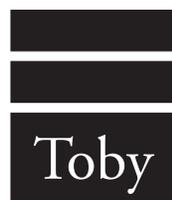


FOR THE **SAKE**
OF **ZION**

**FOR THE SAKE
OF ZION**

TUVIA BOOK

A CURRICULUM OF ISRAEL STUDIES



For the Sake of Zion

Fifth Edition, 2017

The Toby Press

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“I don’t know whether I’ve mentioned that I’ve become a Zionist. This word stands for a tremendous number of things. To me it means, in short, that I now consciously and strongly feel a Jew, and am proud of it...One needs something to believe in, something for which one has a whole-hearted enthusiasm. One needs to feel that one’s life has meaning. That one is needed in this world. Zionism fulfills this for me.”

(Chana Szenesh 1921–1944)

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"For the Sake of Zion: A Curriculum of Israel Studies"

Shalom!

This updated and revised curriculum is intended to provide students with a sense of pride and understanding of modern Zionism and its achievements and challenges.

Once Jewish students leave the protective bubble of school, home or intimate social group and enter the "real world" of a mixed college campus, sometimes hostile to Jews and Zionism, they often find themselves uncomfortable, on the defensive and unable to speak about Israel, in part because they lack the knowledge of and passion for Zion.

In order to respond effectively with a sense of self-respect and to be proactive, students need commitment and pride, as well as knowledge and tools. The units in this guide are structured to paint broad-brush strokes of Zionist literacy and focus on heroic men and women who helped shape the Zionist dream. This is a curriculum of "Identity Zionism." There are many "triggers" that should lead to passionate group discussion and debate. The clips on the suggested films listed in the index will enhance many units. It is recommended that this course be taken in conjunction with, or as a precursor to, a college activism piece such as the excellent curricula available from StandWithUs, Jerusalem U, AIPAC and The David Project. Most importantly a visit to Israel, preferably in a peer group educational touring program is the most effective method to develop a clear understanding regarding the achievements and challenges facing Israel.

In addition, the educator should also utilise the resources provided in the appendix in order to develop a comprehensive course on Israel that will provide the students with the specific responses to challenging questions. The appendix includes:

1. A chronology
2. A bibliography containing recommended books to enhance each unit
3. A list of suggested films to accompany each unit
4. A list of useful educational websites

The units are structured in the following manner:

- The first pages of each unit are the educator's guide (blue stripe on top), followed by the student worksheets (grey stripe on top).
- The first three units are foundation units dealing with the necessity to define Zionism in the twenty-first century. This involves exploring our historical and religious connections to the Land of Israel.
- The next four units concern the rise of the modern Zionist movement and the *Yishuv* (pre-state Israel). Streams of Zionism will be reviewed as well as the *Chalutzim* (pioneers) and the hope and betrayal of the British Mandate era.
- The culminating units relate to the Modern Jewish State, including Israel at war and peace, issues Israel is struggling and wrestling with, and acknowledge the importance of having a Jewish country of our own after almost two stateless millennia.

"For the sake of Zion I will not hold my peace,
and for the sake of Jerusalem I will not be silent..."

(Isaiah 62:1)

"...גִּפְעֵי־כֶּדַח יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁמַע וְיִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁמַע"

(Isaiah 62:1)

Tuvia Book

*"Zionism finds in it, for the Jews,
a reason to raise their heads,
and, taking their stand upon the past,
to gaze straightforwardly
into the future."*

(Justice Louis Brandeis)

"The 'Z' Word"

FOR THE SAKE OF ZION
UNIT ONE

MISCONCEPTION: "Zionism is a form of racism" (UN resolution 3379).

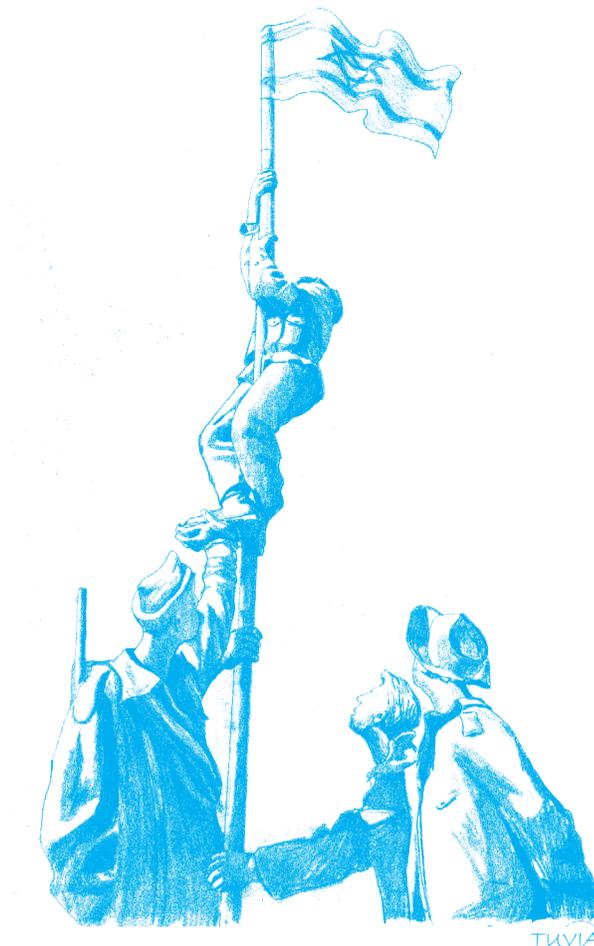
REALITY: "Zionism is the ancient/modern ideology which expresses the legitimate yearning of Jews the world over for their historical homeland – Zion, the Land of Israel" (Neuberger).

MISCONCEPTION: College campuses are havens of tolerance and understanding, where one can express one's views without fear.

REALITY: Some college campuses have campaigns which single Israel out for demonisation. These campaigns are, immoral, bigoted and based on misinformation (Dershowitz)

Objectives

- Attempt to define "Zionism."
- Become aware of the current opposition to Zionism and its negative result on some university campuses.
- Understand why it is necessary to define one's Zionism in order to be a self-assured Jew.



A: Introduction and Motivation

1. Explain that before 1948 it was easy to define Zionism – 'The wish to establish a Jewish State in the Land of Israel.' Now that the Jewish State has become a reality the question is: "What is Zionism and how does one define it today?" Does one have to live in Israel to be a Zionist, or is financial support enough?
2. Hand each pair of students Worksheet #1 (Definitions of Zionism).
3. Students will work in pairs and rank every statement from "A" (I strongly agree and/or this is very important to me) to "E" (I strongly disagree and/or this is of no importance to me).
4. After dividing statements into groups A–E ask what common factors, if any, link the statements in each group.
5. Discuss students' responses. Have them explain their choices. Ask each student to write a statement (in one or more paragraphs) about why s/he is a Zionist, using points that were raised during the discussion. A conclusion could be that to be a Zionist one has to *do* the most that one can, to the best of one's ability, for Israel.
6. Lay out the plan for the course of study.

B: Examining Current anti-Zionism / anti-Semitism on College Campuses

1. When the students have completed their statements, ask: "Why is it so important for us to deal with the issue of the definition of Zionism? How will it help us to understand who we are?" Inform the students that: "It is possible that when you enter college you maybe entering a battlefield. A war is being fought on some campuses against Israel and Zionism that often descends to crass anti-Semitism. If anyone thinks that this is an exaggeration, let us now examine the following two sources."
2. Hand each pair of students Worksheet #2 ("University of Michigan"). Ask students to read and try to respond to the questions. (Please note: it is not necessary to belabour the issue now). Inform the students that the next source is very disturbing, but it is important to confront these issues.
3. Hand each pair of students Worksheet #3: ("Violence at Concordia University"). After the students read the letter, ask them to respond to the questions. Suggestion: show the Jerusalem U film: "Crossing the Line 2, The New Face of Anti-Semitism on Campus."
4. Conclude by saying: "These are just two of the numerous campuses in North America and across the world where similar scenarios are played out. We need knowledge, correct information and tools to advocate for Israel. The main goal of these units is to provide you with both the information and the passion for advocacy."
5. Natan Sharansky stated: "Today the battle which takes place on the campuses is one in which our enemies try to convince Jewish students that in order to be part of the world of justice and freedom, you have to disengage yourself from Israel and from your own identity. These attacks and double standards and slander result in the fact that many young Jews don't want to have anything to do with their Jewish identity. Our history, whether talking about 2,000 years ago, or the struggle of Soviet Jewry, or where it is today, you find this again and again. It's something that we have to bring to every young Jew. If you want to be part of the world of freedom and justice and *tikkun olam*, your identity is your source of strength to fight for those things – your identity, which is based on your history, on your traditions and of course on your connection to Israel."*

* Natan Sharansky, Interview with the Jerusalem Post, July, 2010



Israel in the Middle East

- The Jewish State is almost exactly the size of
- (1) Wales – about 21,000 sq. km. or 12,600 sq. miles
 - (2) The Kruger National Park in South Africa
 - (3) The State of New Jersey

C: Conclusion

*"In the face of a vicious assault on Israel's legitimacy, it is crucial these days to understand the depth of the Jewish attachment to Israel."**

– Gil Troy

Since the Arab world is trying to negate the Jewish historical claim to Israel, it is vital for us to understand our historical and current claim to Israel. The most effective method to develop a clear understanding regarding the achievements and challenges facing Israel is to visit Israel, preferably on a peer group educational touring program.

The next two units will focus on our historical and religious connections in order to answer the question, "Why Israel?" For the sake of Zion and ourselves, we need to regain pride and strength. We become empowered through knowledge. Israel needs to be an integral part of our being all the time, not just in times of crisis. The famous 18th-century Hasidic rabbi, Rebbe Nachman of Breslav, succinctly summed up this point by stating, "Every place I go, I am going to Israel."



"Every place I go,
I am going to Israel"

(Rebbe Nachman of Breslav)

"באשר אני הולך
אני תמיד הולך לארץ ישראל"
(רבי נחמן מברסלב)

* Troy, Gil, *Why I am a Zionist: Israel Jewish Identity and the Challenges of Today*. (BJEC: Montreal, 2006)

WORKSHEET #1

Name: _____ Date: _____

Definitions of Zionism

Rank every statement:

A – I strongly agree and this is very important to me

B – I agree and this is important to me

C – I somewhat agree and this is somewhat important to me

D – I somewhat disagree and this is somewhat unimportant to me

E – I strongly disagree and this is not very important to me

- The Jews are a nation like the French or the Germans.
- The Jews are a religious group like Muslims or Christians.
- All Jews should live in Israel.
- Jewish life in the Diaspora is vital to the continuation of the Jewish people.
- Jewish life in the Diaspora can never be fully safe or satisfying.
- Self-determination is the basic right of all peoples.
- The Jewish claim for national independence is based on Divine promise as recorded in the Torah.
- The Jewish people have an absolute and singular right to the Land of Israel as their national homeland.
- The Land of Israel is the national homeland of both the Jewish and the Palestinian Arab people.
- The State of Israel should be a model of Western liberal democracy.
- The Torah is the national constitution of the Jewish people and should be the national constitution of the State of Israel.
- The State of Israel belongs to the entire Jewish people.
- The State of Israel belongs to the citizens of the State.
- Israel is primarily a refuge for Jews fleeing oppression and a response to anti-Semitism.
- Israel is primarily a creative expression of the Jewish people's will to be an independent community.
- All citizens of the State of Israel, regardless of religion or national-cultural identity, should share the same rights and privileges.
- Zionism demands personal fulfillment through Aliyah.
- Any support of Israel is Zionism.
- Zionism does not end with Aliyah, but continues through personal work to create a better society in Israel.
- A person living in Israel has to volunteer for National Service to be considered a Zionist.

WORKSHEET #2

Name: _____ Date: _____

University of Michigan to Host 'Zionism is Racism' Conference.

Michael Freund, *The Jerusalem Post*

The University of Michigan at Ann Arbor is slated to play host to a national student conference late next week, one of whose "guiding principles" is that it "condemns the racism and discrimination inherent in Zionism", the *Jerusalem Post* has learned.

The Second National Student Conference on the Palestine Solidarity Movement, which is scheduled to begin on October 12, is being sponsored by pro-Palestinian and socialist groups. It aims to promote an end to U.S. aid to Israel and to encourage divestment by universities and corporations from the Jewish State.

In the conference's promotional material, organisers refer to "Apartheid Israel", and refuse to condemn Palestinian terrorism, stating, "As a solidarity movement, it is not our place to dictate the strategies or tactics adopted by the Palestinian people in their struggle for liberation."

In addition to asserting, "racism" is "inherent to Zionism", the organisers call for "the right of return and repatriation for all "Palestinian refugees" as well as "an end to the Israeli system of apartheid and discrimination."

Panelists at the conference include Dr. Sami Al-Arian, a former professor at the University of South Florida who was fired after reports surfaced linking him to Middle Eastern terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda and Islamic Jihad.

A similar conference on divestment, held earlier this year at Berkeley, caused an uproar among American academics, leading Harvard President Lawrence Summers to criticize the divestment scheme as "anti-Semitic."

In a statement issued last week, University of Michigan President Mary Coleman appeared to distance the school from the conference, stating, "The agenda of the conference represents the views of the organisers and not the University of Michigan." She added that the University had no intention of divesting from Israel. "I do not support this divestment," she said, adding, "As a matter of University policy, we do not believe political interests should govern our investment decisions."

Questions:

1. What would you do if you were a Jewish student at the University of Michigan?
2. Write a letter to the Jerusalem Post and /or the school newspaper with your reaction to this article.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Violence at Concordia University

Sara Ahronheim

Dear Friends and Family,

This morning my friends and I set out to Concordia University, in the heart of downtown Montreal, to hear Benjamin Netanyahu (Prime Minister of Israel) speak. Many articles were featured in the Montreal papers leading up to today's speech, warning of protest action. I had a good idea of what we would face as we approached Concordia, but I could never have predicted what actually happened once we were there.

To enter the building we had to make a giant circle around it, to get to the supposedly "safe" entrance. We had to walk right through a volatile protest of hundreds of Palestinians and their supporters in keffiyehs, with flags, screaming vitriolic hate. Once having run this gauntlet, we waited patiently outside the Bishop Street entrance, held back at the gate by security and police. After about an hour they started admitting us inside, but it was too late because a huge group of Palestinian 'demonstrators' had appeared in our midst. I was fortunately right at the entrance, and as dozens of violent protesters pushed their way to the front, I tried to get through. Right next to me appeared the ringleader, who tried to push his way in. The cop in front of me punched him in the face while pulling me through the gate at the same time. I rested against the wall and watched as at least a hundred (I think) red-and-green coloured protesters attacked the barriers and tried to get in. Riot cops appeared, dozens of them, and went to the gate as a few others and I were herded into the building.

There was yelling and chanting, drumming and fighting going on outside the doors, with hundreds of our people stuck behind the gate being abused by hundreds of violent demonstrators. A few of us were waiting after the metal detectors for our friends to come through, when all of a sudden we heard loud chanting and yelling INSIDE the building. The riot cops came storming in and up the stairs beside us, and we began hearing fighting, crashing, yelling, punching. Chaos broke out and riot cops made us run for the door to the auditorium – I thought we were going to get killed, I swear. It was the scariest feeling, because I knew that these people wanted to hurt me and anyone who supports Israel or is Jewish.

Once inside the auditorium, we were told to be patient, as more people would drift in from the insanity outside. We waited inside for three hours, as the commotion

continued on next page

outside grew increasingly loud. We could hear chanting and yelling, and the protesters began trashing the university building. The police tear-gassed and pepper sprayed the entire building and outside, and we began to feel the effects if we stood too near the doors. After hours of waiting, and bomb searches by RCMP sniffer dogs, we were informed that Bibi Netanyahu could not speak after all – too much danger to him and to us. This was an incredible disappointment and we were naturally upset.

We however managed to maintain a kind of composure and instead of fighting, the 650 of us inside began to sing Hatikvah, the national anthem of the State of Israel. We sang peace chants and then just waited to be let out, in groups of 10, escorted by police.

The scene as we exited was disgusting. Benches were overturned, papers and garbage streaked across the hallways, and broken windows. We were shoved outside directly into a HUGE Palestinian riot, where some of our people were apparently attacked. The cops did nothing. We stood on one side of the barrier, while they stood on the other, and we faced off. On our side, we sang and danced and celebrated being free and Jewish. On their side, they threw bottles at people's heads, screamed hatred, and tried to break the barriers down to hurt us. They started tossing pennies and coins at us – one of the oldest ways to taunt Jews by saying we're all 'money-grubbing'. While we sang Hatikvah arm in arm, they spat at us. Finally we decided to disperse and leave them to their hatred.

Today was a sick and sorrowful day not only for the Jewish students and community of Montreal, but for Jews everywhere, the city of Montreal and Canada. Today a man was gagged and not allowed to express an opinion; today hundreds of people were denied the opportunity to listen to him speak. Today a riot broke forth on our peaceful streets, and today no police managed to restrain hate. Today Montreal Jews were made to feel afraid for our lives, and today Jewish students were threatened in our own home. If we cannot express ourselves here in Canada, champion of free speech and human rights, where on earth can we do so? If we cannot feel safe in our own cities where we have grown up and thrived, where are we to go?

I can answer my own question with what many of us already know – Israel is our place. She is our homeland, and opens her arms to us, willing to protect us at all costs. The Jewish people need Israel, and she needs us. Even so, we must voice our distaste at the violence, which occurred in Montreal today.

We must all take our own individual stands against this fascism, by which freedom of speech was denied. What happened today in my city cannot be condoned or allowed to repeat. We must act. So I am sending you this entire long letter, with my own personal feelings and an eyewitness account.

WORKSHEET #3

Please do what you can to see that this message is spread to anyone you can think of – from friends to work associates, to politicians, and from Jews to non-Jews alike. We have a chance to fix these wrongs, but only if we take action and don't sit back as passive observers. We say NEVER AGAIN, but unless we protest these attacks on our freedoms, it is fruitless to put up that chant. Last but certainly not least, a personal lament on our situation: today I saw raw hatred, and it cut me to the core.

I have never feared for my life as I did today. I have never feared for our free society the way I do today. I wish beyond anything that we can one day fix the agonizing rifts between our peoples, and erase the hate from our and their hearts alike. It is most important for you to know what really happened here today, and it is vital that you see this side of the story.

Questions:

1. What are your feelings about this article?
2. How do you think you would react to the violence at Concordia University?

*"How easy it should be...to understand and support
the right of the Jewish people to live
in the ancient Land of Israel.*

*All men of good will exult in the fulfillment of G-d's promise that His
people should return in joy to rebuild
their plundered land.*

This is Zionism, nothing more, nothing less."

(Martin Luther King Jr., 1967)

The Historical Connection: “A Link in the Chain”

FOR THE SAKE OF ZION
UNIT TWO

MISCONCEPTION: “The first inhabitants of Palestine were the Canaanite Arabs.” (2nd Grade Palestinian Authority textbook entitled, “National Education” – deals with the “history of Palestine.”)

REALITY: The Jews have had a continuous connection to the Land of Israel for over three millennia. “Palestine” was the name given by the Romans to the Province of Judæa only from the second century CE. Canaanites were the native inhabitants (2nd Millennium BCE) and the Arab conquest of Byzantine-controlled Palestine was in the 7th century CE. The whole statement, therefore, is anachronistic.

Objectives

- Understand our connection to Israel
- Relate the 4,000 years of Jewish history to the tie with the Land of Israel
- Comprehend the relevance today of being a “link in the chain of (Jewish) existence and Israel’s independence”



A: Introduction and Motivation

1. Remind students: “In the last unit we worked on defining Zionism in the twenty-first century. This was an important exercise to complete before we examine the phenomena of Arab violence and anti-Israel incitement on campus. However, it is not enough to just react. In order to “walk tall,” defend, advocate for and promote Israel, we need to be armed with knowledge. With knowledge will come pride and confidence. In this unit we will examine our historical, religious and cultural connections to Israel and why it is important to be aware of these links.”
2. Hand each pair of students Worksheet #1, (“Incitement and Propaganda against Israel and Zionism”). Have the students read it and then ask: “These are statements from Palestinian Authority children’s textbooks, media sources and the late Yassir Arafat himself. How do they make you feel as a Jew and as a Zionist? Do you know how to respond?” We need to know our own history.
3. On a different note, ask the students: “In your opinion, which is the Jewish holiday that most effectively captures Jewish history and the Jewish experience throughout the ages?”

(This holiday is one in which one’s extended family sits down and celebrates together). The answer should be Pesach, as will be explained

and emphasised below. Allow students the freedom to suggest any holiday and have them give reasons for their choices.

4. Inform the students that they will learn about a modern Jewish hero and hear his opinion regarding this same question.
5. "Yoni" – Tell Entebbe story synopsis;
 - Air France plane flies Sunday, June 27, 1976 (Tel Aviv–Athens–Paris).
 - Plane is hijacked in Athens by PFLP and flown to Entebbe airport in Uganda (Idi Amin)
 - "Selektzia" – 103 Jewish passengers held hostage.
 - "Operation (Thunderbolt) Yoni." (Israeli commandoes fly 2,500 miles to Uganda and rescue hostages.)
 - The single Israeli military fatality: Yonatan Netanyahu, the commander.
6. Suggestion: have the students watch the film "Follow Me, The Yoni Netanyahu Story" (2012)
7. After the students have seen the film, learned about Yoni and seen pictures of him, ask them how they felt about it and what the most moving aspect of the event was. What makes this a "miraculous" yet tragic episode (bittersweet)?

By studying and talking about Yoni, we are actually helping to keep his memory alive. Look at a letter he wrote to his girlfriend not long before he was killed.

8. Distribute Worksheet #2, (Yoni's Letter). Have

students read the letter and discuss the following points in groups of four:

- Is this a typical love letter?
- What is strange about it?
- What is Yoni's favorite holiday? Why?
- How can a Seder in a battle zone be as nice as one at home?
- What does Yoni mean by "past?"
- What do you mean by "past?"
- What does it mean to be a "link in the chain of Jewish history?"



TUVIA

B. Introduction to Jewish History

1. Draw a line on the board with a “o” in the middle and ask the students to help you fill it in with Jewish dates they know. The time-line will probably end up looking something like this:

— 586 — 0 — 70 — 1492 — 1939 — 1948 — 1967 — 1973 — 1982 —

After analyzing the dates, students will notice that there is a common theme; all the dates usually relate to negative events in Jewish history – destruction, death, expulsion etc. It is time to redefine the way we look at our history. Ask: “Is this all there is to Jewish history?” Let students try to answer as best as they can.

2. Transmit to the students the following critical message: “We need to comprehend that along with all the darkness and misery there is also light and joy. We need to restore pride and awe in our history. We need to realise that it’s not a burden to be a Jew, but rather a privilege.” To illustrate this point, explain how each of these dates had positive, wonderful and sometimes long precedents. Give examples.

(The Temples were not just destroyed in 586 BCE and 70 CE; they were built in c. 940 BCE and c. 536 BCE and stood for a millennium. The Jews were not just exiled from Spain in 1492; they lived there since Second Temple times and rose to levels of tremendous crea-

tivity and vitality. The same is true of the Jews of Eastern and Western Europe. Israel’s history is not just one long war but also periods of remarkable scientific, agricultural, cultural and medical achievements, not to mention the unparalleled success of immigrant absorption).

3. Ask the students to discuss: “How did the Jews survive despite so much suffering and without physical possession of a homeland for many centuries?” Hand out Worksheet #3, (“Concerning the Jews”, by Mark Twain).
4. Discuss: What are the ingredients of Jewish survival? How would you answer this? Write students’ answers on the board. Divide the students’ answers into the following three categories:
 - Tradition (*Torat Yisrael*)
 - People/Family (*Am Yisrael*)
 - Land of Israel (*Eretz Yisrael*)

Identify the above as the ‘secrets’ of Jewish survival. Expand on these three points. Ask whether they are still relevant today.

C. Conclusion:

1. Ask students to share what they learned in this unit. What touched them the most?
2. Remind students that Jewish history is not all pain and suffering but also beauty and joy.
3. You can add the following: As a sixteen year old Yoni penned what were to be the guiding principals of his life:

"...man does not live forever, and he should put the days of his life to the best possible use. He should try to live life to its fullest...I must feel certain that not only the moment of my death shall I be able to account for the time I've lived; I ought to be ready at every moment of my life to confront myself and say – This is what I've done."

Yoni saw himself as a "link in the chain of Jewish history" and as an heir to an ancient legacy – in a sense so are we all! To understand who we are today, we must begin by searching in our past. "Know from where you came and to where you are going." (Mishna)



*"Know from where you came
and to where you are going"*

(Mishna: Avot)

*"דע מאין באת
וסאן אתה הולך"*
(משנה: אבות)

WORKSHEET #1

Name: _____ Date: _____

Incitement and Propaganda Against Israel and Zionism

"Abraham was not a Jew ... The Jews never lived in ancient Israel..."

There never was a Jewish Temple in Jerusalem...

Jews never had any connection to Jerusalem...

That is not the Western Wall at all, but a Muslim shrine."

Unfortunately, these quotations represent mainstream Palestinian opinions, not an extremist fringe. They are respectively taken from a Palestinian-Arab historian named Jarid al-Kidwa, Palestinian television, the Palestinian Authority's Ministry of Information, and finally from the late Arafat himself (*Why I am a Zionist*, Troy 165).

The following text is taken from a 2nd grade textbook entitled, "National Education"* which deals with the "history of Palestine." It states:

"The first inhabitants of Palestine were the Canaanite Arabs."

Questions:

1. What is problematic about this declaration?
2. Can you identify the anachronisms?



This picture is from a 7th grade textbook entitled, "Mathematics." It portrays a map of "Palestine" showing the territory as one single geographical entity, mentioning only "Palestinian" towns (Jerusalem, Gaza, Nablus [Shechem], Hebron). No mention is made of the name Israel or Israeli towns, which were established by the Zionist movement. (For instance, where is Tel Aviv?)

Questions:

1. How does this make you feel?
2. How do you think it is possible to counter this type of education?

* Erlich Reuven (ed), Incitement and Propaganda against Israel and Zionism in the educational system of the Palestinian Authority and the alternative Islamic educational system identified with the Hamas. (Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center for Special Studies: Israel, June 2002)

Name: _____ Date: _____

Letter of Yonatan Netanyahu *

March 25, 1975

My Dearest Bruria,

Tomorrow is Passover.

I have always thought it is the most wonderful of all our holidays. It is an ancient celebration of freedom – a thousands-of-years-old liberty. When I sail back over the seas of our history, I pass through long years of suffering, oppression, of massacres, of ghettos, of banishments, of humiliation; many years that, in a historical perspective seem devoid of any ray of light-yet it isn't so. The fact that the idea of freedom remained, that hope persisted, that the flame of liberty continued to burn through the observance of this ancient festival, is to me testimony of the striving for freedom and idea of freedom in Israel.



In this search through our past we come upon other periods-of tranquility and liberty, when we were the people of the Land as well as the people of the Book. Yet even then, Passover was celebrated with the same ardour, for freedom is precious and its remembrance long.

And there were other periods of transition from bondage to liberty, periods of rising and revolt – and it is of those that Passover reminds me most of all. When I say Passover – the Feast of Freedom – I think at once of the Hasmoneans and the Bar-Kochvah revolt and the Exodus and Joshua's conquest of the land...

Last year I celebrated Seder with my men in a big tent near a Tel in a Syrian enclave that was being shelled, and that too, was a wonderful Seder in its way. My yearning for the past mingles with my longing for you, and because of you I find myself in my past. And find the time and desire to reminisce in order to share my life with you. Yet by "past" I mean not only my own past, but also the way in which I see myself as an inseparable part, a link in the chain of existence and Israel's independence.

Love,

Yoni

Questions:

1. Is this a typical love letter? What is strange about it?
2. What is Yoni's favorite holiday? Why?
3. How can a Seder in a battle zone be as nice as one at home?
4. What do you think it means to be a "link in the chain of Jewish history?"

* Netanyahu, Jonathan, *The Letters of Jonathan Netanyahu*. (Gefen: Israel: 2013)

WORKSHEET #3

Name: _____ Date: _____

Mark Twain “Concerning the Jews”

(*Harper's Magazine* for March, 1898)



“If the statistics are right, the Jews constitute but one percent of the human race. It suggests a nebulous dim puff of stardust lost in the blaze of the Milky Way. Properly the Jew ought hardly to be heard of; but he is heard of, has always been heard of. He is as prominent on the planet as any other people, and his commercial importance is extravagantly out of proportion to the smallness of his bulk. His contributions to the world’s list of great names in literature, science, art, music, finance, medicine, and abstruse learning are also away out of proportion to the weakness of his numbers. He has made a marvelous fight in this world, in all the ages; and has done it with his hands tied behind him. He could be vain of himself, and be excused for it. The Egyptian, the Babylonian, and the Persian rose, filled the planet with sound and splendor, then faded to dream-stuff and passed away; the Greek and the Roman followed, and made a vast noise, and they are gone; other peoples have sprung up and held their torch high for a time, but it burned out, and they sit in twilight now, or have vanished. The Jew saw them all, beat them all, and is now what he always was, exhibiting no decadence, no infirmities of age, no weakening of his parts, no slowing of his energies, no dulling of his alert and aggressive mind. All things are mortal but the Jew; all other forces pass, but he remains...

What is the secret of his immortality?”

Question:

What, in your opinion, is the secret of Jewish immortality?