



SHALOM HARTMAN מכון  
INSTITUTE הרטמן שלום



# The Israel We Imagine

When Visions Confront Reality

**Elana Stein Hain**

Tuesday, May 10, 2022

**Beth Tzedec Congregation**  
1700 Bathurst Street, Toronto

**SPONSORED BY**  
The Louis & Moishe  
J. Weisfeld Annual  
Memorial Lectures  
at Beth Tzedec  
Congregation

WITH APPRECIATION FOR THE GENEROUS SUPPORT OF THE AZRIELI FOUNDATION

**Dr. Elana Stein Hain** is the Director of Faculty and a Senior Fellow at the Shalom Hartman Institute of North America, where she serves as lead faculty, directs the activities of the Kogod Research Center for Contemporary Jewish Thought and consults on the content of lay and professional leadership programs.

A widely well-regarded teacher and scholar, Elana is passionate about bringing rabbinic thought into conversation with contemporary life. To this end, she created [Talmud from the Balcony](#), an occasional learning seminar exposing the big ideas, questions, and issues motivating rabbinic discussions; she leads the [Created Equal Research Seminar](#) which considers the relationships between gender consciousness and Jewish thought; and she co-hosts [For Heaven's Sake](#), a bi-weekly podcast with Donniel Hartman and Yossi Klein Halevi, exploring contemporary issues related to Israel and the Jewish world.



Elana earned her doctorate in Religion from Columbia University where she wrote her dissertation on the topic of legal loopholes as a prism for understanding rabbinic views on law and ethics. She is an alumna of the Yeshiva University Graduate Program in Advanced Talmudic Studies (GPATS) as well as the Consortium in Jewish Studies and Legal Theory Graduate Fellowship at Cardozo School of Law. She also served for eight years as a clergy member on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, at both Lincoln Square Synagogue and the Jewish Center, has taught at the Wagner School at NYU, and sits on the board of Sefaria: A Living Library of Jewish Texts.

Elana lives on the Upper West Side of Manhattan with her family.



**The Shalom Hartman Institute is a leading center of Jewish thought and education, serving Israel and North America. Our mission is to strengthen Jewish peoplehood, identity, and pluralism; to enhance the Jewish and democratic character of Israel; and to ensure that Judaism is a compelling force for good in the 21st century.**

Shalom Hartman Institute of North America  
475 Riverside Drive, Suite 1450  
New York, NY 10115  
212-268-0300  
[info@shalomhartman.org](mailto:info@shalomhartman.org) | [www.shalomhartman.org](http://www.shalomhartman.org)



## Table of Contents

<b>I. Non-Messianic &amp; Messianic Jewish Sovereignty</b>	<b>1</b>
1. Maimonides (1138-1204), Commentary to the Mishnah, Introduction to Perek Helek	1
2. Yeshayahu Leibowitz, <i>Judaism, Human Values, and the Jewish State</i> , p. 115	1
<b>II. Jewish Redemption</b>	<b>2</b>
3. Zechariah (Prophets, <i>Nevi'im</i> ) 8:3-6	2
4. Joseph B. Soloveitchik, <i>The Voice of My Beloved Knocks</i> , 1956	2
<b>III. Universal Redemption</b>	<b>4</b>
5. Isaiah (Prophets/ <i>Nevi'im</i> ) 49:6	4
6. Theodor Herzl, <i>The Jewish State</i> , 1896	4
<b>IV. The Land, Not The State</b>	<b>5</b>
7. Genesis (Bereishit) 12:1-7	5
8. Yoram Taharlev, "Come and Walk Yourself Through the Land," 1984	6
9. Nahmanides (1194-1270), commentary on Leviticus (Vayikra) 18:25	6
10. Heinrich Bünting, Clover Leaf Map <i>Itinerium Sacrae Scripturae</i> (Travel Through Holy Scripture), 1581	7
<b>V. Statehood: Judaism in the Public Square</b>	<b>8</b>
11. Ahad Ha'am (1856-1927), <i>Nationalism and the Jewish Ethic</i> , ed. Hans Kohn, 1962, p. 79	8
12. Shuki Friedman, "The Shabbat Wars: A Guide for the Perplexed on the 'Status Quo'... and a Possible Solution," Israel Democracy Institute, 2017	8
13. Ruth Calderon, Inaugural Speech to the Knesset, 2013	9
14. David Hartman, "The Third Jewish Commonwealth," <i>A Living Covenant</i> , 1985	10

## I. Non-Messianic & Messianic Jewish Sovereignty

### 1. Maimonides (1138-1204), Commentary to the Mishnah, Introduction to Perek Helek

The “days of the Messiah” refers to a time in which sovereignty will revert to Israel and the Jewish people will return to the land of Israel. Their king will be a very great one, with his royal place in Zion. His name and his reputation will extend throughout all the nations and even greater measure than did King Solomon’s. All nations will make peace with him, and all countries will serve him out of respect for his great righteousness and the wonders which occur through him. All those who rise against him will be destroyed and delivered into his hands by God. All the verses of the Bible testify to his triumph and our triumph with him. However, except for the fact that sovereignty will revert to Israel, nothing will be essentially different from what it is now. This is what the sages taught: “The only difference between this world and the days of the Messiah is that oppression by other kingdoms will be abolished” (Berakhot 34b; Shabbat 63a, 151b; Pesachim 68a; Sanhedrin 91b, 99a). In the days of the Messiah there will still be rich and poor, strong and weak. However, in those days it will be very easy for men to make a living. A minimum of labor will produce great benefits.

### 2. Yeshayahu Leibowitz, *Judaism, Human Values, and the Jewish State*, p. 115

My own answer to that non-Jew was that Zionism is the expression of our being fed up with being ruled by Goyim. I am aware that this “we” does not extend to all Jews. Still, it is the motive shared by Zionist Jews who differ widely in their human values and in their conception of Judaism. **Zionism is best defined as the program for the attainment of political and national independence. Now that this has been attained in the form of a sovereign state, Zionism consists in the effort to maintain this independence. This is the function the state of Israel performs for the Jewish people, in addition to inspiring “the fear of authority” as does every system of government to maintain peace and tranquility.** More than that should not be expected from any state. The values people wish to realize, whether general humanistic ones like the idea of a “model society,” or specifically Jewish such as the “prophetic vision and the messianic promises,” or, most authentically, a condition in which “the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord,” are not the affairs of the state. Their realization is a proper object for the aspirations and striving of individuals and groups within the state. It is outside the sphere of action of the executive and administrative apparatus of state coercion, which can never be the suitable instrument for the implementation of these values.

*Compare and contrast Maimonides and Leibowitz when it comes to the significance and function of Israel.*

## II. Jewish Redemption

### 3. Zechariah (Prophets, *Nevi'im*) 8:3-6

ג כֹּה, אָמַר ה', שְׁבִתִי אֶל-צִיּוֹן, וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בִּתְּוֹךְ יְרוּשָׁלַם; וְנִקְרָאָה יְרוּשָׁלַם עִיר הָאֱמֻנָה וְהָר-ה' צְבָאוֹת הָר הַקֹּדֶשׁ. כֹּה אָמַר, ה' צְבָאוֹת, עַד יֵשְׁבוּ זָקְנִים וְזִקְנוֹת, בְּרַחֲבוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם; וְאִישׁ מִשְׁעֲנָתוֹ בְּיָדוֹ, מֵרֶב יָמִים. ה וּרְחֲבוֹת הָעִיר יִמְלְאוּ, יִלְדִים וְיִלְדוֹת, מִשְׁחָקִים, בְּרַחֲבֶתֶּיהָ. כֹּה אָמַר, ה' צְבָאוֹת, כִּי יִפְּלֹא בְּעֵינַי שְׂאֲרֵית הָעָם הַזֶּה, בְּיָמִים הָהֵם--גַּם-בְּעֵינַי, יִפְּלֹא, נָא, ה' צְבָאוֹת.

**3** Thus said the LORD: I have returned to Zion, and I will dwell in Jerusalem. Jerusalem will be called the City of Faithfulness, and the mount of the LORD of Hosts the Holy Mount. **4** Thus said the LORD of Hosts: There shall yet be old men and women in the squares of Jerusalem, each with staff in hand because of their great age. **5** And the squares of the city shall be crowded with boys and girls playing in the squares. **6** Thus said the LORD of Hosts: Though it will seem impossible to the remnant of this people in those days, shall it also be impossible to Me?—declares the LORD of Hosts.

*The prophet Zechariah paints a portrait of Jerusalem when it is redeemed by God. What are some of the features of this vision and what meaning underlies it?*

### 4. Joseph B. Soloveitchik, *The Voice of My Beloved Knocks*, 1956

Eight years ago, in the midst of a night of the terrors of Majdanek, Treblinka, and Buchenwald; in a night of gas chambers and crematoria; in a night of total divine self concealment; in a night ruled by the devil of doubt and destruction who sought to sweep the Lover from her own tent into the Catholic Church; in a night of continuous searching for the Beloved — on that very night the Beloved appeared. The Almighty, who was hiding in His splendid sanctum, suddenly appeared and began to beckon at the tent of the Lover, who tossed and turned on her bed beset by convulsions and the agonies of hell. Because of the beating and knocking at the door of the mournful Lover, the State of Israel was born.

How many times did the Beloved knock on the door of the Lover? It appears to me that we can count at least six knocks.

First, the knock of the Beloved was heard in the political arena. **From the point of view of international relations, no one will deny that the rebirth of the State of Israel, in a political sense, was an almost supernatural occurrence.** Both Russia and the Western nations supported the establishment of the State of Israel. This was perhaps the one resolution on which East and West concurred [during the Cold War era]. **I am inclined to believe that the United Nations was especially created for this end — for the sake of fulfilling the mission that Divine Providence had placed upon it...**

**Second, the knock of the Beloved was heard on the battlefield. The tiny defense forces of [the State of] Israel defeated the mighty Arab armies.** The miracle of “the many delivered into the hands of the few” materialized before our eyes, and an even greater miracle happened! ...

Third, the Beloved also began to knock on the door of the tent of theology, and possibly this is the strongest beckoning. I have, on several occasions, emphasized in my remarks concerning the Land of Israel that the theological arguments of Christian theologians to the effect that the Holy One has taken away from the Community of Israel its rights to the Land of Israel, and that all of the biblical promises relating to Zion and Jerusalem now refer in an allegorical sense to Christianity and the Christian Church, were all publicly shown to be false, baseless contentions by the establishment of the State of Israel.

Fourth, the Beloved knocks in the heart of the youth which is assimilated and perplexed. The period of hester panim in the 1940's brought confusion among the Jewish masses and especially Jewish youth... Suddenly, the Beloved began to beckon to the hearts of the perplexed, and His beckoning, the establishment of the State of Israel, at least slowed the process of flight. Many who were once alienated are now bound to the Jewish State with ties of pride in its mighty accomplishments.

The fifth knock of the Beloved is perhaps the most important. For the first time in the annals of our exile, Divine Providence has amazed our enemies with the astounding discovery that Jewish blood is not cheap! ... Let us not forget that the poison of Hitlerite anti-Semitism (which made Jews fair game to all) still permeates this generation, which looked with equanimity upon the horrible scene of the suffocation of millions in gas chambers as a normal event that need not be challenged. The antidote for this venom that poisoned minds and dulled hearts is the readiness of the State of Israel to defend the lives of its citizens. Listen! My Beloved Knocks!

The sixth beckoning, of which we should also not lose sight, was heard at the time of the opening of the gates of the Land of Israel. A Jew escaping from an enemy's land now knows that he can find refuge in the land of his forefathers. This is a new phenomenon in the annals of our history. Up to now, when a Jewish population was uprooted, it wandered in the wilderness of the nations without finding shelter and habitation. The shutting of the gates in the face of the exiled caused total destruction for much of the Jewish people. Now the situation has changed.

*Rabbi Soloveitchik understands the birth of the State of Israel as a moment of **Jewish** redemption. What are the strengths and limitations of his understanding?*

### III. Universal Redemption

#### 5. Isaiah (Prophets/*Nevi'im*) 49:6

וַיֹּאמֶר, נִקְלַמְהוּתָדָד לִי עֶבֶד, לְהַקִּים אֶת-שְׁבִטִי יַעֲקֹב, וְנִצִּירִי (וְנִצְוִירִי) יִשְׂרָאֵל לְהָשִׁיב וּנְתַתִּידָד  
לְאוֹר גּוֹיִם, לְהִיּוֹת יְשׁוּעָתִי עַד-קֵצֶה הָאָרֶץ

6 For He has said:

“It is too little that you should be My servant

In that I raise up the tribes of Jacob

And restore the survivors of Israel:

**I will also make you a light of nations,**

**That My salvation may reach the ends of the earth.”**

#### 6. Theodor Herzl, *The Jewish State*, 1896

We have honestly endeavored everywhere to merge ourselves in the social life of surrounding communities and to preserve the faith of our fathers. We are not permitted to do so. In vain are we loyal patriots, our loyalty in some places running to extremes; in vain do we make the same sacrifices of life and property as our fellow-citizens; in vain do we strive to increase the fame of our native land in science and art, or her wealth by trade and commerce. In countries where we have lived for centuries we are still cried down as strangers, and often by those whose ancestors were not yet domiciled in the land where Jews had already had experience of suffering...

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.

*Compare and contrast Isaiah and Herzl when it comes to the universal role that Israel plays. Where do you see their respective visions realized in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and where do they fall short?*

#### IV. The Land, Not The State

##### 7. Genesis (Bereishit) 12:1-7

א וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל-אַבְרָם, לֵךְ-לְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ וּמִמּוֹלַדְתְּךָ וּמִבֵּית אָבִיךָ, אֶל-הָאָרֶץ, אֲשֶׁר אֲרָאָךְ בַּיָּעָשׂוֹךְ, לְגוֹי גָּדוֹל, וְאַבְרָכְךָ, וְאַגְדִּלָּה שְׁמֹךְ; וְהָיָה, בְּרָכָה ג' וְאַבְרָכָה, מְבָרְכִיךָ, וּמִקְלָלְךָ אָאֵר; וְנִבְרָכוּ בְּךָ, כָּל מְשֻׁפָּחוֹת הָאָדָמָה ד' וַיֵּלֶךְ אַבְרָם, כְּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר אֵלָיו ה', וַיֵּלֶךְ אִתּוֹ, לוֹט; וְאַבְרָם, בֶּן-חָמֵשׁ שָׁנִים וְשִׁבְעִים שָׁנָה, בְּצֵאתוֹ, מִחָרָן ה' וַיִּסָּח אַבְרָם אֶת-שָׁרִי אִשְׁתּוֹ וְאֶת-לוֹט בֶּן-אָחִיו, וְאֶת-כָּל-רִכּוּשָׁם אֲשֶׁר רָכְשׁוּ, וְאֶת-הַנֶּפֶשׁ, אֲשֶׁר-עָשׂוּ בְּחָרָן; וַיֵּצְאוּ, לָלֶכֶת אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן, וַיָּבֹאוּ, אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן וַיַּעֲבֵר אַבְרָם, בָּאָרֶץ, עַד מְקוֹם שָׁקֵם, עַד אֵלוֹן מוֹרֶה; וְהַכְנַעֲנִי, אָז בָּאָרֶץ ז' וַיֵּרָא ה', אֶל-אַבְרָם, וַיֹּאמֶר, לִזְרַעְךָ אֵתֵן אֶת-הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת; וַיָּבֹן שָׁם מִזְבֵּחַ, לַה' הַנִּרְאָה אֵלָיו

**1** God said to Abram, “Go forth from your native land and from your father’s house to the land that I will show you. **2** I will make of you a great nation,

And I will bless you;

I will make your name great,

And you shall be a blessing

**3** I will bless those who bless you

And curse the one who curses you;

And all the families of the earth

Shall bless themselves by you.”

**4** Abram went forth as God had commanded him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Haran. **5.** Abram took his wife Sarai and his brother’s son Lot, and all the wealth that they had amassed, and the persons that they had acquired in Haran; and they set out for the land of Canaan. When they arrived in the land of Canaan, **6** Abram passed through the land as far as the site of Shechem, at the terebinth of Moreh. The Canaanites were then in the land. **7** God appeared to Abram and said, “I will assign this land to your offspring.” And he built an altar there to God who had appeared to him.

*Why does the Torah begin the story of the Jewish people with commands associated with the Land of Canaan (Israel)? What roles does the land play for the Jewish people in this text?*



8. Yoram Taharlev, "Come and Walk Yourself Through the Land," 1984

"Come and walk yourself through the  
land" (Genesis 13:17)  
with your backpack and stick  
and there on your journey  
you'll rediscover the land of Israel

Under the asphalt  
and the buildings  
the homeland is hiding,  
shy and modest.

The paths will embrace you  
of this good country  
she will call you to her  
like a love song

The olive trees  
and the springs of water,  
yet again we guard the dream  
and her old dream.

This is the land  
this is the earth,  
the rock will burn  
and explode in the heat.

The red roofs  
and children in the streets  
in the place that we walked  
with our backpacks.

*This famous Israeli song draws on the biblical text of Genesis where God instructs Abram to get up and walk through the land seemingly as a way of making a claim to it. What message does the song seek to impart to its listeners? Why does it use this direct biblical quote?*

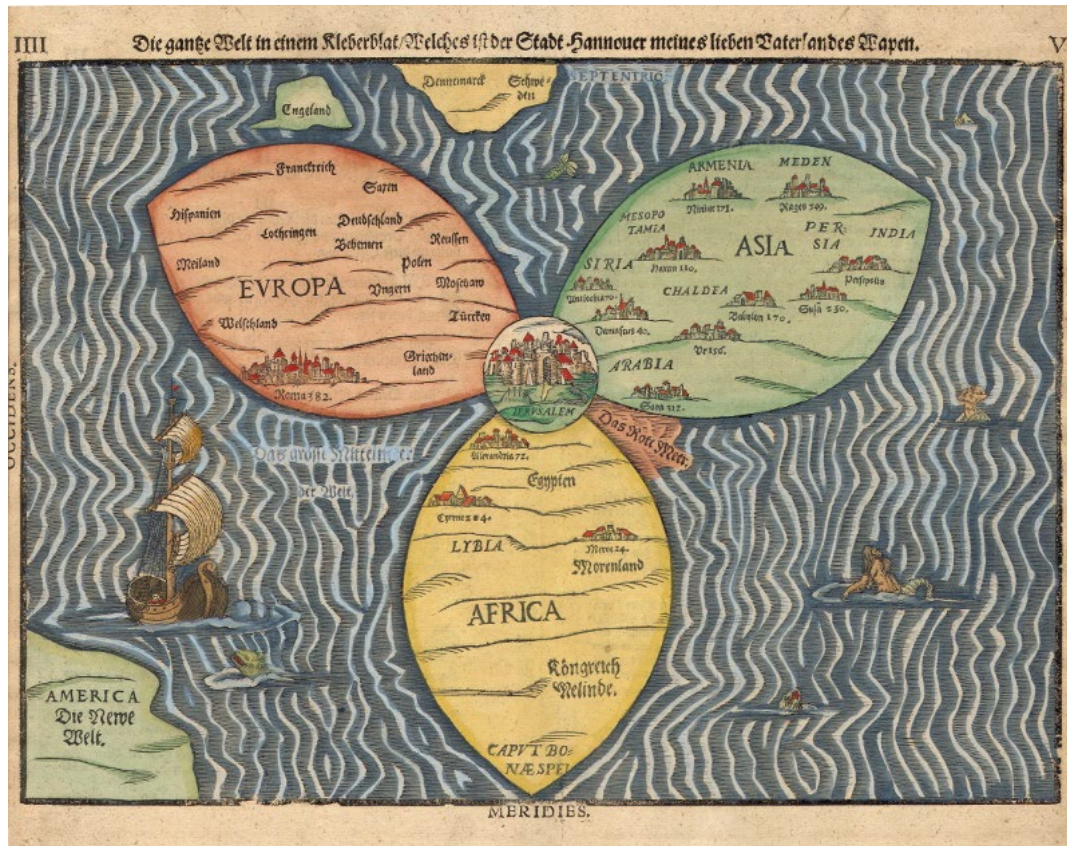
9. Nahmanides (1194-1270), commentary on Leviticus (Vayikra) 18:25

The explanation is that while God is the creator of all, God assigned for every people and land a star or constellation, as we have learnt through astrology. Regarding this it is written: "These the Lord your God allotted to other peoples." He apportioned to each one their constellations in the heavens...

**Now God is God of gods, and Lord of lords of the whole world. But the Land of Israel, which is in the center of the earth, is God's portion designated exclusively to God's Name. God did not designate any angels as having power and authority over it when God gave this land to God's people who are committed to the Unity of His Name, the descendants of God's loved ones [the patriarchs].** Regarding this God said, "you shall be My treasured possession among all the peoples for, all the earth is Mine," and it is further written "and you shall be My people and I will be your God, and you shall not be subjugated to other divine forces at all..."

*How does Nahmanides imagine the Land of Israel? What are the consequences and implications of this vision of Israel?*

10. Heinrich Bünting, Clover Leaf Map *Itinerium Sacrae Scripturae* (Travel Through Holy Scripture), 1581



A mosaic replica of Bunting's map is displayed outside of Safra Square in Jerusalem, with one important difference: the crosses are left out. What ideas and agendas does this map seek to convey? What is the objective of leaving out the crosses in the mosaic?

## V. Statehood: Judaism in the Public Square

11. **Ahad Ha'am (1856-1927), *Nationalism and the Jewish Ethic*, ed. Hans Kohn, 1962, p. 79**

Judaism needs at present but little. It needs not an independent state, but only the creation in its native land of conditions favourable to its development: a good-sized settlement of Jews working without hindrance in every branch of culture, from agriculture and handicrafts to science and literature. This Jewish settlement, which will be a gradual growth, will become in the course of time the center of the nation, wherein its spirit will find pure expression and develop in all its aspects up to the highest degree of perfection of which it is capable. Then from this center the spirit of Judaism will go forth to the great circumference, to all the communities of the Diaspora, and will breathe new life into them and preserve their unity; and when our national culture in Palestine has attained that level, we may be confident that it will produce men in the country who will be able, on a favorable opportunity, to establish a state which will be truly a Jewish state, and not merely a state of Jews.

12. **Shuki Friedman, "The Shabbat Wars: A Guide for the Perplexed on the 'Status Quo'... and a Possible Solution," Israel Democracy Institute, 2017**

Of the various issues related to religion and state, the status quo regarding Shabbat is one of the most charged and complicated. From the genesis of the Zionist movement, this question had concerned religious Zionist leaders and members of other religious parties. One example of this preoccupation with Shabbat laws dates back to Mandatory Palestine, when the city of Tel Aviv passed a municipal bylaw banning the operation of businesses on Shabbat.

The status quo letter states that "it is clear that the legal day of rest in the Jewish state will be Shabbat." Nothing can be inferred from this about what the character of Shabbat will be, or the extent to which it will be observed, even in the most general terms.

Since then, the State of Israel has witnessed hundreds of struggles over Shabbat observance, both on a national and municipal level. When a Friday afternoon ceremony celebrating the arrival of F-15 warplanes ran into Shabbat, this transgression brought the demise of the first Yitzhak Rabin government in 1977...

But it would seem that what causes the greatest difficulty, and is at the heart of the issue of Shabbat observance, and is also “killing” the status quo, is the activity of commercial businesses. There is insufficient data regarding kiosks and corner stores, but the greatest volume of activity is to be found in malls and in out-of-town shopping centers. It is estimated that some 20 percent of malls in Israel are open for business on Shabbat, representing a huge volume of commerce...

The current situation is a social, cultural and religious tragedy.

For a great many Israelis, Shabbat is an important cultural and religious value. The gift of the Jewish people to the world, Shabbat is for many an integral part of Jewish heritage or tradition, as well as of the Jewish state.

**Surveys show that most Israeli citizens believe Shabbat should have a unique character from other days of the week and that Shabbat should give expression to Jewish tradition and heritage. Moreover, mass non-observance of Shabbat is immensely harmful to the weakest members of the labor market: single mothers forced to work on the only day they can spend with their family, service sector workers who find themselves bound to the workplace on the seventh day, and business owners who face the cruel choice of operating on Shabbat, sometimes against the dictates of their own conscience, or going bust.**

*The question of what Shabbat should look and feel like in the modern State of Israel is an important and controversial one. How do you approach this question? How does your approach towards Shabbat in Israel fit in with what you imagine Israel should be more generally?*

### **13. Ruth Calderon, Inaugural Speech to the Knesset, 2013**

...I am convinced that studying the great works of Hebrew and Jewish culture are crucial to construct a new Hebrew culture for Israel. It is impossible to stride toward the future without knowing where we came from and who we are, without knowing, intimately and in every particular, the sublime as well as the outrageous and the ridiculous. The Torah is not the property of one movement or another. It is a gift that every one of us received, and we have all been granted the opportunity to meditate upon it as we create the realities of our lives. Nobody took the Talmud and rabbinic literature from us. We gave it away, with our own hands, when it seemed that another task was more important and urgent: building a state, raising an army, developing agriculture and industry, etc. The time has come to re-appropriate what is ours, to delight in the cultural riches that wait for us, for our eyes, our imaginations, our creativity.

...I aspire to bring about a situation in which Torah study is the heritage of all Israel, in which the Torah is accessible to all who wish to study it, in which all young citizens of Israel take part in Torah study as well as military and civil service. Together we will build this home and avoid disappointment. I long for the day when the state's resources are distributed fairly and equally to every Torah scholar, man or woman, based on the quality of their study, not their communal affiliation, when secular and pluralistic yeshivot, batei midrash, and organizations win fair and equal support in comparison to Orthodox and Haredi batei midrash. Through scholarly envy and healthy competition, the Torah will be magnified and glorified.

...

I want to conclude with a prayer composed by my colleague Chaim Hames, the prayer for entering the Knesset: May it be Your will, Lord our God, God of our fathers and mothers, that I leave this house as I entered it – at peace with myself and with others. May my actions benefit all residents of the State of Israel. May I work to improve the society that sent me to this chamber and cause a just peace to dwell among us and with our neighbors. May I always remember that I am a messenger of the public and that I must take care to keep my integrity and innocence intact.

May I, and we, succeed in all our endeavors. I add a small prayer for my faction, Yesh Atid, that we maintain our unique culture of cooperation and brotherhood, that we remain united, that we remain in the plenum, and that we realize our dream to make things better. Thank you.

*According to Calderon, why does the modern state of Israel need Talmud study?*

#### **14. David Hartman, "The Third Jewish Commonwealth," *A Living Covenant*, 1985**

I live with the guarded hope that out of this complex and vibrant new Jewish reality will emerge new spiritual directions for the way Judaism will be lived in the modern world. **Israel expands the possible range of halakhic involvement in human affairs beyond the circumscribed borders of home and synagogue to the public domain. Jews in Israel are given the opportunity to bring economic, social, and political issues into the center of their religious consciousness. The moral quality of the army, social and economic disparities and deprivations, the exercise of power moderated by moral sensitivity – all these are realms that may engage halakhic responsibility.** From this perspective, the fact that Israel enables us to make the whole of life the carrier of the covenant is in itself sufficient to ascribe profound religious significance to the secular revolt that led to Israel's rebirth. I celebrate Israel's Independence Day with the recitation of the Hallel psalms, thus

expressing gratitude to God for having been given the opportunity to renew the full scope of the covenantal spirit of Judaism. My religious celebration is not a judgment on God's activity, but only on the opportunity that Israel makes possible. The opportunity may be missed. But that does not in any way detract from the religious possibilities created by the event. The recitation of psalms of thanksgiving on Independence Day does not entail any divine guarantee regarding the successful realization of those opportunities...

*What are the unique opportunities afforded by the State of Israel according to David Hartman?  
Can you think of examples where Hartman's vision is realized?*

[illegible]

## TWO great podcasts from the Shalom Hartman Institute



Weekly round-table podcast hosted by Yehuda Kurtzer featuring a wide variety of expert guests exploring the ideas behind the news that matter to the Jewish community.

---



Donniel Hartman, Yossi Klein Halevi, and Elana Stein Hain discuss the ideas and values behind differing positions on contemporary issues challenging to Israel and the Jewish world.

Both podcasts available on all major platforms including  
iTunes, Spotify, and Soundcloud

