

ישראל

ISRAEL
wrestling with G!d

*Question Everything,
Including Authority*

The Jewish approach includes asking questions— of ourselves and of others, about why and how things are the way they are.

Even in the face of great power the approach is not to bow down but to engage, and struggle for deeper understanding.

SENSIBILITY CARD

On One Foot: Israel

IMPORTANT TEXTS

“My heart is in the East, yet I am in the utmost West”
— Rabbi Judah Ha-Levi (d. 1141)

“Thus He will judge among the nations, and arbitrate for the many peoples, and they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks: Nation shall not take up sword against nation; they shall never again know war.” — Isaiah 2:4

“The name “*Israel*” stands for *shir el* the song of God. It is a simple song, a twofold song, a threefold song, and a fourfold song.” — Rabbi Abraham Isaac HaKohen Kook (1865-1935), *The Fourfold Song*



The Implications

We will look at *Israel* in the context of:

- Soul Session: Wrestling With God **154**
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Soul Session: Wrestling With God

This Activity is Great For



Spirituality

- Alternative Service



Learning

- Group Learning



I. Beginning the Conversation

Soul sessions are based on the work of Parker Palmer, specifically his development of the “circle of trust” and his emphasis on drawing out the soul and giving it safe space. In these soul sessions, we will use a piece of text or artwork connected to a sensibility, and give ourselves the time and safe space to fully experience the text and discover our relationship to it. Our goals in these sessions are: (1) to get in touch with the wisdom that we have within; (2) to have real, meaningful encounters with Jewish ideas; and (3) to create a welcoming community that nurtures true, honest and kind communication.

For more information about Parker Palmer, the Center for Courage and Renewal, and the principles and procedures of Circles of Trust, see <http://www.couragerenewal.org/approach/>.

Note to Facilitator:

As the facilitator, your role is to help the circle participants create a secure space where they can meaningfully encounter themselves, each other and the text. As much as possible, try to facilitate and not teach: you should be involved in the discussions, journaling and small discussions like other members of the group. Give the group the space and trust to proceed without telling them what they should think or how they should interpret.

How to conduct a soul session:

1. Set up chairs in a circle, where everyone can see each other.
2. Welcome students to the soul session, and explain what a soul session/ circle of trust is. You may wish to distribute the Courage and Renewal touchstones, and read each touchstone out loud, in order to set the stage for the work that the group will do together. ([http://www.couragerenewal.org/PDFs/CourageRenewal-Circle-of-Trust-Touchstones-\(c\)2015.pdf](http://www.couragerenewal.org/PDFs/CourageRenewal-Circle-of-Trust-Touchstones-(c)2015.pdf))
3. Explain that the principle of double confidentiality will apply to this session: What other people mention in this soul session, and in the breakout sessions, is totally confidential. You may not tell anyone what someone else said in this session. In addition, if you see participants from this soul session after the session has concluded, you may not ask them about what they talked about here, unless they specifically invite you to do so.





4. Introduce the text: This poem is taken from *God's Optimism*, a book of poetry by Yehoshua November. November was raised in a traditional Jewish home and became *Chassidic* in college. As his commitment to his faith deepened, he stopped writing poetry and enrolled in *yeshiva* until, with his rabbis' encouragement, he began to write again after two years' silence. In a 2010 interview, November said: "I think it's important to explore how most people, even if they look as if everything is in order, are facing challenges. Art that doesn't express conflict always falls flat because it's not true to human experience." (from the Poetry Foundation, <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poets/detail/yehoshua-november>)
5. Ask for two volunteers to read the text out loud, one after the other, so that we can hear the text in two different voices (the poem can be found on the page right after this facilitation guide)
6. Invite members of the circle to comment on what resonates for them in the piece they just read. You should be involved as a member of the circle, but don't rush to fill the silence - give participants the time and space to comment and reflect. Encourage participants to speak into the middle of the circle, rather than to each other.
7. Journaling: Before the session, write out the following questions - or any other questions you would like to pose - on a large sheet of paper. At this point in the session, post the paper on the wall and read the questions out loud.
 - How would you describe your relationship with God?
 - How has the sorrow in this world affected your relationship with God?
 - What does November suggest that one do instead? What would that look like in your life?
 - What are some words you would use to describe how you would like your relationship with God to be?

Invite students to spend 10 minutes writing in their journal, or if this session occurs on *Shabbat* or a holiday, silently reflecting on these questions. They should find a place to sit comfortably, and take their time. Their written reflections will be kept private unless they choose to reveal them.
8. Small Group Discussion: Bring the group back together and explain that you will now separate them into groups of two or three (depending on how much time you have carved out for this session, and your space constraints). Each group will find someplace to gather, and then each individual in the group will have 10 minutes to talk about their reflections on the text and questions, or whatever thoughts the text has prompted in them. Each group should appoint a timekeeper to raise his or her hand when the 10 minutes are up. After each member of the group has had his or her ten minutes, they should return to the circle.

Ground rules for the breakout groups:

- a. Sit in silence and give the individual who is speaking the space and time to talk at his or her own pace. Do not jump in with questions or comments. Hold the space for them to talk. If they take all 10 minutes to talk, then your job is simply to listen. If they decide they do not want to talk at all, sit in silence with them for 10 minutes. If they have finished what they have to say, and they invite questions before the 10 minutes are up, ask brief, open and honest questions — without introducing your own opinion or offering advice.
- b. Do not give advice — your job is not to tell the others what they should do. Your job is to help create a safe, open space where honest, soulful reflection can occur.



c. The rule of double confidentiality applies. Members of the group may not tell anyone else what they heard in this conversation. In addition, if you see a member of your group later on, you may not ask them about what they talked about, unless they specifically invite you to do so.

9. Whole Group Reflection: When everyone returns to the circle, invite participants to share with the whole group something they have discovered (about themselves only — no talking about what others had said) through their journaling and small group discussions, or to reflect on the soul session and its process of reflection and building of safe space. Allow students to sit in silence to reflect; do not rush to close.

10. Closing: Thank students for their time and for creating a welcoming, honest, safe space. Remind them again that double confidentiality applies. Tell students that you are always happy to speak with them about some of the issues that have come up for them in this session, but that because of double confidentiality you will not refer back to what they said unless they explicitly and proactively invite you to do so (make sure to let them know that so no misunderstandings occur).

The Purpose of this World

From *God's Optimism* by Yehoshua November

When some Jews cannot explain the sorrow of their lives
they take a vow of atheism.

Then everywhere they go,

they curse the God they don't believe exists.

But why, why don't they grab Him by the lapels,
pull His formless body down into this lowly world,
and make Him explain.

After all, this is the purpose of creation —
to make this coarse realm a dwelling place
for His presence.

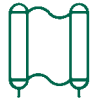


“My Heart Is In the East” — Why?

Israel



This Activity is Great For



Learning

- Beit Midrash
- Group Learning



Holidays

- Yom HaAtzmaut (Israel Independence Day)



Immersive Experiences

- Pre-Birthright Session

Big Idea

Jews throughout the ages have yearned for Jerusalem, symbol of kindness and peace.

I. Beginning the Conversation

Judah HaLevi (d. 1141) was a Spanish poet and philosopher who longed to live in the Land of Israel. Many of his poems speak to his love for Zion and his despair at being so far away, though he lived relatively comfortably in Spain. Read “My Heart Is In the East”, perhaps HaLevi’s most famous ode to the Land of Israel.

“My Heart is in the East”

לְבִי בְּמִזְרַח וְאֲנִי בְּסוֹף מִמְּעַרֵב
 אֵיךְ אֶטְעֶמָה אֶת אֲשֶׁר אֲכַל וְאֵיךְ יַעֲרֹב
 אֵיכָה אֲשַׁלֵּם נְדָרֵי וְאִסְרֵי, בְּעוֹד
 צִיּוֹן בְּחַבְלֵי אֲדוֹם וְאֲנִי בְּכַבְלֵי עֲרָב
 יִקַּל בְּעֵינַי עֲזָב כָּל טוֹב סִפְרָד, כְּמוֹ
 יִקַּר בְּעֵינַי רְאוֹת עִפְרוֹת דְּבִיר נְחָרֵב.

My heart is in the East, yet I am in the utmost West
 How can I taste the food I eat, could it bring me any rest?
 The vows and oaths I’ve sworn, can I heed them as I must
 When Zion’s bound with Christian rope and I with Arab chains?
 It seems as easy in my eyes to leave the charms of Spain,
 As precious as my eyes would find the ruined Temple’s dust.

(Translation by: <http://www.soulandgone.com/2012/11/05/libi-ve-mizrah/>.)

Tell students: Judah HaLevi lived 1,000 years after the destruction of the Temple and the Jewish diaspora, yet his heart desperately longed for Jerusalem. And he wasn’t alone — for thousands of years Jews have mourned, fasted, written poetry and risked their lives to return to the Land of Israel. What is so special about Israel, specifically Jerusalem, in Jewish tradition that led Jews to never forget about it?



II. A Deeper Dive

Let us look at some of the strands in Jewish tradition that speak about Jerusalem to understand the love and longing that Jews have had for city throughout the ages.

Stories of Jerusalem appear throughout our tradition. Today, we will look at one story that describes why Jerusalem was chosen, and a prophecy of the promise of Jerusalem.

The following is well-known folk story about why Jerusalem was chosen as the site of the Temple. It is not found in the *Talmud* or *Midrash*.

You may wish to read and discuss the first story together, and then divide students into *chavruta* pairs to read the second source and discuss the questions.

A. The Two Brothers on the Temple Mount

Long before the Temple was built, two brothers lived and farmed on that site [in Jerusalem]. One was married and had a large family, while the other was single. They lived in close proximity to each other, and each worked his land growing wheat. When harvest time arrived, each was blessed with a bountiful crop and piled up his grain for long-term storage. The unmarried brother, observing his good fortune, thought to himself that God had blessed him with more than he needed, whereas his brother, who was blessed with a large family, could surely use more. He arose in the middle of the night and secretly took from his grain and put it in his brother's pile. Similarly, the married brother thought to himself that he was fortunate to have children who will care for him in his old age, while his brother will depend on what he saved. He, too, arose in the middle of the night and quietly transferred grain from his pile to his brother's. In the morning, each pondered why there was no noticeable decrease in his own pile, and so they repeated the transfer the next night. These nocturnal activities went on for several nights, until one night the brothers bumped into each other. In that instant, in the dark of night, the glow of brotherly love lit up the mountain sky; they each understood what the other had been doing and fell into each other's arms in a loving embrace. According to the legend, when God saw that display of brotherly love, He selected the site for His Temple. (retold by Dr. Ari Zivotofsky, https://www.ou.org/torah/machshava/tzarich-iyun/tzarich_iyun_the_two_brothers_and_the_temple_mount/)

1. What was so special about this story between two brothers?
2. Why situate the Temple, Judaism's holiest site, in this place? What does this tell us about the significance of the Temple, and of Jerusalem?
3. Have you ever given up something of your own for another, because of your love for them? Has someone ever done that for you? What does that experience feel like?



B. The Hope for What Jerusalem Can Be

This text comes from Isaiah, who lived at the time of the destruction of the first Temple. He lays out a vision of what Jerusalem can — and one day will — be.

א הַדְּבַר אֲשֶׁר חִזָּה יִשְׁעִיָּהוּ בֶן אֲמוֹץ
עַל יְהוּדָה וְיְרוּשָׁלַם.

1 The word that Isaiah son of Amoz prophesied concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

ב וְהָיָה בְאַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים נִכּוֹן יְהִיָּה הַר
בַּיִת יְהוָה בְּרֹאשׁ הַהָרִים וְנִשְׂאָ מִגְבְּעוֹת
וְנִהְרָוּ אֱלֹוֵי כָּל הַגּוֹיִם.

2 In the days to come,
The Mount of the Lord's House
Shall stand firm above the mountains
And tower above the hills;
And all the nations
Shall gaze on it with joy.

ג וְהָלְכוּ עַמִּים רַבִּים וְאָמְרוּ לָכֵן וְנִעְלָה
אֶל הַר יְהוָה אֶל בַּיִת אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב וְיִרְנוּ
מִדְרָכָיו וְנִלְכָּה בְּאַחֲרֵיתָיו כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן תֵּצֵא
תוֹרָה וְדִבְרֵי יְהוָה מִירוּשָׁלַם.

3 And the many peoples shall go and say:
"Come,
Let us go up to the Mount of the Lord,
To the House of the God of Jacob;
That He may instruct us in His ways,
And that we may walk in His paths."
For instruction shall come forth from Zion,
The word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

ד וְשִׁפְטוּ בֵּין הַגּוֹיִם וְהוֹכִיחַ לְעַמִּים רַבִּים
וְכִתְבוּ חֲרָבוֹתָם לְאֵתִים וְחִנִּיתוּתֵיהֶם
לְמַזְמְרוֹת לֹא יִשָּׂא גּוֹי אֶל גּוֹי חֲרָב וְלֹא
יִלְמְדוּ עוֹד מִלְחָמָה.

4 Thus He will judge among the nations
And arbitrate for the many peoples,
And they shall beat their swords into
plowshares
And their spears into pruning hooks:
Nation shall not take up
Sword against nation;
They shall never again know war.



TALK IT OUT

- How does our world compare to the vision that Isaiah presents of Jerusalem?
- What are some of the themes about Jerusalem that you see in these two texts?
- How do you typically think about Jerusalem? How is this way of thinking different from the one you see in this text?



Judah HaLevi, (continued)

Tell students about the end of Judah HaLevi's life:

"Judah ha-Levi" from the Jewish Encyclopedia (Richard Gottheil, Max Schloessinger, Isaac Broyd , Judah Ha-Levi, Jewish Encyclopedia, <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/9005-judah-ha-levi>):

Judah ha-Levi does not seem to have been contented in Toledo; for he removed to the (Muslim) city of Cordova. Even here he did not feel at ease... He had long yearned for a new, or rather for the old, home—for the Holy Land... and at length he decided to set out on a journey to Palestine. For himself at least, he wished "to do away with the contradiction of daily confessing a longing and of never attempting to realize it" (Kaufmann, "Jehuda Halevi"); and therefore, on the death of his wife, he bade farewell to daughter, grandson, pupils, friends, rank, and affluence. There was only one image in his heart—Jerusalem:

Oh! had I eagle's wings, I'd fly to thee, And with my falling tears make moist thine earth."

After a stormy passage he arrived in Alexandria, where he was enthusiastically greeted by friends and admirers. At Damietta he had to struggle against the promptings of his own heart and the pleadings of his friend Halfon ha-Levi that he remain in Egypt, which also was Jewish soil and free from intolerant oppression. He, however, resisted the temptation to remain there, and started on the tedious land route trodden of old by the Israelitish wanderers in the desert. Again he is met with, worn out, with broken heart and whitened hair, in Tyre and Damascus. Here authentic records fail; but Jewish legend has taken up the broken threads of history and woven them further. It is related that as he came near Jerusalem, overpowered by the sight of the Holy City, he sang his most beautiful elegy, the celebrated "Zionide," "Zion ha-lo Tish'ali." At that instant he was ridden down and killed by a man on a horse, who dashed forth from a gate (Gedaliah ibn Yahya, "Shalsholet ha-Kabbalah," ed. Venice, p. 40b).

Ask:

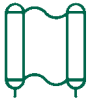
- Can you imagine yourself having a love like Judah Ha-Levi's for Jerusalem?
- What will you do to develop the Jewish love story with Jerusalem?



Growing Your Leadership: Know Your People

Israel

This Activity is Great For



Learning

- Group Learning



Pastoral Counseling

- Self-Worth
- Relationships



Identity & Relationships

- Student Leaders



Big Idea

Different souls have different songs. Great leadership understands these songs and leads in a way for all four songs to be sung.

I. Beginning the Conversation

Ask students what songs have been stuck in their heads recently. On the count of three, ask students to all sing their songs at the same time.

Discuss with students why certain songs get stuck in their heads, and other songs get stuck in other people's heads. Talk about how everyone has their own song that appeals to them.

II. A Deeper Dive

Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook (1865-1935), a great mystic, *Torah* scholar and Jewish leader who was the first Ashkenazic Chief Rabbi of Mandatory Palestine, was also a prolific poet. Give out and read together Rabbi Kook's poem "The Fourfold Song."

A Fourfold Song, Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook, *Orot Hakodesh*, Volume II, pp.458-459

שיר מרובע There are many levels of song.

יש שהוא שר את שירת נפשו, ובנפשו הוא מוצא את הכל,
את מלא הסיפוק הרוחני במילואו. There is one who sings the song of one's own life, and in herself she finds everything, full spiritual satisfaction.

יש שהוא שר שירת האומה, יוצא הוא מתוך המעגל של
נפשו הפרטית, שאינו מוצא אותה מרוחבת כראוי, ולא
מיושבת ישוב אידיאלי, שואף למרומי עז, והוא מתדבק
באהבה עדינה עם כללותה של כנסת ישראל, ועמה הוא
 There is another who sings the song of his people. He leaves the circle of his own individual self, because he finds it without sufficient breadth, without an idealistic basis. He aspires toward the heights, and he stretches himself with a gentle love to the whole community of





A Fourfold Song, Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook, *Orot Hakodesh*, Volume II, pp.458-459 (continued)

שר את שירה, מצר בצרותיה, ומשת-
עשע בתקוותיה, הוגה דעות עליונות
וטהורות על עברה ועל עתידה, וחוקר
באהבה ובחכמת לב את תוכן רוחה
הפנימי.

Israel. Together with her he sings her songs.
He feels grieved in her afflictions and delights
in her hopes. He contemplates noble and
pure thoughts about her past and her future,
and probes with love and wisdom her inner
spiritual essence.

יש אשר עוד תתרחב נפשו עד שיוצא
ומתפשט מעל גבול ישראל, לשיר את
שירת האדם, רוחו הולך ומתרחב בגאון
כללות האדם והוד צלמו, שואף אל
תעודתו הכללית ומצפה להשתלמותו
העליונה, וממקור חיים זה הוא שואב
את כללות הגיונותיו ומחקריו, שאיפותיו
וחזיונותיו.

There is another who reaches toward
more distant realms, and she goes beyond
the boundary of Israel to sing the song of
humanity. Her spirit extends to the wider
vistas of the majesty of humanity in general,
and its noble essence, aspiring towards
humanity's general goal and looking forward
towards its higher perfection. From this
source of life she draws the subjects of her
meditation and study, her aspirations and her
visions.

יש אשר עוד מזה למעלה ברוחב
יתנשא, עד שמתאחד עם כל היקום
כולו, עם כל הבריות, ועם כל העולמים,
ועם כולם אומר שירה, זה הוא העוסק
בפרק שירה בכל יום שמובטח לו שהוא
בן העולם הבא.

Then there is one who rises toward wider
horizons, until he links himself with all
existence, with all God's creatures, with all
worlds, and he sings his song with all of them.
It is of one such as this that tradition has said
that whoever sings a portion of song each day
is assured of having a share in the world to
come.

יש אשר עולה עם כל השירים הללו
ביחד באגודה אחת, וכולם נותנים את
קולותיהם, כולם יחד מנעימים את זמ-
ריהם, וזה לתוך זה נותן לשד וחיים, קול
ששון וקול שמחה, קול צהלה וקול רנה,
קול חדוד וקול קדושה. שירת הנפש,
שירת האומה, שירת האדם, שירת העו-
לם, כולן יחד מתמזגות בקרבו בכל עת
ובכל שעה. והתמימות הזאת במילואה
עולה היא להיות שירת קודש, שירת אל,
שירת ישראל, בעוצם עזה ותפארתה,
בעוצם אמתה וגדלה, ישראל שיר אל,
שיר פשוט, שיר כפול, שיר משולש, שיר
מרובע. שיר השירים אשר לשלמה,
למלך השלום שלו.

And then there is one who rises with all
these songs in one ensemble, and they all
join their voices. Together they sing their
songs with beauty, each one lends vitality and
life to the other. They are sounds of joy and
gladness, sounds of jubilation and celebration,
sounds of ecstasy and holiness. The song of
the self, the song of the people, the song of
humanity, the song of the world all merge
in her at all times, in every hour. And this
full comprehensiveness rises to become the
song of holiness, the song of God, the song
of *Israel*, in its full strength and beauty, in
its full authenticity and greatness. The name
"*Israel*" stands for *shir el* the song of God. It
is a simple song, a twofold song, a threefold
song, and a fourfold song. It is the Song of
Songs of Solomon, Shlomo which means
peace or wholeness. It is the song of the
Highest One in whom is wholeness.

(אורות הקודש ב, עמ' תמד-תמה)

(Text from Noah Dolgin, http://jewcology.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/4-fold_song_with_Hebrew.pdf.)

Discuss with students each of the four songs that Rav Kook describes. Point out that the song of God, *Shir El*, is made up of all four songs — and Rabbi Kook says that is why we are called *Yisraell* (Israel).

Divide the room into four quadrants:

- The Song of One's Own Life
- The Song of Your People
- The Song of Humanity
- The Song of All Existence

Tell students to go into the quadrant that best represents their own song. While students are still in their quadrants, ask them:

- How does this song express itself in your leadership?
- What do you want others in the community to know about your song and why it is important to you?

Now tell students to walk over to someone who was in a quadrant that represents them least or that they don't fully understand. Have a conversation with that person about their song, and how to craft a Jewish community that meaningfully represents both your songs.



OFF THE PAGE AND INTO LIFE

Ask students to go back into their quadrants. Give out poster board and markers.



Tell students about an upcoming Hillel event that you have not yet started planning. Give them 15 minutes to design the event in a way that expresses the song of their souls, and to sketch out their vision for the event on poster board.

Ask each quadrant to present their vision for the event.

Bring everyone back together to combine elements from all four visions of the event to create an event in which “they all join their voices.” Consciously make sure that the event has elements from all four quadrants. Discuss how this commitment to the needs of all the different souls creates an event “with beauty, [as] each one lends vitality and life to the other.”

Israel



Just for Hillel Professionals: Dissent Within the Jewish Community

This Activity is Great For



Just for Hillel
Professionals

I. Beginning the Conversation

While it is important to wrestle over important questions, Jewish tradition also has a strong value of *achdut Yisrael*, the unity of the Jewish people. Rabbi Avi Weiss has come up with some ground rules for debate within the Jewish community in order to preserve *achdut*.

Do you agree with these ground rules? Would you change them in any way?
Go over this list with a colleague, and then create your own.

Rabbi Avraham Weiss, *Spiritual Activism: A Jewish Guide to Leadership and Repairing the World*, Vermont: Jewish Lights, 2008, p. 33:

- Language must be used with care.
- Dissent is acceptable; delegitimization is not.
- Total material and spiritual commitment to the State of Israel must remain unconditional regardless of any disputes with particular Israeli policies.
- No stream of Judaism has a monopoly on love for the people of Israel, the *Torah* of Israel, and the land of Israel.
- We can learn from one another despite, and perhaps because of, our disagreements. The Orthodox can learn the universalistic agenda of *tikkun olam* (repairing the world) from the non-Orthodox, and the non-Orthodox can learn the importance of ritual and day school education from the Orthodox.
- We should focus our collective energy on reaching the majority of American Jews who are uninvolved with Judaism.

Your List of Ground Rules for Dissent:



Textsheets for Students

Israel

On the next pages, you'll find just the texts mentioned in each of the sections of this curriculum, without the facilitator's guide. Use these sheets if you would like to make copies of the texts for students, while keeping the facilitator's notes just for you!



Israel



Textsheets for Students

Soul Session: Wrestling with God

The Purpose of this World

From *God's Optimism* by Yehoshua November

When some Jews cannot explain the sorrow of their lives
they take a vow of atheism.

Then everywhere they go,

they curse the God they don't believe exists.

But why, why don't they grab Him by the lapels,
pull His formless body down into this lowly world,
and make Him explain.

After all, this is the purpose of creation —
to make this coarse realm a dwelling place
for His presence.



“My Heart Is In the East” – Why?



Yehuda Ha-Levi, “My Heart is in the East”

לְבִי בְּמִזְרָח וְאֲנִי בְּסוֹף מַעֲרָב
אֵיךְ אֶטְעָמָה אֶת אֲשֶׁר אֶכֶל וְאֵיךְ יַעֲרֹב
אֵיכָה אֲשַׁלֵּם נְדָרַי וְאֶסְרִי, בְּעוֹד
צִיּוֹן בְּחֶבֶל אָדוּם וְאֲנִי בְּכַבֵּל עֲרָב
יִקַּל בְּעֵינַי עֶזְב כֹּל טוֹב סְפָרַד, כְּמוֹ
יִקַּר בְּעֵינַי רְאוֹת עֶפְרוֹת דְּבִיר נְחָרָב.

My heart is in the East, yet I am in the utmost West
How can I taste the food I eat, could it bring me any rest?
The vows and oaths I've sworn, can I heed them as I must
When Zion's bound with Christian rope and I with Arab chains?
It seems as easy in my eyes to leave the charms of Spain,
As precious as my eyes would find the ruined Temple's dust.

(Translation by: <http://www.soulandgone.com/2012/11/05/libi-ve-mizrah/>.)

A. The Two Brothers on the Temple Mount

Long before the Temple was built, two brothers lived and farmed on that site [in Jerusalem]. One was married and had a large family, while the other was single. They lived in close proximity to each other, and each worked his land growing wheat. When harvest time arrived, each was blessed with a bountiful crop and piled up his grain for long-term storage. The unmarried brother, observing his good fortune, thought to himself that God had blessed him with more than he needed, whereas his brother, who was blessed with a large family, could surely use more. He arose in the middle of the night and secretly took from his grain and put it in his brother's pile. Similarly, the married brother thought to himself that he was fortunate to have children who will care for him in his old age, while his brother will depend on what he saved. He, too, arose in the middle of the night and quietly transferred grain from his pile to his brother's. In the morning, each pondered why there was no noticeable decrease in his own pile, and so they repeated the transfer the next night. These nocturnal activities went on for several nights, until one night the brothers bumped into each other. In that instant, in the dark of night, the glow of brotherly love lit up the mountain sky; they each understood what the other had been doing and fell into each other's arms in a loving embrace. According to the legend, when God saw that display of brotherly love, He selected the site for His Temple. (retold by Dr. Ari Zivotofsky, https://www.ou.org/torah/machshava/tzarich-iyun/tzarich_iyun_the_two_brothers_and_the_temple_mount/)

“My Heart Is In the East” – Why? (continued)



B. The Hope for What Jerusalem Can Be

This text comes from Isaiah, who lived at the time of the destruction of the first Temple. He lays out a vision of what Jerusalem can — and one day will — be.

- א** הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר חִזָּה יִשְׁעִיהוּ בֶן אֲמוֹץ
עַל יְהוּדָה וִירוּשָׁלַם.
- ב** וְהָיָה בְּאַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים נֶכֶן יְהִי הַר
בֵּית יְהוָה בְּרֹאשׁ הַהָרִים וְנִשְׂא מִגְבְּעוֹת
וְנִהְרֹו אֵלָיו כָּל הַגּוֹיִם.
- ג** וְהָלְכוּ עַמִּים רַבִּים וְאָמְרוּ לָכוּ וְנַעֲלֶה
אֶל הַר יְהוָה אֶל בֵּית אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב וִירְנוּ
מִדְרָכָיו וְנִלְכֶה בְּאַרְחֵיתָיו כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן תֵּצֵא
תוֹרָה וְדָבַר יְהוָה מִירוּשָׁלַם.
- ד** וְשִׁפֵּט בֵּין הַגּוֹיִם וְהוֹכִיחַ לְעַמִּים רַבִּים
וְכִתְּבוּ חֻבּוֹתֵם לְאֵתִים וְחִנִּיתוּתֵיהֶם
לְמַזְמְרוֹת לֹא יֵשׂא גּוֹי אֶל גּוֹי חֶרֶב וְלֹא
יִלְמְדוּ עוֹד מִלְחָמָה.
- 1** The word that Isaiah son of Amoz prophesied concerning Judah and Jerusalem.
- 2** In the days to come,
The Mount of the Lord’s House
Shall stand firm above the mountains
And tower above the hills;
And all the nations
Shall gaze on it with joy.
- 3** And the many peoples shall go and say:
“Come,
Let us go up to the Mount of the Lord,
To the House of the God of Jacob;
That He may instruct us in His ways,
And that we may walk in His paths.”
For instruction shall come forth from Zion,
The word of the Lord from Jerusalem.
- 4** Thus He will judge among the nations
And arbitrate for the many peoples,
And they shall beat their swords into
plowshares
And their spears into pruning hooks:
Nation shall not take up
Sword against nation;
They shall never again know war.

TALK IT OUT

- How does our world compare to the vision that Isaiah presents of Jerusalem?
- What are some of the themes about Jerusalem that you see in these two texts?
- How do you typically think about Jerusalem? How is this way of thinking different from the one you see in this text?



“My Heart Is In the East” — Why? (continued)

“**Judah ha-Levi**” from the **Jewish Encyclopedia** (Richard Gottheil, Max Schloessinger, Isaac Broydé, Judah Ha-Levi, Jewish Encyclopedia, <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/9005-judah-ha-levi>):

Judah ha-Levi does not seem to have been contented in Toledo; for he removed to the (Muslim) city of Cordova. Even here he did not feel at ease... He had long yearned for a new, or rather for the old, home—for the Holy Land... and at length he decided to set out on a journey to Palestine. For himself at least, he wished “to do away with the contradiction of daily confessing a longing and of never attempting to realize it” (Kaufmann, “Jehuda Halevi”); and therefore, on the death of his wife, he bade farewell to daughter, grandson, pupils, friends, rank, and affluence. There was only one image in his heart—Jerusalem:

Oh! had I eagle’s wings, I’d fly to thee, And with my falling tears make moist thine earth.”

After a stormy passage he arrived in Alexandria, where he was enthusiastically greeted by friends and admirers. At Damietta he had to struggle against the promptings of his own heart and the pleadings of his friend Halfon ha-Levi that he remain in Egypt, which also was Jewish soil and free from intolerant oppression. He, however, resisted the temptation to remain there, and started on the tedious land route trodden of old by the Israelitish wanderers in the desert. Again he is met with, worn out, with broken heart and whitened hair, in Tyre and Damascus. Here authentic records fail; but Jewish legend has taken up the broken threads of history and woven them further. It is related that as he came near Jerusalem, overpowered by the sight of the Holy City, he sang his most beautiful elegy, the celebrated “Zionide,” “*Zion ha-lo Tish’ali*.” At that instant he was ridden down and killed by a man on a horse, who dashed forth from a gate (Gedaliah ibn Yahya, “*Shalshet ha-Kabbalah*,” ed. Venice, p. 40b).



Growing Your Leadership: Know Your People



A Fourfold Song, Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook, *Orot Hakodesh*, Volume II, pp.458-459

שיר מרובע There are many levels of song.

יש שהוא שר את שירת נפשו, ובנפשו הוא מוצא את הכל, את מלא הסיפוק הרוחני במילואו.

There is one who sings the song of one's own life, and in herself she finds everything, full spiritual satisfaction.

ויש שהוא שר שירת האומה, יוצא הוא מתוך המעגל של נפשו הפרטית, שאינו מוצא אותה מרוחבת כראוי, ולא מיושבת ישוב אידיאלי, שואף למרומי עז, והוא מתדבק באהבה עדינה עם כללותה של כנסת ישראל, ועמה הוא שר את שיריה, מצר בצרותיה, ומשתעשע בתקוותיה, הוגה דעות עליונות וטהורות על עברה ועל עתידה, וחוקר באהבה ובחכמת לב את תוכן רוחה הפנימי.

There is another who sings the song of his people. He leaves the circle of his own individual self, because he finds it without sufficient breadth, without an idealistic basis. He aspires toward the heights, and he stretches himself with a gentle love to the whole community of Israel. Together with her he sings her songs. He feels grieved in her afflictions and delights in her hopes. He contemplates noble and pure thoughts about her past and her future, and probes with love and wisdom her inner spiritual essence.

ויש אשר עוד תתרחב נפשו עד שיוצא ומתפשט מעל גבול ישראל, לשיר את שירת האדם, רוחו הולך ומתרחב בגאון כללות האדם והוד צלמו, שואף אל תעודתו הכללית ומצפה להשתלמותו העליונה, וממקור חיים זה הוא שואב את כללות הגיונותיו ומחקריו, שאיפותיו וחזיונותיו.

There is another who reaches toward more distant realms, and she goes beyond the boundary of Israel to sing the song of humanity. Her spirit extends to the wider vistas of the majesty of humanity in general, and its noble essence, aspiring towards humanity's general goal and looking forward towards its higher perfection. From this source of life she draws the subjects of her meditation and study, her aspirations and her visions.

ויש אשר עוד מזה למעלה ברוחב יתנשא, עד שמתאחד עם כל היקום כולו, עם כל הבריות, ועם כל העולמים, ועם כולם אומר שירה, זה הוא העוסק בפרק שירה בכל יום שמובטח לו שהוא בן העולם הבא.

Then there is one who rises toward wider horizons, until he links himself with all existence, with all God's creatures, with all worlds, and he sings his song with all of them. It is of one such as this that tradition has said that whoever sings a portion of song each day is assured of having a share in the world to come.



Growing Your Leadership: Know Your People

A Fourfold Song, Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook, *Orot Hakodesh*, Volume II, pp.458-459 (continued)

יש אשר עולה עם כל השירים הללו
ביחד באגודה אחת, וכולם נותנים את
קולותיהם, כולם יחד מנעימים את זמ-
ריהם, וזה לתוך זה נותן לשד וחיים, קול
ששון וקול שמחה, קול צהלה וקול רנה,
קול חדוה וקול קדושה. שירת הנפש,
שירת האומה, שירת האדם, שירת העו-
לם, כולן יחד מתמזגות בקרבו בכל עת
ובכל שעה. והתמימות הזאת במילואה
עולה היא להיות שירת קודש, שירת אל,
שירת ישראל, בעוצם עזה ותפארתה,
בעוצם אמתה וגדלה, ישראל שיר אל,
שיר פשוט, שיר כפול, שיר משולש, שיר
מרובע. שיר השירים אשר לשלמה,
למלך שהשלום שלו.

(אורות הקודש ב, עמ' תמד-תמה)

And then there is one who rises with all these songs in one ensemble, and they all join their voices. Together they sing their songs with beauty, each one lends vitality and life to the other. They are sounds of joy and gladness, sounds of jubilation and celebration, sounds of ecstasy and holiness. The song of the self, the song of the people, the song of humanity, the song of the world all merge in her at all times, in every hour. And this full comprehensiveness rises to become the song of holiness, the song of God, the song of Israel, in its full strength and beauty, in its full authenticity and greatness. The name "Israel" stands for *shir el* the song of God. It is a simple song, a twofold song, a threefold song, and a fourfold song. It is the Song of Songs of Solomon, Shlomo which means peace or wholeness. It is the song of the Highest One in whom is wholeness.

(Text from Noah Dolgin, http://jewcology.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/4-fold_song_with_Hebrew.pdf.)

