

The Jewish connection to Israel

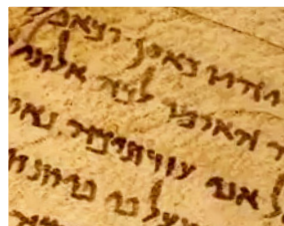
Over 3,000 years ago, the Jewish people developed a thriving civilisation and culture in the Land of Israel. Over time, they were conquered by a series of aggressive foreign empires. While some Jews remained in their homeland, most scattered across Europe, the Middle East, and beyond. Although they flourished at times, for 1,900 years, Jews lived as an oppressed minority, suffering persecution, expulsions, and ultimately genocide. They barely survived but never lost hope. They overcame, and managed to maintain their unique identity and connection to Israel. They founded Zionism in the late 1800s as a liberation movement, went back to join Jews who were already in Israel, and built one of the most inspiring nations in the world.



Jewish culture, language, religion, and identity were born in the Land of Israel over 3,000 years ago. As colonial powers conquered Israel and Jews scattered around the world, Jewish identity evolved, and Jewish communities became diverse. However, living in Israel or longing to return remained central to Jewish identity. That is why Jews around the world came back to Israel in waves and built a modern Jewish state there.



Detail of the Arch of Titus in Rome, constructed in 71 CE depicting the fall of Jerusalem and looting of artifacts.



250 – 65 BCE: Dead Sea Scrolls were written in Hebrew and later hidden. They were discovered in 1947 by three Bedouin shepherds in the caves near the Dead Sea.

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TIMELINE: OVER 3,000 YEARS OF JEWISH HISTORY IN ISRAEL

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| <i>1300 - 1200 BCE</i> | Israelite communities grow in the hills of Canaan. |
| <i>1000 - 960 BCE</i> | King David makes Jerusalem the capital of the Israelite kingdom and King Solomon builds the First Temple there. |
| <i>586 BCE</i> | The First Temple is destroyed by the Babylonian empire. |
| <i>538 BCE</i> | Jews return to the Land of Israel and begin to rebuild the temple (Second Temple). |
| <i>166 - 63 BCE</i> | Judah Maccabee leads a Jewish revolt against the Macedonian (Greek) Empire, reestablishing Jewish independence. Commemorated today as Chanukah. |
| <i>131 CE</i> | Hadrian renames Judea Syria Palestina and bans Jews from Jerusalem. |
| <i>200 CE</i> | The Mishna (Foundational text of Jewish law) is completed in the Land of Israel. |
| <i>361 CE</i> | Roman Emperor Julian invites Jews to return to the Land of Israel. |
| <i>628 CE</i> | Emperor Heraclius betrays the Jews and massacres Jewish population. |
| <i>638 CE</i> | Islamic Empire conquers Jerusalem. |
| <i>691</i> | Dome of the Rock (replica of Kaaba in Saudi Arabia) is built on Temple Mount in Jerusalem (Temple Mount is the holiest site in Judaism). |
| <i>705</i> | Al Aqsa Mosque built on Temple Mount By Abd al-Malik, the fifth caliph of the Umayyad dynasty. |
| <i>717</i> | Jews banned from praying on Temple Mount. |
| <i>1204</i> | Rabbi Maimonides (one of the most influential Jewish thinkers) buried in the Land of Israel. |
| <i>1492</i> | Large wave of Aliyah (Jewish immigration to the Land of Israel) from persecution in Spain to the Land of Israel. |
| <i>1577</i> | Hebrew Printing Press established in the Land of Israel. |
| <i>1610</i> | Yochanan Ben Zakai synagogue (located in the Jewish Quarter of Jerusalem) built in Jerusalem and is still there today. |
| <i>1648</i> | Large wave of Aliyah from Ukraine due to pogroms against the Jews. |
| <i>1777</i> | Large Chasidic (ultra-orthodox) Aliyah to the Land of Israel. |
| <i>1882</i> | Wave of Jewish immigration from Europe to the Land of Israel. |
| <i>1897</i> | First World Zionist Congress In Basel, Switzerland. |
| <i>1898</i> | Theodor Herzl makes a visit to the Land of Israel. |
| <i>1917</i> | Balfour Declaration: expressing support for the establishment of a "national home for the Jewish people" in the Land of Israel. |
| <i>1920</i> | San Remo Conference recognises that the Jewish people are indigenous to the Land of Israel. |
| <i>1948</i> | Israel declares independence. |



A coin in ancient Hebrew from the first Jewish Revolt against Rome (66–70 CE).