

# Zionism and its Discontents

**Rabbi Sid Schwarz**  
**Adat Shalom Adult Ed-Winter 2023**  
**Session 1**



# 1. The Ideological Camps of Zionist Thought

# A. Political Zionism

- a. Idea: We need a state to save Jews from a world that is hostile to Jews
- b. Personalities: Theodore Herzl; Chaim Weizman
- c. Institutions: World Zionist Congress

## B. Labor/Socialist Zionism

- a. Idea: Jews need to re-connect to their ancient land through working the land; the Jewish state will create an ideal society based on an egalitarian, class-conscious equality and universal justice for all oppressed people.
- b. Personalities: A.D. Gordon; Ber Borochov; David Ben-Gurion; Golda Meir.
- c. Institutions: the kibbutz; the moshav; the Labor Party

# C. Cultural Zionism

- a. Idea: Israel will become the center for Jewish culture, religion and the intellectual heritage of the Jewish people.
- b. Personalities: Ahad Ha'am; Mordecai Kaplan; Chaim Nachman Bialik; Eliezer ben Yehuda
- c. Institutions: HaShiloach (1902-1926); Hebrew University

# D. Religious Zionism

- a. Idea: the messianic belief that the state will lead to a mystical salvation of the Jewish people and that residence in the land will allow Jews to observe all the commandments in ways not possible in the diaspora
- b. Personalities: Personalities: Yitzchak Yaakov Reines;  
Abraham Isaac Kook
- c. Institutions: the National Religious Party; Shas; Settlement movement

# E. Revisionist Zionism

- a. Ideas: The Revisionists were critical of the socialist/labor leadership of the Yishuv in the 1920's, feeling that they were too accommodationist in their relationship with the British Mandatory authorities. They wanted a Jewish state with a Jewish majority on both sides of the Jordan. They believed in developing a strong Jewish military force to achieve their objectives. They also felt that the emphasis on agriculture and on collectivist settlements like *kibbutzim* would not be as effective as promoting free market businesses.
- b. Personalities: Ze'ev Jabotinsky; Menachem Begin; Yitzchak Shamir; Bibi Netanyahu
- c. Institutions: Betar youth movement; Irgun; the Likud party; Israel Hayom newspaper; the Settlement movement

## 2. The Jerusalem Program (adopted by the World Zionist Congress, 6/19/68)

### **The Aims of Zionism are:**

- The unity of the Jewish people and the centrality of Israel in Jewish life;
- The ingathering of the Jewish people in its historic homeland, Eretz Israel, through Aliyah from all countries;
- The strengthening of the State of Israel, which is based on the prophetic vision of justice and peace;
- The preservation of the identity of the Jewish people through the fostering of Jewish and Hebrew education and of Jewish spiritual and cultural values;
- The protection of Jewish rights everywhere.