

Am Chofshi B'Artzenu – עם חופשי בארצנו –

A Free People in Our Land

Introduction

The Palestinian Authority has announced that in September this year it will be seeking recognition of the State of Palestine at the UN. Whether or not this plan succeeds, and whether or not this turns out to be disastrous or beneficial for Israel, what is clear is that in this period we will see a significant upturn in what has come to be known as “delegitimization”.

This “delegitimization” movement would seem to be made up of a few genuine enemies of Israel who wish to eliminate its right to exist, and many people who do not seek Israel’s elimination but have found in campaigns such as Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) a convenient way to express their critique of Israeli policy.

Our task as a community will be to drive a wedge between the enemies of Israel, and her critical friends. In order to do so, **we ourselves must be clear as to the difference**. How do we differentiate between the dangerous enemy of Israel, and the confused guy who could do with reading a book or two? The less we distinguish between critique and attack, the more we are likely to push the confused critic – non-Jewish or Jewish - into the arms of our enemies.

So how do we do it? How do we sketch out the limits of our “broad tent”?

We would suggest that the answer lies in Israel’s national anthem. When the State was established, the penultimate line of the *Hatikva* anthem was rewritten. Instead of referring to a return to the land of our fathers, the line was altered to define our hope of two thousand years: **“Lihiyot Am Chofshi B’Artzenu - To be a free [Jewish] people in our land”**.

It may be that this broad, generative, dialogical definition of our hope for Israel is far more useful to us than the seemingly-scientific language of “a Jewish and Democratic State”. The latter construction hints at paradox, feels painfully particularistic, and makes no reference to place. By contrast, the aspiration to be a free Jewish people in our land is lyrical, inviting, and most importantly: common to all. **What else was behind the world’s initial excitement at the Egyptian uprising, for example, if not the sight of Egyptians fighting to be a free Egyptian people in their land?**

Applied to Jews and Israel there is, woven into the phrase, a shared assumption (To be) and a three-fold wish (Free People in Our Land):

To be - that the Jewish People know what it is to be threatened with destruction, and our continued existence is both a miracle and a value. At the same time, after millennia of struggling not just to establish but to justify our existence, might we not deserve the chance just “to be”?

Free – for Israel to be a place that allow Jews to be free to renew, to be different, to experiment and even to rebel, while at the same time free to take responsibility for its decisions.

People – for Israel to be the place where the Jews can redevelop their nature as a collective: broader than a religion, richer than an ethnic tendency, connected to Jews around the world, and drawing on strong ideas and profound values.

In Our Land – for Israel to exist not in Uganda nor in Patagonia or Alaska, but in the area of land referred to in the Bible and in our prayers. In this way our People may have its own landscape from which to engage with the world.

We would suggest that if one were looking for a litmus test of “who is pro-Israel?”, asking someone’s attitude to this three-fold aspiration for the State of Israel would be extremely revealing and useful. *Am Chofshi B’Artzenu* (Free Jewish People In Our Land) should be the three pillars that define our communal “tent”, whose “roof” would be the assumption of our continued existence as a fundamental value – *Lihiyot* (To be).

All stripes of Israel-supporter can agree with this statement - and argue within it. We may not agree on the exact borders of “our Land”, nor may we agree to what extent we must share this land with others who also view it as “theirs”, but we do agree that the Jews’ State must be in that biblical Middle Eastern neck of the woods.

We may not agree exactly on our definition of who is a Jew, nor may we agree on our interpretation of *halacha* or its applications, but we can agree that the Jews are a People and as such deserve their own opportunity for self-determination.

Our understandings of Free will be nuanced, too. Some Zionists cannot understand the liberation movement of the Jewish people without democracy: How can we free the Jewish People to control its own destiny without freeing the Jewish person to do the same? Others will engage in a heated discussion about the morality of enjoying freedom while restricting the freedom of others, while their interlocutors will argue how our freedom from terror should be our most important guide.

What we are pointing out is that this “holding form” for agreement is no strait-jacket. We would still have plenty of room to argue within this formulation. **We are arguing for the parameters of a communal “tent” rather than a communal “tank”.**

A tent is not a tank. In a tank we can be safe, we can fight back against our enemies, but life is pretty cramped and miserable inside, everyone must follow orders, only the military exists, and everyone outside is a mortal enemy.

A tent allows us room to talk freely among ourselves, allows space to have fun occasionally(!) and appreciate that not all is a military compound, and – perhaps equally significant – can empower us to engage more confidently with those not inside the tent.

This definition of the tent's limits allows us to clarify who sits outside its parameters, and help us design our approach to them accordingly. There is clearly no point arguing the complexities of Israel's immigration policy with someone who does not accept that Israel should have the right to decide *any* immigration policy! There is nothing to be gained discussing the desired borders of the State of Israel with someone who does not agree that the Jews have a connection to the land in the first place.

Yet we can defend the basics: Why we regard the Jews as a people, the rights of a people to freedom, and our connection to the land. As long as we keep our eyes on this three-pillared structure to our tent, **instead of turning our backs to critics, we can learn to face them.**

At the same time, if we reject the constrictions of a communal “tank”, and accept how “*Am Chofshi b'Artzenu*” defines the extent of our open-sided tent, we may now embrace the work to be done inside the tent. Within Israel and within the Jewish world we can now talk and work at the areas where these different values harmonize, and where they sometimes clash.

The way the Ketura solar panel fields will feed into the world's first national network of electric cars, while also offering a fresh solution to the issue of Bedouin land rights, can serve as an example of how being a Free People In Our Land can better the world. On the other hand, Israeli policies towards African refugees, or women at the Kotel, indicate that not all is yet harmonized inside the tent.

This three-pillared tent will allow us to differentiate between three kinds of people we are in danger of conflating. We will better defend ourselves against the malicious rejecter of Jewish rights in Israel, we will converse more fruitfully with principled dissenters, and we will be free to work with those who live inside this fascinating and compelling tent of Israel.

To this end we have created this *Am Chofshi B'Artzenu* booklet for your use. Through the guided questions to the text studies, and a couple of programs on *Hatikva* and the Prayer for the State of Israel, we hope you may find a powerful resource for addressing our deep and rich connection with Israel.

Source 1

Nothing could be more striking than the fact that a people whose very reason for being in the past was to be different, chosen, particular, should today define itself in purely universalist terms, forgetting - surely not accidentally - that it is precisely in our particularity that we enter and express the universal human condition. I am reminded of the remark of the late Shlomo Carlebach after a lifetime of visiting American campuses: "I ask students what they are. If someone gets up and says, I'm a Catholic, I know that's a Catholic. If someone says, I'm a Protestant, I know that's a Protestant. If someone gets up and says, I'm just a human being, I know that's a Jew."

The seminal Jewish experience for the past two centuries has been the flight from particularity, and both the Israeli and American Jewish communities are its heirs.

Love, Hate, and Jewish Identity by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks



- What do you think of the Carlebach story?
- Do you recognize yourself or anyone you know in the story?
- A Jew stands up and says 'I'm just a human being'. Can you see how this might be both a source of shame and pride of the Jewish People?

Source 2

"If we blow into the narrow end of the shofar [ram's horn], we will be heard far. But if we choose to be Mankind rather than Jewish and blow into the wider part, we will not be heard at all; for us America will have been in vain."

Cynthia Ozick, 1970

Both Ozick and R. Sacks are convinced that universalism, and a commitment to humankind as a whole, can only be served through a particular culture. Do you agree? Or do you see particular cultures as the main obstacle to universalism?

Source 3

<p>Book of Ruth, Chapter 1</p> <p>15: And she [Naomi] said, Behold, your sister-in-law is gone back to her people, and to her gods; go back you after your sister-in-law. 16: And Ruth said, Do not entreat me to leave you, or to keep from following you; for wherever you go, I will go; and where you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my God</p>	<p>רות פרק א</p> <p>נִסִּיתִי אֶת־אֱמֹרָה, הִנֵּה שָׁבָה יְבִמְתִּךְ, אֵל-עַמֶּיהָ, וְאֵל-אֱלֹהֶיהָ; שׁוּבִי, אַחֲרַי יְבִמְתִּךְ. טַז וְתִאֲמָר רֹת אֵל-תַּכְנִיעֵי-בִי, לְעֹבֵד לְשׁוֹב טַאחֲרַיךְ: כִּי אֵל-אֲשֶׁר תִּלְכִּי אֵלַי, וּבְאֲשֶׁר תִּלְוִי אֵלַי--עִמָּךְ עִמִּי, וְאֱלֹהֵיךְ אֱלֹהֵי.</p>
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How does one join the Jewish People?

According to this archetype of conversion to Judaism, Ruth lays out four areas of commitment.

1. She throws her lot in with the fate of Naomi's people, willing to travel wherever Naomi travels, even if it means being a refugee.
2. She moves to the same geographical location.
3. She commits herself to Jewish Peoplehood
4. She commits herself religiously.

- Are all four of these areas essential to join the Jewish People?
Can any of these four areas be waived?
- Are there any additional or new aspects that should be added?

Source 4

"I resent the fact that just because I am Jewish, people assume that I have a connection to Israel or to the Jewish people."

Jewish Social Justice Activist

- Do you think that being a Jewish individual means you have to have a collective identity, as well?
- To what extent do you think that you can be Jewish without having a connection to other Jews?
- Should being Jewish necessarily mean having a connection to Israel?
- Why might a Jewish social activist feel particularly pained by association with Israel?
- How do you feel when you hear such a statement?

Source 1

From Egypt by Alma Zohar

From Egypt
Alma Zohar

There's always war in Africa
What luck it's so far away,
We don't have to see or hear it,
from here

I too walked, Once
Down lengthy paths of pain
From Egypt to Jerusalem,
Across a desert with no end,
Without water,
no water,
Only damp eyes and the same question.

I, as they, encountered evil,
Striking out in all directions,
A falsely accused people,
People lacking all protection
Without a home,
no home
Carrying small children as they go.

They come knocking at your door,
Crying out with outstretched hands,
And you say – what do I need them for?
Foreigners from foreign lands.

Don't you know each day and age,
One and all must see himself,
As though having escaped Egypt,
So he won't forget how he fled,
How he was beaten, bled, left dead,
How he called out to the heavens.

ממצרים
עלמה זהר

תמיד יש מלחמה באפריקה
מזל שהיא רחוקה
שלא רואים ולא שומעים
אותה מכאן

גם אני הלכתי פעם
בנתיב הייסורים
ממצרים לירושלים
במדבר, ימים רבים
בלי מים
עם אותה שאלה בעיניים

גם אני פגשתי רשע
המכה בלי אבחנה
אנשים חפים מפשע
אנשים בלי הגנה
בלי בית
עם ילדים קטנים בידיים

הם דופקים לך בדלת
הם בוכים בכי תמרורים
אל תאמר - מה לי עם אלה
אלה אנשים זרים

כי בכל דור ודור
חייב אדם לראות עצמו
כאילו הוא יצא ממצרים
שלא ישכח איך ברח,
הוכה, הושפל, נרצח
איך צעק לשמיים

גם אני חיפשתי כוח
להציל מה שאפשר
כשלא היה לאן לברוח
דמי היה מותר
אות קין

I too vainly tried,
To save the little that I could,
With no place left to hide
Anyone could let my blood,
Marked Cain, Marked Cain,
People pleading on their knees.

They come knocking at your door,
Babes and bundles on their backs,
And you say – what do I need them for?
Who needs any more of those blacks?

Don't you know each day and age...

Ruler of the World
Save us please while you still can
And bless we'll never ever need
The mercies of another man

Don't you know each day and age...

There's always war in Africa,
What luck it's so far away,
We don't have to see or hear it,
from here.

There's always war in Africa,
What luck it's so far away,
We don't have to see or hear...
The screams

הם דופקים לך בדלת
הם בוכים בכי תמרורים
אל תאמר - מה לי עם אלה
אלה אנשים שחורים

כי בכל דור ודור ...

אז שמור נא על כולנו
ריבונו של עולם
שלא נזדקק אף פעם
לרחמים של בני אדם

כי בכל דור ודור ...

תמיד יש מלחמה באפריקה
מזל שהיא רחוקה
שלא רואים ולא שומעים
אותה מכאן

תמיד יש מלחמה באפריקה
מזל שהיא רחוקה
שלא רואים ולא שומעים
את הצעקה



About “From Egypt”

Some Background:

Since 2003, an estimated 10,000 non-Jewish immigrants from various African countries have crossed into Israel. Some 600 refugees from the Darfur region of Sudan have been granted temporary resident status to be renewed every year, though not official refugee status. Another 2,000 refugees from the conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia have been granted temporary resident status on humanitarian grounds.

In 2007, Israel deported 48 refugees back to Egypt. In August 2008 the Israel Defense Forces deported at least another 91 African asylum seekers at the border. The current prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, has called for a patrolled fence to be built on Israel’s border with Egypt to keep out illegal immigrants.



Circles of Empathy:

- Do you ever think about the war and unrest in Africa? How much do you care about injustice taking place far from home, to people you do not know or share very much with?

Pesach:

- Every year on Pesach we say at the Seder “in each generation everyone should see themselves as if they themselves have left Egypt.”
Why do you think this passage is part of the seder?
- How do you think Alma Zohar might answer this question?
Do you agree with Zohar’s interpretation?
- Do you think this song would have a place at your seder night? Might you choose to sing it at your seder?

Cosmopolitanism:

- Do you think we should be helping African refugees because it is our responsibility as human beings, or because we remember that as Jews, we too were once refugees, or both?
- Does tapping into our Jewish history of slavery and exile make our desire to help those in need stronger? Should it?
- Should the obligation of the State of Israel to refugees be any different from that of your country?

Source 2

The very essence of Zionist thinking about the life of the Jewish people and Hebrew history is basically... a revolt against a tradition of many centuries, a tradition of practically living in exile while in theory longing hopelessly for redemption. Instead of these sterile and bloodless longings, we substitute a will to realize. Instead of rootless life in exile, we substitute an attempt at reconstruction and creativity on the soil of the homeland. Instead of a people dependent on others, instead of a minority living at the mercy of a majority – we call for a self-sufficient people, master of its own fate. Instead of a corrupt existence of middlemen, suspended in mid-air, we call for an independent existence of a working people, at home on the soil and in a creative economy.

'Class to Nation' – David Ben-Gurion (1933)

- Do you see your life as being dependent on others, “living at the mercy of a majority”?
- Would you say that Israelis are a “self-sufficient people”?
- Is this a good thing, or not?
- Do you see Israelis as ‘masters of their own fate’?
- Do you see yourself as master or mistress of your own fate?



Source 3

A psychiatrist and Holocaust survivor, Frankl pioneered a therapy called "Logotherapy" which focuses on how we create and find meaning in our lives.

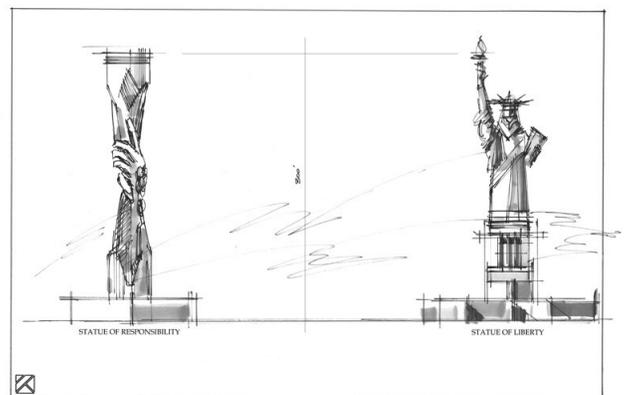
Freedom is not the last word, freedom is only part of the story and half of the truth. The positive aspect of freedom is responsibility... I recommend that the Statue of Liberty be supplemented by a Statue of Responsibility on the west coast.

Viktor E. Frankl

- Together with the freedom you enjoy, what responsibilities do you have toward others in your community?

One of the few collective guarantors of freedom in an unstable world is sovereignty: having the control and responsibility for a population in a particular place.

- What sovereignty does your government have? Do you feel it is fulfilling its responsibilities?
- What responsibilities does the government of Israel have? Do you feel it is fulfilling these responsibilities? (What are some examples for each country, consider each country's reaction to the earthquake in Haiti.)
- Are Israel's responsibilities different in any way from those of your country?



Source 1

1. And the Lord said to Abram, "Go forth from your land and from your birthplace and from your father's house, to the land that I will show you. *Genesis 12: 1*

א. וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל אַבְרָם לֵךְ לְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ
וּמִמּוֹלַדְתְּךָ וּמִבֵּית אָבִיךָ אֶל הָאֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֶרְאֶךָ:

Rambam, Mishne Torah – Kings 5:12

One should always live in the Land of Israel, even in a town most of whose inhabitants are idolaters, but let no one live outside the Land, even in a town most of whose inhabitants are Israelites; for whoever goes out of the Land of Israel may be regarded as if one who worships idols.

רמב"ם יד החזקה - הלכות מלכים פרק ה

(יב) לעולם ידור אדם בארץ ישראל
אפילו בעיר שרובה עכו"ם ואל ידור
בחוצה לארץ ואפילו בעיר שרובה ישראל
שכל היוצא לחוצה לארץ כאילו עובד
ע"ז

It is worth bearing in mind that the Rambam himself only spent a few years of his life in Jerusalem, and the rest in Spain and Egypt. His grandson relates that the Rambam would sign his name together with a public acknowledgment that he had made the sinful journey from Israel to Egypt, a reverse Exodus! In this sense, Rambam was integrating his 'non-living in Israel' into his public identity.

- How do you understand Rambam's pronouncement, given that he himself did not live by it?
- Can you relate to his mixed emotions?
- Do you share, or reject his guilt at not living in the land of Israel?

Source 2

“It’s time to say that America is a better place to be a Jew than **Jerusalem**. If ever there was a Promised Land, we Jewish Americans are living in it. Here Jews have flourished, not alone in politics and the economy, but in matters of art, culture, and learning. Jews feel safe and secure here in ways that they do not and cannot in the State of Israel. And they have found an authentically Jewish voice – their own voice – for their vision of themselves. ... God alone knows the future. But for here, now and for whatever future anyone can foresee, America has turned out to be our Promised Land.” (Our emphasis)

Jacob Neusner “Is America the Promised Land for Jews?” Washington Post, March 8, 1987

- Is Neusner giving voice to a “forbidden truth” shared by many?
- Does Neusner level the playing field with the Zionists, or does he add an unnecessary layer of tension to the relationship, a deal breaker of sorts?
- What do you make of the fact that Neusner makes reference to Jerusalem but not to Israel? For Diaspora Jews, is Jerusalem the *sine qua non* of Israel?

From Barack Obama's Cairo Speech, 2009

America's strong bonds with Israel are well known. This bond is unbreakable. It is based upon cultural and historical ties, and the recognition that the aspiration for a Jewish homeland is rooted in a tragic history that cannot be denied.

Around the world, the Jewish people were persecuted for centuries, and anti-Semitism in Europe culminated in an unprecedented Holocaust. Tomorrow, I will visit Buchenwald, which was part of a network of camps where Jews were enslaved, tortured, shot and gassed to death by the Third Reich. Six million Jews were killed – more than the entire Jewish population of Israel today. Denying that fact is baseless, ignorant, and hateful.



- President Obama was later criticized for implying that the claims for a Jewish homeland in Israel were based on European anti-semitism and the Holocaust alone.
- How might you have rewritten this part of his speech?

“I saw all the mountain-tops engraved
With all the liturgy.
All the verses etched
In exposed, weather-beaten slopes.”
Yitzhak Shalev

Hatikvah

Target population: adults

Technical needs: computer projector, internet access, good speakers

Introduction

When a people takes hold of its fate in its own hands, when a nation builds its own country when before it had none, it needs to take on the characteristics of a modern State. Among other things, this means that the Jews needed to find or create symbols that would unite and represent the country to the outside world.

What was the musical symbol – the anthem - that Israel chose for itself? In what way is it like other nation's anthems, and in what way is it different? Does Hatikvah, Israel's national anthem, serve its unifying and symbolic purpose?

This program aims to explore Hatikvah – its history, its meaning, and its artistic function. In order to do so, it's worth developing our thinking and our language by first exploring the meaning and history of our own anthem. ...

My National Anthem

Quick quiz – possibly in small groups

1. Can you write down all the words of the first verse?
2. Can you remember any of the other verses?
3. What event do the lyrics refer to? (An event? A political situation? When?)

[For US participants, you can play an [official version](#) of the anthem]

4. When did this anthem become the official anthem of your country?
5. What are the origins of the tune? (feel free to google...)

To discuss – music and words:

What feelings arise when you sing the anthem?

Do you stand/put hand on heart/salute when singing it?

If you don't make any gesture while singing, what do you think when others do?

How do you understand/relate to the words?

[are they difficult to understand?]

What affects you more: the words, or the music?

Is the national anthem important? For what?

[There is no right answer here. What is important is for the group to develop a common language about national anthems, and to allow them to throw an interested eye on their own heritage.]

The first person to perform his own adaptation of USA's Star Spangled Banner was Jose Feliciano. As this [short film](#) recounts, his original adaptation almost destroyed his career. Ever since, from Hendrix onwards, the adaptation business has prospered.

What is your attitude to adaptations of your National anthem? Do they adversely affect the power of the original, or to they add to its splendor?

[we think [Marvin Gaye's version](#) of Star Spangled Banner is rather splendid...]

[This is, in essence, a question about the sacred. Can a song be sacred? Is this holiness, or specialness, accorded to it by the people? In which case if someone changes it, 'desecrates' it, then the holiness is gone. Or is the sacred inherent? In which case it doesn't matter what people 'do' to it, the song will remain holy. As we will see, these questions of the sanctity of the national anthem are equally relevant in Israel.]

Before moving on to Hatikva, it may be worth some kind of summarizing. What have we learned about our different approaches to and understandings of our National Anthem? What place does the music, the words, the history, have in its significance to us?

Hatikva

Play the famous [Barbra Streisand version](#).

The music

Hatikvah is one of the very few national anthems in a minor key. To a western ear, this sound somewhat sorrowful.

- Does this add to its significance for you, or does it detract from it?
- Thinking back to our responses to the music of our own anthem – should an anthem be triumphant?
- What does it say to you, that Israel's anthem is minor?

Development of the tune

An early 16th century song [Ballo di Montova](#) displays many elements of the song we know as Hatikvah, but the most direct source would be Smetana's piece [Ma Vlast – My Fatherland](#).

It is fascinating to realize that this quintessential song of Israel was originally written in praise of Czechoslovakia!

The lyrics

As long as the Jewish spirit is yearning deep in the heart,
With eyes turned toward the East, looking toward Zion,
Then our hope - the two-thousand-year-old hope - will not be lost:
To be a free people in our land,
The land of Zion and Jerusalem.

Two questions about the lyrics:

- The lyrics talk of the Jewish spirit. Do you see yourself as part of the Jewish spirit? How does this song speak to you?
[it is worth trying to reincorporate the thoughts and sentiments expressed about your own anthem, and encouraging their application in this conversation. Are there points of comparison?]
- The song talks of a longing and a hope. Do you think the hope has now been fulfilled? Do you think this song is now a little out of date?
[you may want to interject at this point and talk about the song Jerusalem of Gold – *Yerushalayim shel Zahav*. The song was originally written as a sad lament for the loss of Jerusalem in early 1967. It was a great hit. But some months later Jerusalem was conquered and Jews could once again enter the Old City. In response, Naomi Shemer added an extra verse, celebrating Jews' return to Jerusalem. So there is a precedent for updating Israeli national songs when appropriate. Perhaps the 'hope' is not yet fulfilled?]

Further Text study

Naftali Herz Inber wrote the original poem in 1878 that was set to music by Samuel Cohen. The poem itself was seven stanzas long, but traditionally only the first verse and the chorus are sung. The then-Chief Rabbi of Israel, Rav Kook, suggested a more religious lyric, but it was not accepted. After Inber had since left Israel, a change was made to the words of the chorus. It is this altered version that we sing today.

Split into groups, and study the three different lyrics for ending of the Israeli national anthem. All were to be sung to the same tune. What are the differences between the three versions, and what do they say to you?

Suggested lyrics of Rav Kook, the first Chief Rabbi of Israel	Original lyrics of Hatikvah	Final version
Eternally living within our hearts, The Faith, the loyal faith to return to our holy land, The city where David settled.	Our hope is not yet lost, The ancient hope To return to the land of our fathers, The city where David encamped	Our hope is not yet lost The hope of 2000 years To be a free people in our land The land of Zion and Jerusalem

[In particular, you may want to encourage people to consider what is the difference between a 'return to the land of our fathers', and 'to be a free people in our land'...]

The controversy over the lyrics

Israel's ultra-orthodox Jews, making up around 10% of Israel's population, do not sing Hatikvah at public events. It offends their religious sensibilities. Arab citizens of Israel, who make up nearly 20% of Israel's population, also do not sing Hatikvah at public events. It offends their national sensibilities. Thus over a third of all Israelis are alienated by their own national anthem.

You may wish to read and discuss the following article:

[Hatikvah in Arabic](#) – a fascinating suggestion from a Canadian writer

Hatikvah - From Holocaust to Rebirth

When Bergen-Belsen was liberated in 1945, a BBC reporter recorded the surviving Jews sing Hatikvah. Even before the establishment of the State, this tune was an anthem of the Jewish People. (You'll notice they sing the original version of the lyrics).

<http://il.youtube.com/watch?v=syUSmEbGLs4&feature=fvw>

For further listening

In 2008 a project brought together some of Israel's top musicians to record their own versions of Hatikvah. [Dudu Fisher](#) sings to a 'human beat box' backing, pop star and broadcaster [Kobi Oz](#) gives his rendition, and [Daniel Zamir](#) creates an entirely unusual jazz version. From the women, [Zehava Ben](#) sings with her oriental lilt, and [Rivka Zohar](#) sings from the heart.