

## Lesson 2: The Land of Israel

*Key message/learning objective:* Israel and Jerusalem have a central place in Jewish identity, tradition and practice. Jews have been connected to the land of Israel for thousands of years.

### What to Bring

- Handouts for each student: 2.1, **one of** 2.2a-2.2h, 2.3a, 2.4 [or on-screen display]
- Color printout (one set) of objects visuals, *Israel-2-Objects.ppt* [or on-screen display]

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### 1. Orientation

- Takeaways from last class; questions
- Objective for this class
- Timeline (handout 2.1)

### 2. Biblical Passages

Give each student a brief passage from the Tanach (handouts 2.2a-h\*).

1. B'reishit (Genesis) 13:14-17
2. B'reishit (Genesis) 26:2-4
3. B'reishit (Genesis) 28:13-15
4. D'varim (Deuteronomy) 8:7-9, 26:15
5. D'varim (Deuteronomy) 12:1, 8-11
6. D'varim (Deuteronomy) 26:1-2, 5-10
7. Tehilim (Psalms) 126:1-4
8. Tehilim (Psalms) 137:1-6

Ask the students to carefully read the text, then briefly present:

- What does it say? (okay to read aloud if it's brief)
- What does it mean? (in your own words)
- Why is it important?
- What does it tell us about the Jewish connection to the land of Israel?

### 3. Identifying Objects

Show set of pictures (download [Israel-2-Objects.ppt](#) to print in color or display on screen, slides #1-20). Explain that these are images of various household items and Jewish ritual objects. Distribute **handout 2.3a** and tell the students they will be asked to identify each

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- Biblical quotes and passages are from [Mechon Mamre](#) (Hebrew) and [The Jewish Theological Seminary](#) (English) unless noted otherwise. Hebrew quotes are included to familiarize students with the visual shape of the language and emphasize the original source, not because they are expected to read the Hebrew.

object and write down what it is. Some are common objects, others they may never have seen before. The scale, resolution, picture quality, and level of detail vary, so some may be difficult to identify, while others are pretty obvious. Just write down as many of these as you can name.


When finished, review the images again with the key (2.4b). Students should put a check mark next to items identified correctly. How many did you get?

Ask students to look at all the picture (in PowerPoint, Slide Sorter view). What do they have in common? They all depict Jerusalem in some way—even though they were created by different artists at different times for different purposes. Why is that?

Now show slides #22-24 and ask students to identify them. How do you know that these are the Nike, McDonald's, and Disney brands, respectively? Where does it say "Nike" or "Disney" or "Mickey Mouse"? Does this three-circle logo even look like a mouse?

Similarly, images of Jerusalem buildings or skyline constitute a "brand" associated for centuries with the Jewish people. To Jews, it's a visual identity, as powerful as the Nike "swoosh" or the Mickey Mouse ears. Imagery and relics of Jerusalem invoke Jewish heritage and identity in a way that images of Tel Aviv (or Seattle) never would. Why? What's special about Jerusalem?

#### 4. Other traditional references to Jerusalem

- Wherever they are, Jews face Jerusalem to pray (Talmud: *Berachot* 27a). The *aron kodesh* in every synagogue is positioned so that congregants pray facing Jerusalem.
- In a traditional Jewish wedding, the groom breaks a glass under the *huppah*, reciting the verse from Psalms 137 we saw earlier: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her skill." The broken glass symbolizes our sorrow, even at a time of joy, at the destruction of the Temple and the Jewish exile.
- From the Talmud: "Ten measures of beauty descended to the world, nine were taken by Jerusalem." (*Kiddushin* 49b)
- At the conclusion of the Passover Seder: "Next year in Jerusalem rebuilt"
- Hatikvah (handout 2.4 or [PowerPoint](#) slide, click speaker icon  to start music; [video](#)): Read last line: "To be a free people in our land / The land of Zion and Jerusalem." These words were written in 1878 – how many years is that before the Jews really were a free people in their land? (1878 to 1948, 70 years.) This is an important **nationalist**, not religious, aspiration. (*Very important point; skip others if necessary to allow enough time for this one.*)

Key message: This is not a new phenomenon; Jews have had emotional, spiritual, religious and nationalist ties to Israel and to Jerusalem for thousands of years, even when they were in exile.

#### 5. Discussion

- Would you ever consider going to Israel? Why or why not?
- Would you ever want to live there or study there? Why or why not?

- If you are Jewish but never go to Israel, do you still have a connection to the land? To the people? The language? The culture? The modern state of Israel?
- Explain concept of *aliya*: All Jews are welcome in the State of Israel and granted automatic citizenship<sup>†</sup>. The word literally means “ascent,” going to a higher place. Why would emigrating to Israel be called that?
- Living in Israel is an important *mitzvah*; some sages have said that people who live in the land of Israel “shall be forgiven their sins” or “are promised a place in the world to come.”<sup>\*</sup> Others<sup>§</sup> have gone as far as saying that living in Israel is as important as all other *mizvot* combined. Why might they have said that?
- Besides being a *mitzvah*, there are other reasons that Jews over the centuries have moved to Israel from other parts of the world. What are some of these reasons?
- Is the Jewish tie to the **land** of Israel or the modern **state** of Israel? What is the difference? Would it be possible, at least in theory, to have a Jewish **state** in another part of the world?
- Most Jews today live outside of Israel. What, if any, is the role of Israel in contemporary Jewish identity? [*This last question is key; if necessary, skip other parts of the discussion in order to have enough time for this one.*]

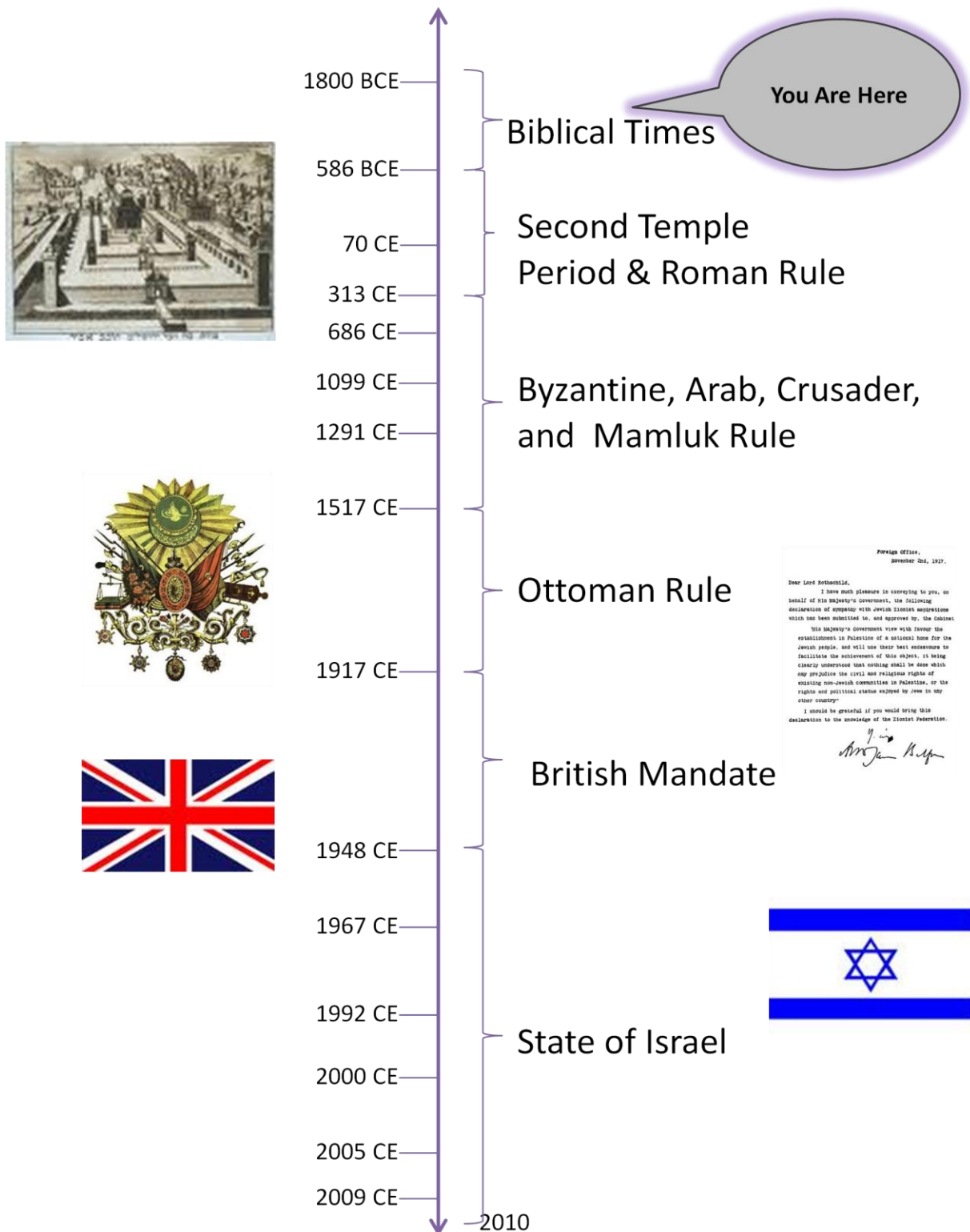
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<sup>†</sup> [http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/MFAArchive/1950\\_1959/Law%20of%20Return%205710-1950](http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/MFAArchive/1950_1959/Law%20of%20Return%205710-1950)

<sup>\*</sup> <http://www.mechon-mamre.org/b/l/13213.htm> מסכת כתובות פרק י"ג דף קי"א

<sup>§</sup> E.g., <http://www.daat.ac.il/daat/vl/sifri/sifrio8.pdf>, 1<sup>st</sup> c. CE;  
<http://kodesh.snunit.k12.il/b/f/f48.htm> תוספתא, עבודה זרה ה' ב', 3<sup>rd</sup> c. CE;  
<http://www.tsel.org/torah/valkutsh/raeh.html> ילקוט שמעוני דברים י"ב רמז תתפה, 11<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> c. CE.

## Timeline: Lesson 2



***B'reishit (Genesis) 13:14-17***

וַיֹּהִי אָמַר אֶל־אַבְרָם אַחֲרֵי הַפָּרֶד־לוֹט מֵעַמּוֹ שָׂא נָא עֵינֶיךָ וּרְאֵה מִן־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־אַתָּה שָׂם  
 צִפְנָה וְנִגְבָּה וְקִדְמָה וְיָמָה׃ כִּי אֶת־כָּל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־אַתָּה רֹאֶה לְךָ אֶתְנַנֶּה וְלִזְרַעְךָ עַד־עוֹלָם׃  
 וְשִׁמְתִּי אֶת־זֶרְעֶךָ כְּעֶפְרַת הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר ׀ אִם־יֻכַּל אִישׁ לִמְנוֹת אֶת־עֶפְרַת הָאָרֶץ גַּם־זֶרְעֶךָ יִמְנֶה׃  
 קוּם הִתְהַלֵּךְ בָּאָרֶץ לְאָרְכָּהּ וּלְרֵחְבָּהּ כִּי לְךָ אֶתְנַנֶּה׃

And the Lord said to Abram, after Lot had parted from him, "Raise your eyes and look out from where you are, to the north and south, to the east and west, for I give all the land that you see to you and your offspring forever. I will make your offspring as the dust of the earth, so that if one can count the dust of the earth, then your offspring too can be counted. Up, walk about the land, through its length and its breadth, for I give it to you."

**B'reishit (Genesis) 26:2-4**

וַיֵּרָא אֵלָיו יְהוָה וַיֹּאמֶר אֵל-תֵּכֶד מִצְרַיִם שָׁכֵן בְּאֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אָמַר אֵלָיךָ: גֵּוֶר בְּאֶרֶץ הַזֹּאת  
וְאֶהְיֶה עִמָּךְ וְאֶבְרַכְךָ כִּי-לֹךְ וּלְזֶרְעֶךָ אֶתֶּן אֶת-כָּל-הָאֲרָצַת הָאֵל וְהִקְמַתִּי אֶת-הַשְּׂבָעָה אֲשֶׁר  
נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי לְאַבְרָהָם אָבִיךָ: וְהִרְבִּיתִי אֶת-זֶרְעֶךָ כְּכּוֹכְבֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם וְנָתַתִּי לְזֶרְעֶךָ אֶת כָּל-הָאֲרָצַת  
הָאֵל וְהִתְבָּרְכוּ בְּזֶרְעֶךָ כָּל גּוֹי הָאֲרֶץ:

The Lord had appeared to him [Abraham] and said, "Do not go down to Egypt; stay in the land which I point out to you. Reside in this land, and I will be with you and bless you; I will assign all these lands to you and to your heirs, fulfilling the oath that I swore to your father Abraham. I will make your heirs as numerous as the stars of heaven, and assign to your heirs all these lands, so that all the nations of the earth shall bless themselves by your heirs.

**B'reishit (Genesis) 28:13-15**

וַהֲגִתָּהּ יְהוָה נֹצֵב עָלָיו וַיֹּאמֶר אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲבֹתֶיךָ וַאֲלֵהִי יִצְחָק הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה  
 שֹׁכֵב עָלֶיהָ לְךָ אֶתְנֶנָּה וְלִזְרַעֲךָ: וְהָיָה זֶרְעֶךָ כְּעֶפְרַת הָאָרֶץ וַיְבָרֶצֶת יָמָה וַקְדָּמָה וַצִּפְנָה וַנִּגְבָּה  
 וַנִּבְרָכוּ בְךָ כָּל־מִשְׁפְּחוֹת הָאָדָמָה וַיְבָרֶעֶךָ: וַהֲגִתָּה אֲנֹכִי עֹמֶד וּשְׁמִרְתִּיךָ בְּכָל אֲשֶׁר־תֵּלֵךְ  
 וַהֲשִׁבְתִּיךָ אֶל־הָאָדָמָה הַזֹּאת כִּי לֹא אֶעֱזָבְךָ עַד אֲשֶׁר אִם־עָשִׂיתִי אֵת אֲשֶׁר־דִּבַּרְתִּי לְךָ:

And the Lord was standing beside him [Jacob] and He said, "I am the Lord, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac: the ground on which you are lying I will assign to you and to your offspring. Your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All the families of the earth shall bless themselves by you and your descendants. Remember, I am with you: I will protect you wherever you go and will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."

***D'varim (Deuteronomy) 8:7-9, 26:15***

כִּי יְהִנֵּה אֱלֹהֶיךָ מִבְּיָאֵךְ אֶל-אֶרֶץ טוֹבָה אֶרֶץ נָחֳלִי מַיִם עֵינֹת וְתַהֲמֹת וְצִאִים בְּבִקְעָה וּבְהָרִ:  
 אֶרֶץ חֹטֶה וְשַׁעֲדָה וְגִפֶּן וְתַאֲנָה וְרִמּוֹן אֶרֶץ-זֵית שֶׁמֶן וְדִבְשׁ: אֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר לֹא בְּמִסְכָּנָה  
 תֹּאכַל-לֶחֶם לֹא-תִחְסֹר כָּל בָּהּ אֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֲבִנֶיהָ בְּרֹזֶל וּמַהֲרֶיהָ תַחְצֹב נְחֹשֶׁת:

For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land, a land with streams and springs and fountains issuing from plain and hill; a land of wheat and barley, of vines, figs, and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey; a land where you may eat food without stint, where you will lack nothing; a land whose rocks are iron and from whose hills you can mine copper.

הַשְׁקִיפָה מִמַּעֲוֹן קֹדֶשְׁךָ מִן-הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבֵרַךְ אֶת-עַמְּךָ אֶת-יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֵת הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר נָתַתָּה לָנוּ  
 כַּאֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתָּ לְאֲבוֹתֵינוּ אֶרֶץ זָבַת חֶלֶב וְדִבְשׁ:

Look down from Your holy abode, from heaven, and bless Your people Israel and the soil You have given us, a land flowing with milk and honey, as You swore to our fathers.



***D'varim (Deuteronomy) 12:1, 8-11***

אֵלֶּה הַחֻקִּים וְהַמִּשְׁפָּטִים אֲשֶׁר תִּשְׁמְרוּן לַעֲשׂוֹת בְּאֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נָתַן יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲבֹתֵינוּ לָךְ  
לְרִשְׁתָּהּ כָּל-הַיָּמִים אֲשֶׁר-אַתֶּם חַיִּים עַל-הָאָדָמָה:

לֹא תַעֲשׂוּן כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר אָנֹחֲנוּ עֹשִׂים פֶּה הַיּוֹם אִישׁ כָּל-הַיָּשָׁר בְּעֵינָיו: כִּי לֹא-בְאַתֶּם עַד-עַתָּה  
אֶל-הַמְּנוּחָה וְאֶל-הַנַּחֲלָה אֲשֶׁר-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ נָתַן לָךְ: וְעַבַּרְתֶּם אֶת-הַיַּרְדֵּן וְיִשְׁבַתֶּם בְּאֶרֶץ  
אֲשֶׁר-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם מִנְחִיל אֶתְכֶם וְהָנִיחַ לָכֶם מִכָּל-אִיְבֵיכֶם מִסָּבִיב וְיִשְׁבַתֶּם-בְּטָח: וְהָיָה  
הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר-יִבְחַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם בּוֹ לְשֹׁכֵן שָׁמוֹ שָׁם שְׁמָה תָבִיאוּ אֶת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי מְצַוֶּה  
אֶתְכֶם עוֹלֹתֵיכֶם וְזִבְחֵיכֶם מַעֲשֵׂי־חֻקֵּיכֶם וְתִרְמַת יֶדְכֶם וְכֹל מִבְּתֵר נְדָרֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר תִּדְּרוּ לַיהוָה:

These are the laws and rules that you must carefully observe in the land that the Lord, God of your fathers, is giving you to possess, as long as you live on earth. [...]. You shall not act at all as we now act here, every man as he pleases, because you have not yet come to the allotted haven that the Lord your God is giving you. When you cross the Jordan and settle in the land that the Lord your God is allotting to you, and He grants you safety from all your enemies around you and you live in security, then you must bring everything that I command you to the site where the Lord your God will choose to establish His name: your burnt offerings and other sacrifices, your tithes and contributions, and all the choice votive offerings that you vow to the Lord.

*D'varim (Deuteronomy) 26:1-2, 5-10*

וְהָיָה כִּי-תָבוֹא אֶל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נָתַן לָךְ נַחֲלָה וַיִּרְשָׁתָהּ וַיֵּשְׁבֶתָ בָּהּ:  
וְלָקַחְתָּ מִרְאשִׁית | כָּל-פְּרִי הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר תִּבְרֵא מֵאֲרֻצְךָ אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נָתַן לָךְ  
וְשָׂמְתָּ בַטֶּנָּא אֶל-הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשָׁכֵן שְׁמוֹ שָׁם:

וְעָנִיתָ וְאָמַרְתָּ לִפְנֵי | יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֲרָמִי אֲבִי נִיָּרַד מִצְרַיִמָּה וַיְגֵר שָׁם בְּמִתִּי  
מֵעֹט וַיְהִי-שָׁם לִגְוִי גָדוֹל עֲצוּם וְרָב: וַיִּרְעוּ אֹתָנוּ הַמִּצְרַיִם וַיַּעֲנוּנוּ וַיִּתְּנוּ עָלֵינוּ עֲבָדָה  
קָשָׁה: וַנִּצְעֵק אֶל-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וַיִּשְׁמַע יְהוָה אֶת-קִלְנוּ וַיֵּרָא אֶת-עַנְיָנוּ  
וְאֶת-עַמְלָנוּ וְאֶת-לַחֲצָנוּ: וַיּוֹצֵאֵנוּ יְהוָה מִמִּצְרַיִם בְּיָד חֲזָקָה וּבִזְרֹעַ נְטוּיָה וּבְמָרָא גָדֹל  
וּבְאֹתוֹת וּבְמִפְתִּים: וַיְבֵאֵנוּ אֶל-הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה וַיִּתֵּן-לָנוּ אֶת-הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת אֶרֶץ זָבַת חֶלֶב  
וְדָבָשׁ: וְעַתָּה הִנֵּה הֵבֵאתִי אֶת-רְאשִׁית פְּרִי הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר-נָתַתָּה לִּי יְהוָה וְהִנְחִיתוּ לִפְנֵי  
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִיתָ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ:

When you enter the land that the Lord your God is giving you as a heritage, and you possess it and settle in it, you shall take some of every first fruit of the soil, which you harvest from the land that the Lord your God is giving you, put it in a basket and go to the place where the Lord your God will choose to establish His name. [...]

You shall then recite as follows before the Lord your God: "My father was a fugitive Aramean. He went down to Egypt with meager numbers and sojourned there; but there he became a great and very populous nation. The Egyptians dealt harshly with us and oppressed us; they imposed heavy labor upon us. We cried to the Lord, the God of our fathers, and the Lord heard our plea and saw our plight, our misery, and our oppression. The Lord freed us from Egypt by a mighty hand, by an outstretched arm and awesome power, and by signs and portents. He brought us to this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. Wherefore I now bring the first fruits of the soil which You, O Lord, have given me."

***Tehilim (Psalms) 126:1-4\****

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת  
 בָּשׁוּב יְהוָה אֶת־שִׁיבַת צִיּוֹן הָיִינוּ כְּחֹלְמִים:  
 אֲזִי יִמְלֵא שְׁחֹק פִּינוֹ וְלִשְׁנֵינוּ רִנָּה  
 אֲזִי יֵאמְרוּ בְּגוֹיִם הַגְדִּיל יְהוָה לַעֲשׂוֹת עִם־אֱלֹהִים:  
 הַגְדִּיל יְהוָה לַעֲשׂוֹת עִמָּנוּ הָיִינוּ שִׂמְחִים:  
 שׁוּבָה יְהוָה אֶת־שְׁבוּתָנוּ (שְׁבִיתָנוּ) כְּאֶפְיָקִים בְּנֶגֶב:

A song of ascents.

When the Lord brought back the captives to Zion,  
 we were like dreamers.

Our mouths were filled with laughter,  
 our tongues with songs of joy.  
 Then it was said among the nations,  
 "The Lord has done great things for them."

The Lord has done great things for us,  
 and we are filled with joy.

Restore our fortunes, Lord,  
 like streams in the Negev.

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\* English translation modified from New International Version,  
<http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=psalm%20126&version=NIV>

***Tehilim (Psalms) 137:1-6<sup>†</sup>***

עַל נְהָרוֹת אֲבָכְנוּ וְשָׁמַרְנוּ אֶת־צִיּוֹן:  
עַל־עֲרָבִים בְּתוֹכָהּ תָּלִינוּ כַּנְּרוֹתֵינוּ:  
כִּי שֵׁם שְׂאֵלֵנוּ שׁוּבֵינוּ דְּבַר־יְשׁוּר וְתוֹלְלֵנוּ שְׁמִיחָה שִׁירוֹ לָנוּ מִנְּשִׁיר צִיּוֹן:  
אֵיךְ נִשְׁרִיר אֶת־שִׁיר־יְהוָה עַל אֲדָמַת נֶכֶד:  
אִם־אֲשַׁכַּח יְרוּשָׁלַם תִּשְׁכַּח יְמִינִי:  
תִּדְבֹּק־לְשׁוֹנִי אֶל־חֶפֶז אִם־לֹא אֶזְכְּרֶכִי אִם־לֹא אֶעֱלֶה אֶת־יְרוּשָׁלַם עַל רֹאשׁ שְׁמִיחָתִי:

By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion.

Upon the willows in the midst thereof we hanged up our harps.

For there they that led us captive asked of us words of song, and our tormentors asked of us mirth: 'Sing us one of the songs of Zion.'

How shall we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land?

If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her skill.

Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I remember thee not; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.

<sup>†</sup> English translation modified from <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Bible/Psalms137.html>

## ***Object Identification***

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1. \_\_\_\_\_

11. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

12. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

13. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

14. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

15. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

16. \_\_\_\_\_

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17. \_\_\_\_\_

8. \_\_\_\_\_

18. \_\_\_\_\_

9. \_\_\_\_\_

19. \_\_\_\_\_

10. \_\_\_\_\_

20. \_\_\_\_\_

## ***Object Identification Key***

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- |                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1. Passover Haggadah              | 11. Huppah                             |
| 2. Kuddush cup                    | 12. Tzedakah box                       |
| 3. Kippa                          | 13. Matza cover                        |
| 4. Wedding band                   | 14. Shabbat candlesticks               |
| 5. Passover Seder plate           | 15. Ketubah (Jewish marriage contract) |
| 6. Door sign (or name place card) | 16. Matzah plate                       |
| 7. Matchbox holder                | 17. Salt & pepper shakers              |
| 8. Hanukkiya (Hanukkah menorah)   | 18. Challah cover for shabbat          |
| 9. Mezzuzah                       | 19. Tallit & kippa                     |
| 10. Havdalah set                  | 20. Challah board & knife              |

## ***Hatikvah***

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Play clip [[YouTube](#), [download](#)] & view lyrics [[PowerPoint](#)]

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.	Kol od balevav p'nimah  Nefesh Yehudi homiyah  Ulfa'atey mizrach kadimah  Ayin l'tzion tzofiyah  Od lo avdah tikvatenu  Hatikvah bat shnot alpayim  L'hiyot am chofshi b'artzenu  Eretz Tzion v'Yerushalayim	כל עוד בלבב פנימה  נפש יהודי הומיה  ולפאתי מזרח קדימה  עין לציון צופיה  עוד לא אבדה תקותנו  התקוה בת שנות אלפים  להיות עם חופשי בארצנו  ארץ ציון וירושלים
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By Naftali Herez Imber, 1878

Source: <http://www.stateofisrael.com/anthem/>  
<http://www.nationalanthems.info/il.htm>