for the offer of African territory, the consideration of which, however, is terminated...”

-Resolution adopted by the Seventh Zionist Congress, July 1905.

Following World War I and the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the victorious nations began the re-division of Ottoman territory. Recognizing the historic connection between the Jewish people and Palestine, they committed to establishing a Jewish state therein.

“When it is asked what is meant by the development of the Jewish National Home in Palestine, it may be answered that it is not the imposition of a Jewish nationality upon the inhabitants of Palestine as a whole, but the **further development of the existing Jewish community**, with the assistance of Jews in other parts of the world, in order that it may become a centre in which the Jewish people as a whole may take, on grounds of religion and race, an interest and a pride. But in order that this community should have the best prospect of free development and provide a full opportunity for the Jewish people to display its capacities, it is essential that it should know that it is in Palestine as of right and not on the sufferance. That is the reason why it is necessary that the existence of a Jewish National Home in Palestine should be internationally guaranteed, and **that it should be formally recognized to rest upon ancient historic connection.**”

- British White Paper of 1922

“Whereas the Principal Allied Powers have also agreed that the Mandatory should be responsible for putting into effect the declaration [the Balfour Declaration] originally made on November 2nd, 1917, by the Government of His Britannic Majesty, and adopted by the said Powers, in favour of the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people... **Whereas recognition has thereby been given to the historical connexion of the Jewish people with Palestine and to the grounds for reconstituting their national home in that country.**”

- Conference of the Principle Allied Powers at San Remo – July 24, 1922.

Even before the wave of Jewish immigration to Palestine as part of the First Aliyah, a Jewish majority has existed in Jerusalem.

Jewish Majority in Jerusalem⁶

Contrary to the prevailing notion that Jews constituted a minority community in 19th century Jerusalem, there is evidence from various sources indicating a Jewish ethnic majority at intermittent periods:

1820-1821:	For the first time Jews made up the largest ethnic group as recorded by noted travelers such as Richardson, Carne and Scholtz.*		
1838: According to Martin Gibert "Jerusalem-Rebirth of a City"	6,000 Jews	5,000 Muslims	3,000 Christians
1844: According to the first official public census	7,120 Jews	5,760 Muslims	3,390 Christians
1876: Guide of Lievin de Hamme	12,000 Jews	7,560 Muslims	5,470 Christians
1909: Mayers' Encyclopaedia	45,000 Jews	12,000 Muslims	10,200 Christians
1911: Baedeker's Guide	30,800 Jews	10,000 Muslims	15,000 Christians
1948: Encyclopaedia Britannica	On the eve of the establishment of the state of Israel, the Jewish majority stood at:		
	99,320 Jews	36,680 Muslims	31,300 Christians
1990: Israel Bureau of Statistics	353,200 Jews	124,200 Muslims	14,000 Christians

¹ *Encyclopedia Judaica*. Jerusalem, Israel: Keter Publishing House, 1971, Page 1467.

² *Encyclopedia Judaica*. Jerusalem, Israel: Keter Publishing House, 1971, Page 1971.

³ Parker, James. *Whose Land? A History of the Peoples of Palestine*. Great Britain: Harmondsworth, 1970, Page 66.

⁴ Kahler, Erich. *The Jews among the Nations*. New York City, NY: F. Ungar, 1967, Page 144.

⁵ Kedar, Benjamin Z. "The Jerusalem Massacre of July 1099 in the Western Historiography of the Crusades." *The Crusades*. Vol. 3. Aldershot, England: Ashgate Publishing, 2004, Page 63.

⁶ Tal, Eliyahu. *Whose Jerusalem*. Tel Aviv, Israel: International Forum for a United Jerusalem, 1994, Page 94.