

From: **Songs of Zion the Beautiful -Yehuda Amichai**  
**מתוך שירי ארץ ציון וירושלים כא'**

<p>Jerusalem - a place where everyone remembers that they have forgotten something there, but they don't remember what they forgot. And for the sake of this remembering I wear over my own face, the face of my father. This is my city where my dream-containers fill up like oxygen tanks of a deep sea diver. The holiness in her sometimes turns into love. And the questions that people ask in these hills are the same as always: "Have you seen my sheep?" "Have you seen my shepherd?" And the door of my house stands open like a tomb from which someone was resurrected.</p>	<p>ירושלים, מקום שהכל זוכרים ששכחו בו משהו אבל הם אינם זוכרים מה שכחו ולצורך זכירה זו אני חובש על פני את פני אבי. זוהי עירי שבה מתמלאים כלי חלומותיי כמו מכלי חמצן של צוללים לצלול הקדושה בה הופכת לפעמים לאהבה והשאלות ששואלים בהרים האלה נשארו כתמיד: ראית את הצאן שלי? ראית את הרועה שלי? ודלת ביתי פתוחה כמו קבר שמתוכו קמו לתחייה.</p>
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**HATIKVA**

The Israeli National Anthem is a shortened version of the poem HATIKVA, by Naftali Herz Imber (1856-1909). Imber moved to the Land of Israel in 1882 from Galicia. The melody was arranged by Shmuel Cohen, an immigrant from Moldavia

<p>As long as deep in the heart, The soul of a Jew yearns, And forward to the East To Zion, an eye looks. Our hope will not be lost, The hope of two thousand years, To be a free nation in our land, The land of Zion and Jerusalem.</p>	<p>כָּל עוֹד בְּלִבִּי פְּנִימָה נִפְשׁ יְהוּדִי הוֹמָה וּלְפָנַי מִזְרַח קְדִימָה עֵין לְצִיּוֹן צוֹפִיָה עוֹד לֹא אֶבְדָּה תִּקְוַתִּי הַתִּקְוָה בֶּת שְׁנוֹת אֲלָפִים לְהִיּוֹת עַם חִפְשִׁי בְּאַרְצִנוּ אֶרֶץ צִיּוֹן וִירוּשָׁלַיִם</p>
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**For Reflection:**

What does it mean to you to be a 'free nation' in our land? Free to do what?

Vastly different hopes of **national freedom** drove the ideas and actions of political thinkers and their colleagues: Theodore Herzl, Ahad Ha'am and Rav Kook. What are the strengths and weaknesses of each position?

**Theodore Herzl** (1860-1904) - Excerpts from **Der Judenstaat**, Vienna 1896  
<https://www.gutenberg.org/files/25282/25282-h/25282-h.htm> - (Gutenberg ebook 2008)

...Everything depends on our propelling force. And what is that force? The misery of the Jews.

Who would venture to deny its existence? We shall discuss it fully in the chapter on the causes of Anti-Semitism.

Everybody is familiar with the phenomenon of steam-power, generated by boiling water, which lifts the kettle-lid. Such tea-kettle phenomena are the attempts of Zionist and kindred associations to check Anti-Semitism.

I believe that this power, if rightly employed, is powerful enough to propel a large engine and to move passengers and goods: the engine having whatever form men may choose to give it.

I am absolutely convinced that I am right, though I doubt whether I shall live to see myself proved to be so. Those who are the first to inaugurate this movement will scarcely live to see its glorious close. But the inauguration of it is enough to give them a feeling of pride and the joy of spiritual freedom.

#### **THE JEWISH QUESTION**

No one can deny the gravity of the situation of the Jews. Wherever they live in perceptible numbers, they are more or less persecuted. Their equality before the law, granted by statute, has become practically a dead letter. They are debarred from filling even moderately high positions, either in the army, or in any public or private capacity. And attempts are made to thrust them out of business also: "Don't buy from Jews!"

Attacks in Parliaments, in assemblies, in the press, in the pulpit, in the street, on journeys—for example, their exclusion from certain hotels—even in places of recreation, become daily more numerous. The forms of persecutions varying according to the countries and social circles in which they occur. In Russia, imposts are levied on Jewish villages; in Rumania, a few persons are put to death; in Germany, they get a good beating occasionally; in Austria, Anti-Semites exercise terrorism over all public life; in Algeria, there are travelling agitators; in Paris, the Jews are shut out of the so-called best social circles and excluded from clubs. Shades of anti-Jewish feeling are innumerable. But this is not to be an attempt to make out a doleful category of Jewish hardships.

I do not intend to arouse sympathetic emotions on our behalf. That would be foolish, futile, and undignified proceeding. I shall content myself with putting the following questions to the Jews: Is it not true that, in countries where we live in perceptible numbers, the position of Jewish lawyers, doctors, technicians, teachers, and employees of all descriptions becomes daily more intolerable? Is it not true that the Jewish middle classes are seriously threatened? Is it not true, that the passions of the mob are incited against our wealthy people? Is it not true, that our poor endure greater sufferings than any other proletariat? I think that this external pressure makes itself felt everywhere. In our economically upper classes it causes discomfort, in our middle classes continual and grave anxieties, in our lower classes absolute despair.

Everything tends, in fact, to one and the same conclusion, which is clearly enunciated in that classic Berlin phrase: "Juden Raus!" (Out with the Jews!)

I shall now put the Question in the briefest possible form: Are we to "get out" now and where to? Or, may we yet remain? And, how long?

Let us first settle the point of staying where we are. Can we hope for better days, can we possess our souls in patience, can we wait in pious resignation till the princes and peoples of this earth are more mercifully disposed towards us? I say that we cannot hope for a change in the current of feeling. And why not? Even if we were as near to the hearts of princes as are their other subjects, they could not protect us. They would only feel popular hatred by showing us too much favor. By "too much," I really mean less than is claimed as a right by every ordinary citizen, or by every race. The nations in whose midst Jews live are all either covertly or openly Anti-Semitic.

#### **LANGUAGE**

It might be suggested that our want of a common current language would present difficulties. We cannot converse with one another in Hebrew. Who amongst us has a sufficient acquaintance with Hebrew to ask for a railway ticket in that language? Such a thing cannot be done. Yet the difficulty is very easily circumvented. Every man can preserve the language in which his thoughts are at home. Switzerland affords a conclusive proof of the possibility of a federation of tongues. We shall remain in the new country what we now are here, and we shall never cease to cherish with sadness the memory of the native land out of which we have been driven.

We shall give up using those miserable stunted jargons, those Ghetto languages which we still employ, for these were the stealthy tongues of prisoners. Our national teachers will give due attention to this matter; and the language which proves itself to be of greatest utility for general intercourse will be adopted without compulsion as our national tongue. Our community of race is peculiar and unique, for we are bound together only by the faith of our fathers.

#### **THE FLAG**

We have no flag, and we need one. If we desire to lead many men, we must raise a symbol above their heads. I would suggest a white flag, with seven golden stars. The white field symbolizes our pure new life; the stars are the seven golden hours of our working day. For we shall march into the Promised Land carrying the badge of honor.

#### **THEOCRACY**

Shall we end by having a theocracy? No, indeed. Faith unites us, knowledge gives us freedom. We shall therefore prevent any theocratic tendencies from coming to the fore on the part of our priesthood. We shall keep our priests within the confines of their temples in the same way as we shall keep our professional army within the confines of their barracks. Army and priesthood shall receive honors high as their valuable functions deserve. But they must not interfere in the administration of the State which confers distinction upon them, else they will conjure up difficulties without and within.

Every man will be as free and undisturbed in his faith or his disbelief as he is in his nationality. And if it should occur that men of other creeds and different nationalities come to live amongst us, we should accord them honorable protection and equality before the law. We have learnt toleration in Europe. This is not sarcastically said; for the Anti-Semitism of today could only in a very few places be taken for old religious intolerance. It is for the most part a movement among civilized nations by which they try to chase away the specters of their own past.

### CONCLUSION

...I believe that a wondrous generation of Jews will spring into existence. The Maccabeans will rise again. Let me repeat once more my opening words: The Jews who wish for a State will have it. We shall live at last as free men on our own soil, and die peacefully in our own homes. The world will be freed by our liberty, enriched by our wealth, magnified by our greatness. And whatever we attempt there to accomplish for our own welfare, will react powerfully and beneficially for the good of humanity.

Theodor Herzl (center) with a Zionist delegation in Jerusalem, 1898



**Ahad Ha'am - Asher Zvi Hirsch Ginsberg (1856 -1927)**

**The Jewish State and the Jewish Problem**

Those very speeches that we heard at Basle about the economic condition of the Jews in various countries showed beyond a doubt that our national wealth is very small, and most of our people are below the poverty-line. From this any man of sense, though he be no great mathematician, can readily calculate that ten million pounds are a mere nothing compared with the sum necessary for the emigration of the Jews and their settlement in Palestine on an agricultural basis. Even if all the rich Jews suddenly became ardent "Zionists", and every one of them gave half his wealth to the cause, the whole would still not make up the thousands of millions that would be needed for the purpose.

There is no doubt, then, that even when the Jewish State is established, the Jews will be able to settle in it only little by little, the determining factors being the resources of the people themselves and the degree of economic development reached by the country. Meanwhile the natural increase of population will continue, both among those who settle in the country and among those who remain outside it, with the inevitable result that on the one hand Palestine will have less and less room for new immigrants, and on the other hand the number of those remaining outside Palestine will not diminish very much, in spite of the continual emigration.

In his opening speech at the Congress, Dr. Herzl, wishing to demonstrate the superiority of his State idea over the method of Palestinian colonization adopted hitherto, calculated that by the latter method it would take **nine hundred years** before all the Jews could be settled in their land. The members of the Congress applauded this as a conclusive argument. But it was a cheap victory. The Jewish State itself, do what it will, cannot make a more favorable calculation.

Truth is bitter, but with all its bitterness it is better than illusion. We must confess to ourselves that the **"ingathering of the exiles"** is unattainable by natural means. We may, by natural means, establish a Jewish State one day, and the Jews may increase and multiply in it until the country will hold no more: but even then the greater part of the people will remain scattered in strange lands. **"To gather our scattered ones from the four corners of the earth" (in the words of the Prayer Book) is impossible.** Only religion, with its belief in a miraculous redemption, can promise that consummation.

But if this is so, if the Jewish State too means not an "ingathering of the exiles," but the settlement of a small part of our people in Palestine, then how will it solve the material problem of the Jewish masses in the lands of the Diaspora?

Or do the champions of the State idea think, perhaps, that, being masters in our own country, we shall be able by diplomatic means to get the various governments to relieve the material sufferings of our scattered fellow-Jews! That is, it seems to me, Dr. Herzl's latest theory. In his new pamphlet (Der Baseler Kongress) we no longer find any calculation of the number of years that it will take for the Jews to enter their country. Instead, he tells us in so many words (p. 9) that if the land becomes the national property of the Jewish people, even though no individual Jew owns privately a single square yard of it, then the Jewish problem will be solved forever.

These words (unless we exclude the material aspect of the Jewish problem) can be understood only in the way suggested above. But this hope seems to me so fantastic that I see no need to waste words in demolishing it. We have seen often enough, even in the case of nations more in favor than Jews are with powerful Governments, how little diplomacy can do in matters of this kind, if it is not backed by a large armed force. Nay, it is conceivable that in the days of the Jewish State, when economic conditions in this or that country are such as to induce a Government to protect its people against Jewish competition by restrictive legislation, that Government will find it easier than it is now to find an excuse for such action, for it will be able to plead that if the Jews are not happy where they are, they can go to their own State.

The material problem, then, will not be ended by the foundation of a Jewish State, nor, generally speaking, does it lie in our power to end it (though it could be eased more or less even now by various means, such as the encouragement of agriculture and handicrafts among Jews in all countries); and whether we found a State or not, this particular problem will always turn at bottom on the economic condition of each country and the degree of civilization attained by each people.

Thus we are driven to the conclusion that the only true basis of Zionism is to be found in the other problem, the moral one.

It is not only Jews who have come out of the Ghetto: Judaism has come out, too. For Jews the exodus is confined to certain countries, and is due to toleration; but Judaism has come out (or is coming out) of its own accord wherever it has come into contact with modern culture. This contact with modern culture overturns the defenses of Judaism from within, so that Judaism can no longer remain isolated and live a life apart. The spirit of our people strives for development: it wants to absorb those elements of general culture which reach it from outside, to digest them and to make them a part of itself, as it has done before at

different periods of its history. But the conditions of its life in exile are not suitable. In our time culture wears in each country the garb of the national spirit, and the stranger who would woo her must sink his individuality and become absorbed in the dominant spirit. For this reason Judaism in exile cannot develop its individuality in its own way. When it leaves the Ghetto walls it is in danger of losing its essential being or -- at best -- its national unity: it is in danger of being split up into as many kinds of Judaism, each with a different character and life, as there are countries of the Jewish dispersion.

The secret of our people's persistence is -- as I have tried to show elsewhere--that at a very early period the Prophets taught it to respect only spiritual power, and not to worship material power. For this reason the clash with enemies stronger than itself never brought the Jewish nation, as it did the other nations of antiquity, to the point of self-effacement.

So long as we are faithful to this principle, our existence has a secure basis: for in spiritual power we are not inferior to other nations, and we have no reason to efface ourselves. But a political ideal which does not rest on the national culture is apt to seduce us from our loyalty to spiritual greatness, and to beget in us a tendency to find the path of glory in the attainment of material power and political dominion, thus breaking the thread that unites us with the past, and undermining our historical basis.

Needless to say, if the political ideal is not attained, it will have disastrous consequences, because we shall have lost the old basis without finding a new one. But even if it is attained under present conditions, when we are a scattered people not only in the physical but also in the spiritual sense -- even then Judaism will be in great danger. Almost all our great men, those, that is, whose education and social position fit them to be at the head of a Jewish State, are spiritually far removed from Judaism, and have no true conception of its nature and its value. Such men, however loyal to their State and devoted to its interests, will necessarily regard those interests as bound up with the foreign culture which they themselves have imbibed and they will endeavor, by moral persuasion or even by force, to implant that culture in the Jewish State, so that in the end the Jewish State will be a State of Germans or Frenchmen of the Jewish race. We have even now a small example of this process in Palestine.

And history teaches us that in the days of the Herodian house Palestine was indeed a Jewish State, but the national culture was despised and persecuted, and the ruling house did everything in its power to implant Roman culture in the country, and frittered away the national resources in the building of heathen temples and amphitheatres and so forth.

Such a Jewish State would spell death and utter degradation for our people. We should never achieve sufficient political power to deserve respect, while we should miss the living moral force within.

The puny State, being "tossed about like a ball between its powerful neighbors, and maintaining its existence only by diplomatic shifts and continual truckling to the favored of fortune", would not be able to give us a feeling of national glory; and the national culture, in which we might have sought and found our glory, would not have been implanted in our State and would not be the principle of its life. So we should really be then -- much more than we are now -- "a small and insignificant nation," enslaved in spirit to "the favored of fortune," turning an envious and covetous eye on the armed force of our "powerful neighbors" and our existence as a sovereign State would not add a glorious chapter to our national history.

Were it not better for "an ancient people which was once a beacon to the world" to disappear than to end by reaching such a goal as this?

## The 7th request in the Daily Amida Prayer: Ingathering of the Dispersed

תִּקַּע בְּשׁוֹפָר גָּדוֹל לְחִרְוֵיתָנוּ.  
וְשָׂא נֶס לְקִבְּץ גְּלוּתֵינוּ.  
וְקַבְּצֵנוּ יַחַד  
מֵאַרְבַּע כְּנָפֹת הָאָרֶץ.  
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה'   
מִקְבֵּץ נִדְחֵי עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל

### Biblical Source: Isaiah 27:12-13.

The Prophet Isaiah lived in the 8th century BCE. He prophesied a severe downfall for the nation state of Judah and for all the nations of the world that oppose God. These events ultimately came to fruition when the first Temple was destroyed and the Jews were banished into exile. He also prophesied the eventual restoration of the nation of Israel to the Land of Israel.

And it will come to pass on that day, a great shofar will be blown, and those lost in the land of Assyria will come, and those cast out in the land of Egypt. Then they will bow to God on the holy mountain in Jerusalem.

וְהָיָה בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יִתְקַע בְּשׁוֹפָר  
גָּדוֹל וּבָאוּ הָאוֹבְדִים בְּאֶרֶץ אַשּׁוּר  
וְהַנִּדְחִים בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוּ  
לֵה' בְּהַר הַקֹּדֶשׁ בִּירוּשָׁלַיִם.

**According to Rav Kook - who will blow this 'great' shofar? How will the dispersed people hear it?**

### Rav Kook - Celebration of the Soul – Collected Essays

From a sermon given by Rav Kook in the Hurva synagogue in the Old City, a week before Rosh Hashana, toward the end of the summer of 1933, as reports from Germany of Hitler's first months in power were growing more disconcerting from day to day.

There are three kinds of shofarot which may be used on Rosh Hashana. Preferably, one should blow a ram's horn. If this is impossible, one may use a shofar made from the horn of any kosher animal other than a cow. But if neither is available, we blow the horn of an animal which is ritually impure and we do so without reciting a blessing. (**Mishna Rosh Hashana**)

These three classes of shofar parallel the three shofars of redemption: **the great shofar**, the medium shofar, and the small shofar.

The awakening of the nation's desire to be redeemed and to redeem its land is a holy awakening growing out the faith in God and in the sanctity of the Jewish people. It is a response to the **great shofar**. The great and venerable of the nation heard its call and were roused to a love of Zion and a desire to rebuild it. The spiritual insight of these pious ones envisioned the heavenly Jerusalem united with the earthly Jerusalem. They longed to breathe the air of Israel, and for them every particle of dust in the Holy Land contained supreme sanctity. The sound of the great shofar brought the Ramban, Rabbi Yehuda HaLevi, the disciples of the Vilna Gaon, and the hasidim of the Ba'al Shem Tov to Israel.

But there is another shofar that also calls Jews to ascend to Israel. This is the call to the land of our ancestors where our forefathers, our prophets, and our kings lived. Here we can live as an independent nation in our homeland; we can raise our children in a Jewish

environment. This shofar, though smaller than the first one, is also fit for blowing. We recite a blessing when sounding this medium shofar.

But (and here the Rav burst into tears) there is also a shofar taken from an unclean animal. Our enemies blow this shofar to warn the Jews to flee while they can and to go to Israel. The enemy sounds sirens of war and persecutes them without respite, compelling them to redeem themselves. Thus, even the shofar of the unclean animal becomes the shofar of the Messiah. Those who are deaf to the call of the first and second shofars are forced to listen to the sound of this small shofar. No blessing is recited when blowing this shofar since “We do not recite a blessing over a cup of affliction” (**Talmud Berachot 51b**).

We pray, ‘Sound a great shofar for our liberation,’ asking that God liberate us not by means of the calamitous sounds of the small shofar. Even the medium shofar is inappropriate for God’s people. Rather, we pray for the great shofar, the shofar of true freedom, of the complete redemption originating in holiness.

**Why does Rav Kook create a hierarchy of motives for returning to the Land?**

**Do you / how do you see this beginning to play out in modern day Israel?**