



# ISRAEL

## Pocket Facts

Produced by  
**StandWithUs**

# Regional Map



**Morocco**

**Tunisia**

*Mediterranean*

**Algeria**

**Libya**

Israel is 1/800  
the size of the  
Arab world.

**Mali**

**Niger**

**Chad**

**Burkina  
Faso**

**Benin**

**Nigeria**

**Ghana**

**Togo**

**Central African  
Republic**

**Cameroon**

**Equatorial  
Guinea**

**Gabon**

**Democratic  
Republic  
of the Congo**

Arab League countries

Non-Arab countries

\*Iran is not an Arab country, but its regime is deeply involved in the politics and conflicts of the region.





# Israel's Size

Israel's territory is 8,019 square miles.

**New Jersey**  
8,729 sq. mi.



**California**  
158,302 sq. mi.



Israel is smaller than New Jersey, which is 8,729 square miles. Israel can fit into the state of California 19 times.

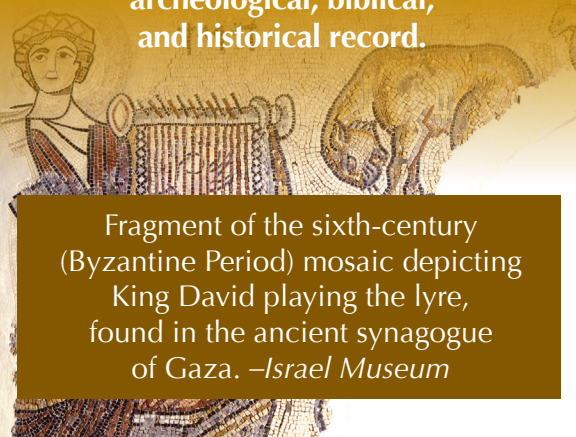
# Israel Represents Justice, Resilience, and Hope.

It is a nation of indigenous people who overcame 1,900 years of oppression to achieve freedom in their ancestral home.

Despite their flaws and challenges, Israelis find countless ways to make the world a better place.

# Continuous Jewish Presence in the Land of Israel

Jews are indigenous to Israel and have maintained a continuous presence for over 3,000 years according to archeological, biblical, and historical record.

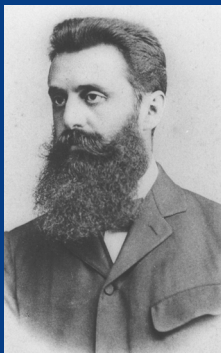


Fragment of the sixth-century (Byzantine Period) mosaic depicting King David playing the lyre, found in the ancient synagogue of Gaza. —*Israel Museum*

# Zionism:

## Liberation and Self-Determination

Zion is an age-old name for Jerusalem and the land of Israel. Zionism is the liberation movement of the Jewish people who sought to restore their freedom and independence in their ancestral homeland.



Theodor Herzl founded the modern Zionist movement in 1897, but the dream of restoration and return had always been at the core of Judaism and Jewish identity. Jews always returned when they could and once again became—and remained—the majority in Jerusalem in the mid-1800s.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sir Martin Gilbert, "Jerusalem: A Tale of One City," *The New Republic*, Nov. 14, 1994, [www.mefacts.com/cache/html/wall-ruling\\_/11362.htm](http://www.mefacts.com/cache/html/wall-ruling_/11362.htm); Dore Gold, *The Fight for Jerusalem*, p. 120



“Jews prefer being prisoners in Jerusalem to enjoying the freedom they could acquire elsewhere. ...The love of the Jews for the Holy Land which they lost...is unbelievable.”

*–Jesuit Father Michael Naud on his pilgrimage to the Holy Land, 1674*

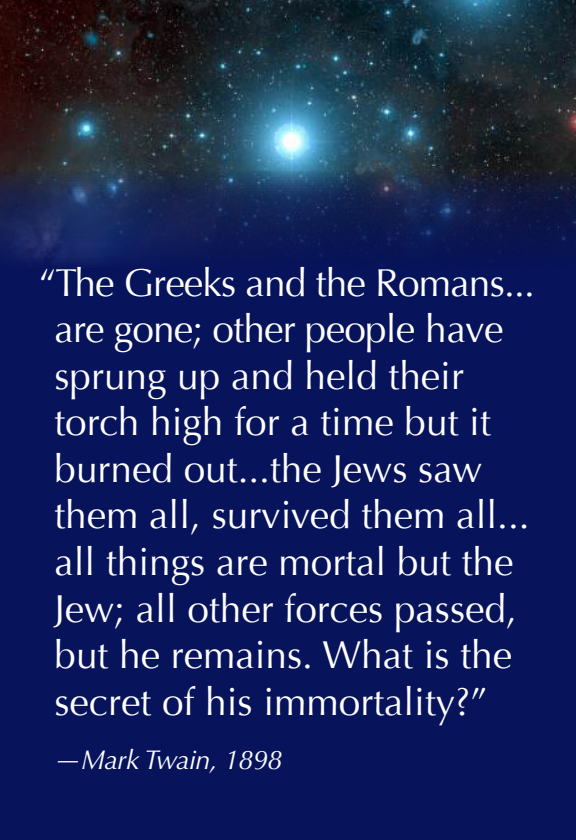


“Who can challenge the  
rights of the Jews in  
Palestine? Good Lord,  
historically it is really  
your country.”

–*Yusef Diya al-Khalidi,*  
*Mayor of Jerusalem, 1899*



Jews on Mount of Olives, 1893



"The Greeks and the Romans...  
are gone; other people have  
sprung up and held their  
torch high for a time but it  
burned out...the Jews saw  
them all, survived them all...  
all things are mortal but the  
Jew; all other forces passed,  
but he remains. What is the  
secret of his immortality?"

—Mark Twain, 1898

# Number of Countries by Religious Majority

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67	Roman Catholic
49	Islamic
49	Protestant
14	Eastern Orthodox
3	Hindu
1	Jewish

# World Religions

**Christianity:** 2 billion people

**Islam:** 1.6 billion people

**Hinduism:** 1 billion people

**Buddhism:** 376 million people

**Judaism:** 14 million people



# Restoring the Jewish Homeland

In the mid-1800s, a new energy seized the Jews living in Israel, then called "Palestine."\* With help from philanthropists like Sir Moses Montefiore and donations from ordinary Jews around the world, Jews branched out from their cities and began purchasing land and building farms, villages, and schools.

By 1854, Jews were the largest religious group in Jerusalem; by 1870, they were once again the majority of the city's population.

\* Palestine was the name given to the region when the Romans conquered the over 1,000-year-old Jewish nation of Judea in the first century.

# Tel Aviv

Tel Aviv celebrated its  
100-year anniversary in 2009.



# **Palestinian-Arab Refugees from the War by Arab States Against Israel in 1948**

**In 1948, 160,000 Arabs who lived within Israel's borders accepted Israel's invitation to choose peace and become Israeli citizens. Between 472,000 and 750,000 Palestinian Arabs left what became Israel for several reasons:**

1. To escape the war.<sup>1</sup>
2. Wealthy Arab leaders left, and, without leadership, Arab communities fell apart.<sup>2</sup>
3. A minority left because Arab leaders encouraged them to get out of the way of the Arab armies, promising a quick victory.<sup>3</sup>
4. Exaggerated accounts of Israeli atrocities caused panic.<sup>4</sup>
5. A minority were forced from their homes, mostly in strategic areas vital to the survival of the Jewish state.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1-5</sup> Benny Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem: 1947-1949*



# Unique Situation of Palestinian Refugees

Tens of millions of refugees from other war-torn areas in the world during this period resettled in other countries, but neighboring Arab states, with the exception of Jordan, would not resettle the Palestinian Arabs despite their shared history, language, and religion. Instead, Arab governments confined them in refugee neighborhoods, refused them citizenship, and then used their plight as a political weapon against Israel.

*“The Arab nations do not want to solve the Arab refugee problem. They want to keep it an open sore, as an affront against the UN and as a weapon against Israel.”* —Sir Alexander Galloway, former director of UNRWA in Jordan, April 1952

*“Since 1948 Arab leaders...have used the Palestine people for selfish political purposes. This is...criminal.”* —King Hussein of Jordan, 1960

*“All the Arab countries want to keep this problem looking like an open wound.”*

—Ana Liria-Franch, regional representative in Cairo for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, 2003

# Jewish Refugees from Arab Countries

After Israel's rebirth in 1948, over 850,000 Jews fled the rising persecution or were expelled from Arab and Muslim lands. They became homeless even though some of their communities were over 2,000 years old. A fledgling country of approximately 650,000 inhabitants, Israel nonetheless began absorbing not only survivors of the Holocaust but also Jews fleeing from Arab countries.



# Declining Jewish Population in Middle Eastern Countries

	1948	2016
Algeria	140,000	50
Egypt	75,000	100
Iran	100,000	9,000
Iraq	150,000	0
Lebanon	20,000	200
Libya	38,000	0
Morocco	265,000	2,300
Syria	30,000	100
Tunisia	105,000	1,100
Yemen	55,000	50

<b>Total</b>	<b>978,000</b>	<b>12,900</b>
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**In the wake of the 1948 war, over 850,000 Jews were forced to leave Arab countries where Jews had lived for two millennia.**

Sources: Sergio Dellapergola, *World Jewish Population, 2016*, No. 17, 2016, Berman Institute North American Jewish Data Bank and "Fact Sheet: Jewish Refugees from Arab Countries," *Jewish Virtual Library*, September 2012, at [www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/talking/jew\\_refugees.html](http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/talking/jew_refugees.html)

# The Security Barrier

- There was no security barrier along the West Bank prior to the violence of the second intifada, when suicide bombers could simply walk into Israel and murder civilians in the streets.
- Construction of the barrier began in 2002. It is 97 percent barrier and 3 percent wall.
- There are many countries that have security barriers at their disputed borders, including Northern Ireland, India, Thailand, Kuwait, Cyprus, and South Korea.

# Israel's Security Threats

- Iranian leaders call for Israel to be “wiped off the map,” are developing ballistic missiles, and are strongly suspected of continuing to have nuclear ambitions.
- Iran- and Qatar-supported proxies Hamas and Hezbollah are building larger military arsenals that threaten Israel from the north and south.
- The Palestinian Authority in the West Bank has been unable or unwilling to eradicate terrorist groups or stop terrorist plots and arms smuggling.



# The Hamas Charter\* Is Violent and Racist:

**“Israel will exist and will continue to exist until Islam will obliterate it, just as it obliterated others before it.”**

When Israel left Gaza, Hamas was elected the new governing party.

The founding document of Hamas calls for the destruction of Israel and the murder of Jews. (You can read the translation of the charter online.)

As long as this remains the guiding document for Hamas or the Palestinian leadership, the dream of peace remains impossible.

\* The Hezbollah and PLO charters are also violent and racist.

# Teaching Peace

Unfortunately Palestinian leaders are still teaching racism and violence to children in mosques and schools and on TV, and jihad against Israel is still promoted.\* For there to be peace in the Middle East, peace must be taught.



**\*See Palestinian Media Watch at:  
[www.pmw.org.il](http://www.pmw.org.il) and also [www.memri.org](http://www.memri.org)**

# Creating the First Palestinian Arab State in History

Historically, there has never been a Palestinian Arab state or sovereignty over the West Bank, Gaza, or Israel.

The first autonomous Palestinian government, the Palestinian Authority (PA), was created in the 1993 Oslo Accords. Today the PA governs 95 to 98 percent of the Palestinian population in the West Bank.

Israel has repeatedly offered to give up parts of the ancient Jewish homeland, where Jews have had a continuous presence for millennia, for the sake of peace and facilitating Palestinian self-determination.

Unfortunately, Palestinian leaders have rejected every offer and refused to recognize that the Jewish people have the same rights.



# West Bank Palestinian Communities:

About 95 to 98 percent of the Palestinian population lives on 40 percent of the land. Over 50 percent is virtually unpopulated.



Nablus, the largest Palestinian city in the West Bank, is surrounded by undeveloped land.

Most Palestinians in the West Bank live in built-up cities and towns like Ramallah, Nablus, and Tulkarm.



Ramallah – the political and economic center of the Palestinian Authority

# Israelis in the West Bank

- After Israel captured the West Bank from Jordan in 1967, Jordan refused Israel's offer to exchange much of the land for peace.
- Israelis built West Bank settlements to make the rest of their territory harder to attack, go back to where their families and ancestors had lived before being expelled, and other reasons. The area, also known as Judea and Samaria, is the cradle of Jewish civilization.
- Built-up areas of Israeli settlements cover roughly 2 percent of West Bank land.<sup>1</sup>
- Eighty percent of Israeli settlers live in communities located close to the line between Israel and the West Bank. The rest live further away.
- Settlements remain a controversial issue inside and outside of Israel.

<sup>1</sup> Mahmoud Abbas, June 2009, at [www.memri.org/bin/latestnews.cgi?ID=SD244009](http://www.memri.org/bin/latestnews.cgi?ID=SD244009); B'Tselem reports 1.7% at [www.btselem.org/english/press\\_releases/20020513.asp](http://www.btselem.org/english/press_releases/20020513.asp)

# Human Rights in Israel

- Israel safeguards religious liberty for all faiths.
- The LGBTQ community has won protections against discrimination.
- Education is encouraged equally for both men and women.
- Fifty-three percent of women are in the workforce, similar to the percentage in the U.S.
- Israel is a democratic country that guarantees free speech and assembly as well as fair and open trials.
- Countless Israelis dedicate their lives to promoting social and economic justice in their country.

# Arab Citizens of Israel

- In 1948, the 160,000 Palestinian Arabs who remained within Israel's borders became citizens of Israel.
- Three Israeli Arabs were elected to the first Knesset, and there were 13 Israeli Arab members of Knesset in 2018.
- Today, 1.8 million Arabs are Israeli citizens.
- Arab Supreme Court Justice Salim Joubran oversaw Israel's national elections in 2015.
- Israel has enacted affirmative action policies to help minorities achieve full social and economic equality.



# Israel's Humanitarian Programs

- Israel set up the first advanced field hospital in earthquake-ravaged Haiti, provided assistance to Hurricane victims in Puerto Rico, and saved the lives of thousands of Syrian refugees.
- Israel's Ethiopian airlifts helped 90,000 African Jews escape persecution.
- Israel's Save A Child's Heart (SACH) is the largest program in the world for children from poor nations who need heart surgery.
- Israel was one of the few countries that took in Vietnamese refugees in the late 1970s.
- Israel conducts nearly 300 courses annually for emerging nations and has trained almost 200,000 participants in 130 countries, from Albania to Zimbabwe, in desert agriculture, water management, desertification prevention, emergency and disaster medicine, refugee absorption, and employment programs.

# Israel's Innovations— Did You Know?

- Israel has the second-highest per capita rate of university degrees, following Canada.
- Israel has the highest ratio of trained scientists and technicians, with 135 per 10,000 citizens, compared to 81 in the U.S., over 70 in Japan, and less than 60 in Germany.
- Next to Silicon Valley, Israel has the highest concentration of high-tech companies in the world.
- Israel has the third-largest number of NASDAQ-listed companies in the world, behind the U.S. and China.

## **Israeli Inventions:**

- Most of the Windows NT operating system (Microsoft-Israel)
- AOL Instant Messenger and chat room technologies
- The first PC anti-virus software
- Voice mail technology
- Electro-optic chips and nanotechnology
- Drip irrigation
- The Pentium 4 microprocessor for desktop computers
- The Centrino processor for laptop computers
- Community-driven navigation software (Waze)



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