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# Reconnecting, Learning and Finding Hope Post October 7

וַיֵּצֵא חֹטֵר מִגֹּזֵעַ יֵשׁוּׁי וַיִּצְרַח מִשָּׁרְשָׁיו יִפְרֶה. - ישעיהו יא, א

"But a shoot shall grow out from the stump of Jesse, a twig shall sprout from his roots" -

Isaiah 11:1 (Haftarah for Yom Ha'Atzmaut)

## Introduction:

For so many of us, since October 7, 2023, our world has been shattered. It is difficult to find solid ground to stand on, let alone branches of hope to look up to. Nevertheless, in the midst of this pain, we believe it imperative to seek sources of strength and hope. The Jewish People and Israel would not be here today had we given in to despair. We are here because we have continued to cling to hope in defiance of our circumstances. It is by grasping onto hope, whilst acknowledging and giving space to our pain, we believe, that we may heal, grow, survive and thrive.

In April 1948, less than three years after the end of World War II and the Holocaust, as the British Mandate for Palestine was coming to an end, and as the Jewish community in the Land of Israel found themselves in the midst of a battle for survival, their elected leadership made the bold decision to grasp onto hope. They decided that they would move forward with their age-old dream and they would prepare for the establishment of a Jewish State in the Land of Israel. One month later, in May 1948, their hope came to fruition and

they established the State of Israel. During that month they wrote a document: The Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel, commonly known as "Megilat Ha'Atzmaut" (The Scroll of Independence).

That document captured their hopes and dreams - their justifications for the establishment of the state and their shared vision for its future. It was signed by the 37 members of the People's Council: men and women, religious and secular, Ashkenazi and Sephardi, young and old. Though they disagreed on much, they all agreed to sign this one scroll - this act of consensus itself being an incredible, if not miraculous, achievement. At the time, in the midst of Israel's War of Independence, they did not know if the state would survive, or if they themselves would survive. So they made sure to put a copy of the scroll in a safe in the bank - so that even if they or the state would not survive, their vision would remain.

And here we are, 76 years later. We are here. The State of Israel is here. Though the 37 signatories of Israel's Declaration of Independence are no longer

with us in person, their vision and legacy live on. To what degree has their vision come true? To what degree is it still relevant for today and to what extent do current circumstances demand renewed vision?

Today, over 76 years after Israel's establishment, Israel and the Jewish people face perhaps the greatest pain and challenges we have faced since 1948 - pain and challenges from both within and without. Under these circumstances, we find it invaluable to return to that one scroll that changed

everything: Israel's Declaration of Independence. By coming together, by sitting around the table together, just as our spiritual ancestors did 76 year ago (and theirs before them), by discussing, arguing, agreeing and disagreeing with love and respect, perhaps we can come up with a new hope, a new vision, a new consensus, that can help us to survive and thrive for the next 76 years - and beyond.

### How to Use this Guide:

This guide is made up of five sessions, with each session focused on a different part of Israel's Declaration of Independence and a specific theme related to issues and questions relevant to this very moment. Each session includes a handout with texts and questions for participants, as well as suggestions and guidelines for facilitators. Feel free to use all eight sessions, or some of them, or even just one of them. Feel free to mix and match, combine, or change the order of the sessions. They are designed so that each can stand alone, or be used in succession to one another. Each session is designed to be about one hour long, but can be adapted to be longer or shorter. The sessions are designed primarily for adult learning or high-level teen learning. They are designed to be a source for learning, connection, discussion, reflection and hope.

### Outline of the Sessions:

1. "In the Land of Israel..." (Paragraphs 1-3) - The significance of the Land of Israel and our relationship to it.
2. "Freedom, justice and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel" (Paragraph 13) - Envisioning justice in an imperfect world.
3. "Peace and good neighborliness" (Paragraphs 16-17) - Hoping for peace in the shadow of war.
4. "The Jewish people throughout the Diaspora" (Paragraph 18) - Global Jews and the State of Israel: yesterday, today and tomorrow.
5. "Placing our trust in the Rock of Israel" (Paragraph 19) - Various sources of faith and strength, unity in diversity.

# Additional Background on Israel's Declaration of Independence

## History:

On November 29, 1947, the United Nations General Assembly voted in favor of Resolution 181, which called for the end of the British Mandate in Palestine and the establishment of independent Jewish and Arab states. Among other things, it also called for each state to make a declaration of independence. Generally speaking, the Jews of Palestine welcomed the resolution, while the Arabs of Palestine rejected it, and war erupted between the Jewish residents of Palestine - who were supported by global Jewish/Zionist communities among others - and the Arab residents of Palestine - who were supported by neighboring Arab states among others. Meanwhile, in April 1948, Great Britain decided that it would indeed end its mandate in Palestine and would formally evacuate its last soldiers and officials by May 15, 1948, essentially leaving behind a power vacuum. The Jewish People's Council - the executive leadership of the elected representatives of the Jewish community in Palestine - debated whether they should move ahead and declare a Jewish state, knowing that doing so would likely provoke a backlash and declaration of war from neighboring Arab states. At the end of April, three weeks before the end of the British Mandate, they had not yet made a final decision on whether or not to declare a state, but they established a committee to secretly prepare a draft of a potential declaration of independence. Over the course of three weeks various individuals put together various drafts of a potential declaration, and it was only in the final days and hours leading up to May 15 that the final decision was made to declare independence, and that a final draft was approved.

At 4 p.m. on Friday, May 14, 1948, the leaders of the People's Council together with several hundred invited guests, gathered in Tel Aviv to declare the establishment of the Jewish State, which would

go into effect that night at midnight, May 15. They decided to officially declare on Friday afternoon, before the start of Shabbat, rather than wait until May 15 itself, which was a Saturday. The 664 words of the final version of the declaration were read aloud by David Ben Gurion, and were ultimately written down onto a scroll that was signed by 37 members of the People's Council, which became the provisional government of the new State of Israel.

Within hours of the declaration, the United States and others recognized the new State of Israel, while its Arab neighbors formally declared war. Yet the State of Israel survived, and so did its Declaration of Independence, and its 664 words continue to be discussed and debated today.

## Structure:

Israel's Declaration of Independence is composed of 19 paragraphs and 37 signatures. The first 10 paragraphs focus on the justification for the establishment of a Jewish State in the Land of Israel; paragraph 11 contains the explicit declaration of the establishment of the state of Israel; paragraphs 12-14 include commitments of the new state; paragraphs 15-18 consist of appeals to the United Nations, the Arab residents of Israel, neighboring countries, and Jews around the world; paragraph 19 is the conclusion. The signatures are those of 37 members of the People's Council: men and women, religious and secular, liberal and conservative, young and old. It is worthwhile to note that the initial draft of the declaration was actually based on the American Declaration of Independence, and certain elements of its structure and language still remain in the final draft.

## Legal and Social Significance:

The official name of the document is “The Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel”, though in English it is usually referred to as “Israel’s Declaration of Independence” and in Hebrew it is commonly referred to as “Megilat Ha’Atzmaut” (The Scroll of Independence), because it was ultimately written and signed on a scroll in a way that recalls other important scrolls (megilot) from the Jewish tradition.

It is important to note that Israel’s Declaration of Independence is a declarative document rather than a legal one. Like the American Declaration of Independence and others, it was declared before the state and its legal institutions existed, and it was never formally passed as a law by the Knesset. It’s also important to note, that Israel never succeeded in completing or ratifying a constitution (despite the promise to do so in paragraph 12), yet the Knesset has passed a number of “Basic Laws” - laws which can be amended by an absolute majority of Knesset members, and outline some of the basic structures and principles of the Government of Israel. In absence of a constitution, therefore, Israeli society and even Israel’s Supreme Court have in many ways used the declaration as a sort of constitutional-like

document. The declaration was given a certain legal weight in the 1990’s, when the Knesset passed the Basic Law: Human Dignity and Liberty, which stated that: “Fundamental human rights in Israel are founded upon recognition of the value of the human being, the sanctity of human life, and the principle that all persons are free; these rights shall be upheld in the spirit of the principles set forth in the Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel.”

Israel’s Declaration of Independence has been studied, discussed, interpreted and debated endlessly inside Israel and around the world. The declaration - or parts of it - have often been used by various protest movements inside and out of Israel. Whatever one’s opinion is of the declaration of its various parts, it serves a basis for discussion. What parts of the declaration resonate with us? What parts perhaps do not? Which of the declaration’s promises and visions have come true, and which perhaps not? What parts of the declaration do we see as still relevant for Israel today, or which part require renewal or change? Just as the original signatories 37 years ago, we may not agree on everything, but perhaps at least we can sit together and maybe even come up with a new shared vision for the future.

### For additional background information and resources see:

<https://catalog.archives.gov.il/en/chapter/the-declaration-of-independence/>

<https://www.gov.il/en/pages/declaration-of-establishment-state-of-israel>

<https://www.the-megillah.com/resources>

[https://www.bina.org.il/english\\_articles/we-declare-israeli-talmud-tractate-independence/](https://www.bina.org.il/english_articles/we-declare-israeli-talmud-tractate-independence/)



## About BINA:

established in 1996, BINA: The Jewish Movement for Social Change is an Israeli-based Jewish organization dedicated to strengthening Israel through limud (study), ma'ase (action) and kehilla (community), emphasizing Jewish culture and values of tikkun olam (repairing the world). For nearly 30 years, BINA has worked to advance Jewish pluralism and democracy in Israel and the Jewish world. BINA designs and implements social and educational programs including year-long study and volunteer programs, workshops and seminars, life cycle ceremonies and public events that empower Jews to take ownership of their Jewish identity and make a positive difference in their local community, in Israeli society, in the Jewish world and beyond. BINA reaches tens of thousands of Israelis and Jews from all over the world annually, and we have branches in cities and towns across Israel.

Learn more: [www.bina.org.il](http://www.bina.org.il).

## About WZO:

**Securing the future and uniqueness of the Jewish people by promoting and strengthening Jewish identity and the connection to Israel in the spirit of our Declaration of Independence and the Jerusalem Plan.**

The Zionist Enterprises Department strives to strengthen Zionist and Jewish morality by assimilating the values of tikkun olam and social justice by emulating Herzl's model society. We believe that communal work for all the citizens of Israel and for each person is a central pillar of Zionism. Although the start of the Zionist movement sought to find a balm for the suffering of the Jewish people, today, the role of Zionism has naturally progressed towards reducing the suffering of every person in Israel and to act in the spirit of the Zionist leaders who love peace, justice and our people.

The department offers activities that promote the ideas of tikkun olam and social justice, the development of social entrepreneurship, the aspiration to reduce disparities, bringing the periphery closer to the center and the promotion of tolerance in Israeli society.

# The Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel

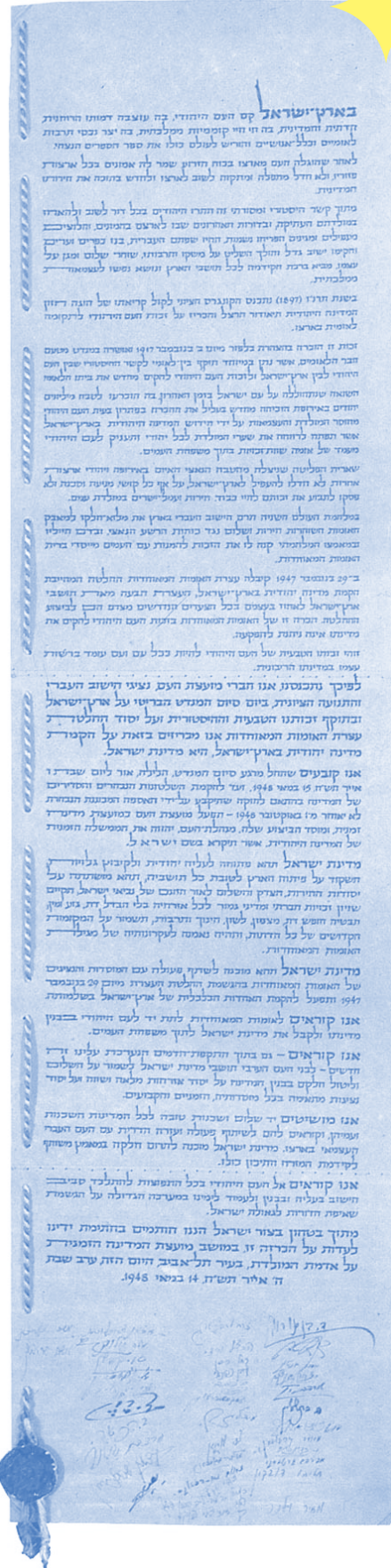
1. ERETZ-ISRAEL [(Hebrew) - the Land of Israel, Palestine] was the birthplace of the Jewish people. Here their spiritual, religious and political identity was shaped. Here they first attained to statehood, created cultural values of national and universal significance and gave to the world the eternal Book of Books

2. After being forcibly exiled from their land, the people kept faith with it throughout their Dispersion and never ceased to pray and hope for their return to it and for the restoration in it of their political freedom.

3. Impelled by this historic and traditional attachment, Jews strove in every successive generation to re-establish themselves in their ancient homeland. In recent decades they returned in their masses. Pioneers, ma'pilim [(Hebrew) - immigrants coming to Eretz-Israel in defiance of restrictive legislation] and defenders, they made deserts bloom, revived the Hebrew language, built villages and towns, and created a thriving community controlling its own economy and culture, loving peace but knowing how to defend itself, bringing the blessings of progress to all the country's inhabitants, and aspiring towards independent nationhood.

4. In the year 5657 (1897), at the summons of the spiritual father of the Jewish State, Theodore Herzl, the First Zionist Congress convened and proclaimed the right of the Jewish people to national rebirth in its own country.

5. This right was recognized in the Balfour Declaration of the 2nd November, 1917, and reaffirmed in the Mandate of the League of Nations which, in particular, gave international sanction to the historic connection between the Jewish



people and Eretz-Israel and to the right of the Jewish people to rebuild its National Home.

6. The catastrophe which recently befell the Jewish people - the massacre of millions of Jews in Europe - was another clear demonstration of the urgency of solving the problem of its homelessness by re-establishing in Eretz-Israel the Jewish State, which would open the gates of the homeland wide to every Jew and confer upon the Jewish people the status of a fully privileged member of the comity of nations.

7. Survivors of the Nazi holocaust in Europe, as well as Jews from other parts of the world, continued to migrate to Eretz-Israel, undaunted by difficulties, restrictions and dangers, and never ceased to assert their right to a life of dignity, freedom and honest toil in their national homeland.

8. In the Second World War, the Jewish community of this country contributed its full share to the struggle of the freedom- and peace-loving nations against the forces of Nazi wickedness and, by the blood of its soldiers and its war effort, gained the right to be reckoned among the peoples who founded the United Nations.

9. On the 29th November, 1947, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution calling for the establishment of a Jewish State in Eretz-Israel; the General Assembly required the inhabitants of Eretz-Israel to take such steps as were necessary on their part for the implementation of that resolution. This recognition by the United Nations of the right of the Jewish people to establish their State is irrevocable. This right is the natural right of the Jewish people to be masters of their own fate, like all other nations, in their own sovereign State.

10. ACCORDINGLY WE, MEMBERS OF THE PEOPLE'S COUNCIL, REPRESENTATIVES OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF ERETZ-ISRAEL AND OF THE ZIONIST MOVEMENT, ARE HERE ASSEMBLED ON THE DAY OF THE

TERMINATION OF THE BRITISH MANDATE OVER ERETZ-ISRAEL AND, BY VIRTUE OF OUR NATURAL AND HISTORIC RIGHT AND ON THE STRENGTH OF THE RESOLUTION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HEREBY DECLARE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A JEWISH STATE IN ERETZ-ISRAEL, TO BE KNOWN AS THE STATE OF ISRAEL.

11. WE DECLARE that, with effect from the moment of the termination of the Mandate being tonight, the eve of Sabbath, the 6th Iyar, 5708 (15th May, 1948), until the establishment of the elected, regular authorities of the State in accordance with the Constitution which shall be adopted by the Elected Constituent Assembly not later than the 1st October 1948, the People's Council shall act as a Provisional Council of State, and its executive organ, the People's Administration, shall be the Provisional Government of the Jewish State, to be called "Israel".

12. THE STATE OF ISRAEL will be open for Jewish immigration and for the Ingathering of the Exiles; it will foster the development of the country for the benefit of all its inhabitants; it will be based on freedom, justice and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel; it will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its citizens irrespective of religion, race or sex; it will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education and culture; it will safeguard the Holy Places of all religions; and it will be faithful to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

13. THE STATE OF ISRAEL is prepared to cooperate with the agencies and representatives of the United Nations in implementing the resolution of the General Assembly of the 29th November, 1947, and will take steps to bring about the economic union of the whole of Eretz-Israel.

14. WE APPEAL to the United Nations to assist the Jewish people in the building-up of its State and to receive the State of Israel into the comity of nations.



15. WE APPEAL - in the very midst of the onslaught launched against us now for months - to the Arab inhabitants of the State of Israel to preserve peace and participate in the upbuilding of the State on the basis of full and equal citizenship and due representation in all its provisional and permanent institutions.

16. WE EXTEND our hand to all neighbouring states and their peoples in an offer of peace and good neighbourliness, and appeal to them to establish bonds of cooperation and mutual help with the sovereign Jewish people settled in its own land. The State of Israel is prepared to do its share in a common effort for the advancement of the entire Middle East.

17. WE APPEAL to the Jewish people throughout the Diaspora to rally round the Jews of Eretz-Israel in the tasks of immigration and upbuilding and to stand by them in the great struggle for the realization of the age-old dream - the redemption of Israel.

18. PLACING OUR TRUST IN THE "ROCK OF ISRAEL", WE AFFIX OUR SIGNATURES TO THIS PROCLAMATION AT THIS SESSION OF THE PROVISIONAL COUNCIL OF STATE, ON THE SOIL OF THE HOMELAND, IN THE CITY OF TEL-AVIV, ON THIS SABBATH EVE, THE 5TH DAY OF IYAR, 5708 (14TH MAY, 1948).

Source: <https://www.gov.il/en/pages/declaration-of-establishment-state-of-israel>.

This is the official translation of "The Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel" by the Government of Israel, except for the word "citizens" in paragraph 13 which was mistranslated as "inhabitants" in the official translation.



# ההכרזה על הקמת מדינת ישראל

זוהי זכותו הטבעית של העם היהודי להיות ככל עם ועם עומד ברשות עצמו במדינתו הריבונית.

לפיכך נתכנסנו, אנו חברי מועצת העם, נציגי הישוב העברי והתנועה הציונית, ביום סיום המנדט הבריטי על ארץ-ישראל, ובתוקף זכותנו הטבעית וההיסטורית ועל יסוד החלטת עצרת האומות המאוחדות אנו מכריזים בזאת על הקמת מדינה יהודית בארץ ישראל, היא מדינת ישראל.

אנו קובעים שהחל מרגע סיום המנדט, הלילה, אור ליום שבת ו' אייר תש"ח, 15 במאי 1948, ועד להקמת השלטונות הנבחרים והסדירים של המדינה בהתאם לחוקה שתיקבע ל-ידי האספה המכוננת הנבחרת לא יאוחר מ-1 באוקטובר 1948 - תפעל מועצת העם כמועצת מדינה זמנית, ומוסד הביצוע שלה, מנהלת-העם, יהווה את הממשלה הזמנית של המדינה היהודית, אשר תיקרא בשם ישראל.

מדינת ישראל תהא פתוחה לעליה יהודית ולקיבוץ גלויות; תשקוד על פיתוח הארץ לטובת כל תושביה; תהא מושתתה על יסודות החירות, הצדק והשלום לאור חזונם של נביאי ישראל; תקיים שיוון זכויות חברתי ומדיני גמור לכל אזרחיה בלי הבדל דת, גזע ומין; תבטיח חופש דת, מצפון, לשון, חינוך ותרבות; תשמור על המקומות הקדושים של כל הדתות; ותהיה נאמנה לעקרונותיה של מגילת האומות המאוחדות. מדינת ישראל תהא מוכנה לשתף פעולה עם המוסדות והנציגים של האומות המאוחדות בהגשמת החלטת העצרת מיום 29 בנובמבר 1947 ותפעל להקמת האחדות הכלכלית של ארץ-ישראל בשלמותה.

אנו קוראים לאומות המאוחדות לתת יד לעם היהודי בבנין מדינתו ולקבל את מדינת ישראל לתוך משפחת העמים. אנו קוראים - גם בתוך התקפת-הדמים הנערכת עלינו זה חדשים - לבני העם הערבי תושבי מדינת ישראל לשמור על שלום וליטול חלקם בבנין המדינה על יסוד אזרחות מלאה ושווה ועל יסוד נציגות מתאימה בכל מוסדותיה, הזמניים והקבועים.

אנו מושיטים יד שלום ושכנות טובה לכל המדינות השכנות ועמיהן, וקוראים להם לשתוף פעולה ועזרה הדדית עם העם העברי העצמאי בארצו. מדינת ישראל מוכנה לתרום חלקה במאמץ משותף לקידמת המזרח התיכון כולו.

אנו קוראים אל העם היהודי בכל התפוצות להתלכד סביב הישוב בעליה ובבנין ולעמוד לימינו במערכה הגדולה על הגשמת שאיפת הדורות לגאולת ישראל.

מתוך בטחון בצור ישראל הננו חותמים בחתימת ידינו לעדות על הכרזה זו, במושב מועצת המדינה הזמנית, על אדמת המולדת, בעיר תל-אביב, היום הזה, ערב שבת, ה' אייר תש"ח, 14 במאי 1948.

בארץ-ישראל קם העם היהודי, בה עוצבה דמותו הרוחנית, הדתית והמדינית, בה חי חיי קוממיות ממלכתית, בה יצר נכסי תרבות לאומיים וכלל-אנושיים והוריש לעולם כולו את ספר הספרים הנצחי.

לאחר שהוגלה העם מארצו בכוח הזרוע שמר לה אמונים בכל ארצות פזוריו, ולא חדל מתפילה ומתקווה לשוב לארצו ולחדש בתוכה את חירותו המדינית.

מתוך קשר היסטורי ומסורתי זה חתרו היהודים בכל דור לשוב ולהאחז במולדתם העתיקה; ובדורות האחרונים שבו לארצם בהמונים, וחלוצים, מעפילים ומגינים הפריחו נשמות, החיו שפתם העברית, בנו כפרים וערים, והקימו ישוב גדל והולך השליט על משקו ותרבותו, שוחר שלום ומגן על עצמו, מביא ברכת הקידמה לכל תושבי הארץ ונושא נפשו לעצמאות ממלכתית.

בשנת תרנ"ז (1897) נתכנס הקונגרס הציוני לקול קריאתו של הוגה חזון המדינה היהודית תיאודור הרצל והכריז על זכות העם היהודי לתקומה לאומית בארצו.

זכות זו הוכרה בהצהרת בלפור מיום ב' בנובמבר 1917 ואושרה במנדט מטעם חבר הלאומים, אשר נתן במיוחד תוקף בין-לאומי לקשר ההיסטורי שבין העם היהודי לבין ארץ-ישראל ולזכות העם היהודי להקים מחדש את ביתו הלאומי.

השוואה שנתחוללה על עם ישראל בזמן האחרון, בה הוכרעו לטבח מיליונים יהודים באירופה, הוכיחה מחדש בעליל את ההכרח בפתרון בעית העם היהודי מחוסר המולדת והעצמאות על-ידי חידוש המדינה היהודית בארץ-ישראל, אשר תפתח לרווחה את שערי המולדת לכל יהודי ותעניק לעם היהודי מעמד של אומה שוות-זכויות בתוך משפחת העמים.

שארית הפליטה שניצלה מהטבח הנאצי האיום באירופה ויהודי ארצות אחרות לא חדלו להעפיל לארץ-ישראל, על אף כל קושי, מניעה וסכנה, ולא פסקו לתבוע את זכותם לחיי כבוד, חירות ועמל-ישרים במולדת עמם.

במלחמת העולם השנייה תרם הישוב העברי בארץ את מלוא-חלקו למאבק האומות השוחרות חירות ושלום נגד כוחות הרשע הנאצי, ובדם חייליו ובמאמצו המלחמתי קנה לו את הזכות להמנות עם העמים מייסדי ברית האומות המאוחדות ב-29 בנובמבר 1947 קיבלה עצרת האומות המאוחדות החלטה המחייבת הקמת מדינה יהודית בארץ-ישראל; העצרת תבעה מאת תושבי ארץ-ישראל לאחוז בעצמם בכל הצעדים הנדרשים מצדם הם לביצוע ההחלטה. הכרה זו של האומות המאוחדות בזכות העם היהודי להקים את מדינתו אינה ניתנת להפקעה.

# Session 1: “In the Land of Israel”

## Exploring the Significance of the Land of Israel and Our Relationship to It Focusing on Israel’s Declaration of Independence, Paragraphs 1-3 Facilitator’s Guide / Lesson Plan

### SESSION OVERVIEW

The purpose of this session is to create a space for participants explore and reflect on their relationships with Israel and how that relationship might have changed over time - and perhaps also to share their concerns about the future of Israel and their relationship with it - while finding comfort in community, and knowing that Jews have had concerns along with complex, diverse and dynamic relationships with Israel for thousands of years. The purpose of this session is NOT to convince participants that their relationship with Israel needs to be a certain way (or, for example, that they all need to move to Israel), but to give space and validity to the different relationships that exist and for concerns and hope for the future.

Additional Background on the Main Text: Paragraphs 1-3 are the opening paragraphs of Israel’s Declaration of Independence, which describe the relationship of the Jewish People to the Land of Israel over time, setting up justification for the establishment of a Jewish State specifically in the Land of Israel. The first paragraph is generally understood to refer to the Jewish presence in the Land of Israel in ancient times, while the second paragraph focuses on the relationship of Jews outside of the Land to the Land, and the third paragraph talks about Jews who returned to the Land of Israel in the past and in more recent times since the advent of modern Zionism.

### REQUIRED MATERIALS

- Copies of the session handout.
- Paper and pens/pencils for writing activities.
- Method for playing a recording(s) of the song “They say there is a land”, e.g.:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VYP3a4yGVk0>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zEG-AcszgpQ>



## OUTLINE OF ACTIVITIES

NOTE: The amount of time you spend on each activity will depend on how much time you have with the group. Also - each one of the activities on its own is somewhat optional. So feel free to build a combination of activities that works for you and for your group, but make sure to allow enough time for a closing discussion.

### 1. Opening / Framing / Setting Safe Space

Welcome everyone to the session. In this session we're going to explore our relationship(s) with the Land of Israel and how that relationship may or may not have changed over time, especially since October 7. We all have our own relationship with Israel, and we are all experiencing these challenging times differently, and that's okay. We're here today to learn, reflect and share with one another, and perhaps gain some comfort and hope in the process.

Because of the sensitivity of the times and of the topic, it may be helpful to set a few "safe space guidelines", such as:

- Make no assumptions. Do not assume others' experiences or feelings are the same as yours. Use "I" statements instead of "you" or "we all" statements.

- Make no judgments. Do not impose value-judgments on others or on what they share, but respond with attentiveness, curiosity, and care. Our aim here isn't to convince anyone of anything, but to listen and learn from one another.

- Step up / step back. Notice if you're talking a lot or not talking a lot. Make room for others but don't be afraid to speak up if you feel there's something that needs to be said.

If not all members of the group know each other, allow them to introduce themselves. (Optional: as part of introducing themselves, ask each person to share one word association they have with the Land of Israel, or share the first time they visited Israel if ever.)

### 2. Individual Journaling Activity

Give everyone a few minutes (3-4) to journal / write quietly starting with the following prompt: "The Land of Israel is..." The journaling can be in paragraph form, a list, free association or drawing - whatever works best.

When the time is up, invite anyone who would like to share part of what they wrote.

Feel free to allow for a few minutes of discussion, reflection, relating and responding respectfully to one another.

### 3. All Together - Reading and Discussing Paragraphs 1-3

Pass out the handout and invite a volunteer to read Paragraphs 1-3 aloud. (Suggestion: Have a second volunteer read it again, to let the words sink in a little more.) (Optional: Especially if this group hasn't explored the document before, feel free to share a little bit of background about the Declaration of Independence.)

Then feel free to discuss any or all of the questions on the handout with the group as a springboard for discussion.

### 4. Havruta (Pair or Small Group) - Reading & Discussing Numbers 13 (Story of the Scouts)

Paragraphs 1-3 describe the Jewish people's relationship to the Land of Israel over time. Now we're going to look at an ancient text (from "The Book of Books") that also has to do with the Jewish's people's relationship to the Land of Israel, as well as complexities in that relationship.

Divide the group into pairs or small groups, or let them divide themselves. Give them several minutes (5-10) to read the text and discuss the questions on the handout. You might also want to ask each group to pick a representative to share something from their small group with the whole group.

Come back together. Invite individuals to share something that they discussed or that came up in their discussions. Feel free to open this up to a broader discussion with the whole group, allowing individuals to respectfully reflect or respond to others.

## 5. All Together - Listening and Discussing “They Say There is a Land”

We looked at an ancient text about the Jewish people’s relationship to the Land of Israel. Now we’re going to explore a modern and more personal text.

Play a recording of “They Say There is a Land” and invite the participants to follow along or read the translation while the song is playing. Invite them to mark parts of the song that stand out to them or take notes while listening.

After listening, invite participants to share their initial thoughts or impressions about the song - the words and/or the music. Then feel free to discuss any or all of the questions on the handout with the group as a springboard for discussion.

(Note to the Facilitator: Shaul Tchernichovsky ultimately did immigrate to the Land of Israel - in 1931. Feel free to read more about Shaul Tchernichovsky online.)

## 6. Conclusion

Invite individuals to share how this experience was for them. Or - go around in a circle and invite each person to share one word about how they are feeling right now.

Feel free to share your own closing words or messages - Perhaps about how we all have different relationships with Israel, and those relationships may be changing over time, and that’s fine. Jews have had complex, diverse and dynamic relationships with Israel for thousands of years, and have often had concerns about the future of the Jewish people in the Land of Israel. But we’ve made it this far, so hopefully there is still hope for us yet.



## Session 2: “Freedom, justice and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel”

Envisioning justice in an imperfect world.

Focusing on Israel’s Declaration of Independence, Paragraph 13  
**Facilitator’s Guide / Lesson Plan**

### SESSION OVERVIEW

The purpose of this session is to take a step back from the pain and concerns of the moment - without ignoring or disregarding them - and think about the bigger picture, reconnecting with the vision upon which the State of Israel was built, and considering our own visions and hopes for the future of Israel, in spite of all the challenges. And maybe by doing so we can step a little bit from a place of frustration and despair to a place of greater hope and resilience.

The purpose of this session is NOT to create a debate about Israeli politics and policy, but rather create a space for personal and group reflection, sharing, visioning, and hoping. Disagreements may come up, but our goal here is not to resolve them, but to see what we can agree on - and perhaps agree to disagree on for now. For this purpose it may be helpful to focus on the personal and the emotional rather than the political or ideological - as well hopes for the future rather than what is or isn’t in the present. It may be worthwhile to note that Israel’s Declaration of Independence is not technically a legal document but rather a visionary and aspirational document - and as with any vision and aspiration, it is always a work in progress.

### REQUIRED MATERIALS

- Copies of the session handout.
- Paper and pens/pencils for writing activities

## OUTLINE OF ACTIVITIES

NOTE: The amount of time you spend on each activity will depend on how much time you have with the group. Also - each one of the activities on its own is somewhat optional. So feel free to build a combination of activities that works for you and for your group, but make sure to allow enough time for a closing discussion.

### 1. Opening / Framing / Setting Safe Space

Welcome everyone to the session. In this session we're going to explore some of the hopes and visions upon which Israel was founded, as well as our own hopes and visions for Israel. We might all have different perspectives and visions and that's okay. We're here today to learn, reflect and share with one another, and perhaps gain some inspiration and hope in the process. Because of the sensitivity of the times and of the topic, it may be helpful to set a few "safe space guidelines", such as:

- Make no assumptions. Do not assume others' experiences or feelings are the same as yours. Use "I" statements instead of "you" or "we all" statements.
- Make no judgments. Do not impose value-judgments on others or on what they share, but respond with attentiveness, curiosity, and care. Our aim here isn't to convince anyone of anything, but to listen and learn from one another.
- Step up / step back. Notice if you're talking a lot or not talking a lot. Make room for others but don't be afraid to speak up if you feel there's something that needs to be said.

If not all members of the group know each other, allow them to introduce themselves. (Optional: as part of introducing themselves, ask each person to share one word association they have with the word "justice".)

### 2. Individual-Pair-Share Writing Activity

Let's start with a little creative exercise. Let's imagine that we are the ones tasked with writing part of Israel's Declaration of Independence -

specifically the part focused on the hopes and goals for the State of Israel.

First - Ask everyone to take a few minutes (2-3) to write quietly and complete the sentence "The State of Israel will...". (What will the state be? What will it do?).

Then - In pairs, take a few minutes (3-5) to share your visions with each other, and then see if you can write a shared vision together that you both agree on, that brings together both of your visions. Then - all together - invite some pairs to share their shared visions, and/or how was the experience trying to come up with a shared vision.

### 3. All Together - Reading and Discussing Paragraph 13

Now we're going to together look at the vision statement that Israel's founders came up with. (It may be worthwhile to note that there were 37 diverse members of the People's Council, who represented the diverse Jewish residents of the Land of Israel, who, within a limited period of time, in the midst of war, had to come up with a shared vision statement - and they managed to come up with something. This is what they came up with...)

Pass out the handout and invite a volunteer to read Paragraph 13 aloud. (Suggestion: Have a second volunteer read it again, to let the words sink in a little more.) Then feel free to discuss any or all of the questions on the handout with the group as a springboard for discussion. You might also want to ask: How does it affect your understanding of this document, knowing that it was written even in the midst of a war of survival?

### 4. Havruta (Pair or Small Group) - Reading & Discussing Quotes of "Prophets of Israel."

Paragraph 13 states that the State of Israel "will be based on freedom, justice and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel." There were many different prophets of Israel with different visions of freedom, justice and peace. Now we're going to look at some of them.

Divide the group into pairs or small groups, or let them divide themselves. Give them several minutes (5-10) to read the texts and discuss the questions on the handout. You might also want to ask each group to pick a representative to share something from their small group with the whole group. (Option: You can assign different texts to different groups and then have them report back on the texts that they read, or you can have all groups read all texts.)

Come back together. Invite individuals to share something that they discussed or that came up in their discussions. Feel free to open this up to a broader discussion with the whole group, allowing individuals to respectfully reflect or respond to others. Feel free to refer back to some of the guiding questions.

### **5. Optional - Individual Writing and Sharing - Hope Statement**

We may not have the power to shape the whole State of Israel, but we can hope, and each do our small part to try to make hope into reality. Invite everyone to take a few minutes (2-3) to write a “hope statement” for Israel, starting with the words “May the State of Israel...”. Then invite volunteers to share all or part of their statement and anyone who wants can say “Amen.”

### **6. Optional - Brief Conclusion**

Invite individuals to share how this experience was for them. Or - go around in a circle and invite each person to share one word about how they are feeling right now.

Feel free to share your own closing words or messages - Perhaps about how it might be hard to talk about freedom, justice and peace when Israel is in the midst of war and the world feels so unjust, and how it might feel impossible to come up with a shared vision with so much disagreement among us, but if Israel’s founders were able to do it 76 years ago - and Israel’s prophets were able to thousands of years ago - maybe there is hope for us too.



## Session 3: “Peace and good neighborliness”

Envisioning justice in an imperfect world.  
Focusing on Israel’s Declaration of Independence, Paragraph 13  
**Facilitator’s Guide / Lesson Plan**

### SESSION OVERVIEW

The purpose of this session is to take a step back from the pain and concerns of the moment - without ignoring or disregarding them - and to create a space for imagining a better reality, despite the challenges of the present.

The purpose of this session is NOT to start a debate about Israeli politics and policy, but rather to create a space for personal and group reflection, sharing, visioning, and hoping. For this purpose it may be helpful to focus on the personal and the emotional rather than the political or ideological - as well hopes for the future rather than what is or isn’t in the present. It may be worthwhile to note that Israel’s Declaration of Independence is not technically a legal document but rather a visionary and aspirational document - and as with any vision and aspiration, it is always a work in progress.

### REQUIRED MATERIALS

- Copies of the session handout.
- Paper and pens/pencils (maybe colored pencils or crayons) for drawing activity.
- Method for playing a recording(s) of the song “Here (Kan)”,  
e.g.: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UWPoCDRkoHU>



## OUTLINE OF ACTIVITIES

NOTE: The amount of time you spend on each activity will depend on how much time you have with the group. Also - each one of the activities on its own is somewhat optional. So feel free to build a combination of activities that works for you and for your group, but make sure to allow enough time for a closing discussion.

### 1. Opening / Framing / Setting Safe Space

Welcome everyone to the session. In this session we're going to explore some challenging but important questions about war and peace. We all have different perspectives and these questions might affect each of us differently, and that's okay. We're here today to learn, reflect and share with one another, and perhaps gain some hope in the process. Because of the sensitivity of the times and of the topic, it may be helpful to set a few "safe space guidelines", such as:

- Make no assumptions. Do not assume others' experiences or feelings are the same as yours. Use "I" statements instead of "you" or "we all" statements.
- Make no judgments. Do not impose value-judgments on others or on what they share, but respond with attentiveness, curiosity, and care. Our aim here isn't to convince anyone of anything, but to listen and learn from one another.
- Step up / step back. Notice if you're talking a lot or not talking a lot. Make room for others but don't be afraid to speak up if you feel there's something that needs to be said.

If not all members of the group know each other, allow them to introduce themselves. (Optional: as part of introducing themselves, ask each person to share one word association they have with the word "peace".)

### 2. Individual Drawing Activity

Let's start with a little creative exercise. Ask everyone to take a few minutes (2-3) to quietly draw an image / artistic representation of "peace". It can be abstract or non-abstract, specific or

general, with or without words. Then - invite a few volunteers to share their image. Optional - Ask participants to share how the experience of trying to draw "peace" was for them.

### 3. All Together - Reading and Discussing Paragraphs 16-17

Pass out the handout and invite a volunteer to read Paragraphs 16-17 aloud. (Suggestion: Have a second volunteer read it again, to let the words sink in a little more.) (Optional: Especially if this group hasn't explored the document before, feel free to share a little bit of background about the Declaration of Independence and its context, i.e., that it was written in the midst of war.) Then feel free to discuss any or all of the questions on the handout with the group as a springboard for discussion. You might also want to ask: How does it affect your understanding of this document, knowing that it was written in the midst of a war? And/or: How does it feel to read these words today? What emotions does it evoke for you?

### 4. Havruta (Pair or Small Group) - Reading & Discussing Biblical Quotes

Divide the group into pairs or small groups, or let them divide themselves. Give them several minutes (5-10) to read the texts and discuss the questions on the handout. You might also want to ask each group to pick a representative to share something from their small group with the whole group. Come back together. Invite individuals to share something that they discussed or that came up in their discussions. Feel free to open this up to a broader discussion with the whole group, allowing individuals to respectfully reflect or respond to others. Feel free to refer back to some of the guiding questions.

### 5. All Together - Listening and Discussing - "Kan (Here)" (Song)

Play a recording of the song "Kan (Here)" and invite the participants to follow along or read the translation while the song is playing. Invite them

to mark parts of the song that stand out to them or take notes while listening. After listening, invite participants to share their initial thoughts or impressions about the song - the words and/or the music. Then feel free to discuss any or all of the questions on the handout with the group as a springboard for discussion.

### 6. Optional - Brief Conclusion

Invite individuals to share how this experience was for them. Or - go around in a circle and invite each person to share one word about how they are feeling right now.

Feel free to share your own closing words or messages - Perhaps about how it might be hard to talk about peace when Israel is in the midst of war, but if Israel's founders were able to do it 76 years ago, maybe there is hope for us too.



## Session 4: “The Jewish people throughout the Diaspora”

Global Jews and the State of Israel: yesterday, today and tomorrow.  
Focusing on Israel’s Declaration of Independence, Paragraph 18  
**Facilitator’s Guide / Lesson Plan**

### SESSION OVERVIEW

The purpose of this session is to explore the relationship between global Jews and Israel - and where we each see ourselves in that relationship, as individuals and/or as a community. The idea here is to have an open discussion and reflection, without prescribing or dictating any specific answers. Although hopefully there will be a focus on how we can best support one another with kindness, care and respect, especially in these difficult times and beyond.

Note on Paragraph 18: This short, penultimate paragraph is very relevant and important, especially to the relationship between Israel and global Jews, although it is often glanced over when people read or discuss the declaration. Even the fact that this paragraph exists in the declaration - and that it was important for the authors to include - is significant. It is important to note that the paragraph doesn’t explicitly call on global Jews to immigrate to Israel, but more vaguely appeals to them to “rally around the Jews of Eretz-Israel in the tasks of immigration and upbuilding” - which could very well include supporting immigration and other efforts in Israel from afar, politically or financially or otherwise. It is also important to note that the declaration doesn’t include specific promises or commitments from the State of Israel to global Jews (except for the promise that it will be open for Jewish immigration), but it’s also worthwhile to recognize that the state of these two Jewish communities and the relationship between them were very different in 1948, and it would be worthwhile to consider what the State of Israel and Israeli Jews can do to support global Jews today.

Note on Ben Gurion-Blaustein Statements: These statements (approved respectively by the Government of Israel and the AJC) were issued largely in response to concerns of American Jews following statements made by Israeli government officials that American Jews should move to Israel or be loyal to Israel. They served for many years as a sort of semi-official contract between American Jews and the Government of Israel. Is it time perhaps for a new contract between global Jews and the State of Israel?

### REQUIRED MATERIALS

- Copies of the session handout.
- Paper and pens/pencils for writing activity.

## OUTLINE OF ACTIVITIES

NOTE: The amount of time you spend on each activity will depend on how much time you have with the group. Also - each one of the activities on its own is somewhat optional. So feel free to build a combination of activities that works for you and for your group, but make sure to allow enough time for a closing discussion.

### 1. Opening / Framing / Setting Safe Space

Welcome everyone to the session. In this session we're going to explore some challenging but important questions about the relationship between global Jews and Israel. We all have different perspectives and that's okay. We're here today to learn, reflect and share with one another, and perhaps gain some hope in the process. Because of the sensitivity of the times and of the topic, it may be helpful to set a few "safe space guidelines", such as:

- Make no assumptions. Do not assume others' experiences or feelings are the same as yours. Use "I" statements instead of "you" or "we all" statements.
- Make no judgments. Do not impose value-judgments on others or on what they share, but respond with attentiveness, curiosity, and care. Our aim here isn't to convince anyone of anything, but to listen and learn from one another.
- Step up / step back. Notice if you're talking a lot or not talking a lot. Make room for others but don't be afraid to speak up if you feel there's something that needs to be said.

If not all members of the group know each other, allow them to introduce themselves. (Optional: as part of introducing themselves, ask each person to share the last time they were in Israel - or read the news from Israel, or spoke to someone in Israel.)

### 2. Optional - Individual Drawing Activity

Let's start with a little creative exercise. Ask everyone to take a few minutes (2-3) to quietly draw an image / artistic representation of the

relationship between Jews in Israel and Jews outside of Israel, as they see it today. It can be abstract or non-abstract, specific or general, with or without words. Then - invite a few volunteers to share their image and explain it. Optional - Ask participants to share how the experience of trying to draw the image was for them.

### 3. All Together - Reading and Discussing Paragraph 18

Pass out the handout and invite a volunteer to read Paragraph 18 aloud. (Suggestion: Have a second volunteer read it again, to let the words sink in a little more.) (Optional: Especially if this group hasn't explored the document before, feel free to share a little bit of background about the declaration) Then feel free to discuss any or all of the questions on the handout with the group as a springboard for discussion.

### 4. Havruta (Pair or Small Group) - Reading & Discussing Ben Gurion & Blaustein Statements

Divide the group into pairs or small groups, or let them divide themselves. Give them several minutes (5-10) to read the texts and discuss the questions on the handout. (Option: You can have all of the groups read both texts, or have half the groups read the Ben Gurion text and have read the Blaustein text.) You might also want to ask each group to pick a representative to share something from their small group with the whole group. Come back together. Invite individuals to share something that they discussed or that came up in their discussions. Feel free to open this up to a broader discussion with the whole group, allowing individuals to respectfully reflect or respond to others. Feel free to refer back to some of the guiding questions.

### 5. Optional Writing Activity - New Appeals to Global and Israeli Jews

Give everyone a few minutes (2-3) to quietly and individually write their own new version of Paragraph 18, applicable to current times and

perhaps the future, starting with the statement: “We call on the Jewish people throughout the world / outside of Israel to...”. Then give them a few minutes (2-3) to quietly write their completion of the statement “We call on the Jewish people in Israel to...” . (Optional: Give participants a few minutes to share their statements in pairs or small groups - the same ones as before, or different ones). Come back together. Invite a few individuals to share their statements. Optional - Invite others to respectfully respond or comment on one another’s statements to continue the discussion.

### 6. Optional - Brief Conclusion

Invite individuals to share how this experience was for them. Or - go around in a circle and invite each person to share one word about how they are feeling right now.

Feel free to share your own closing words or messages - Perhaps about how Israel’s Declaration of Independence itself includes an invitation to Jews around the world to “rally round” the Jews in Israel in the task of “upbuilding” and to “stand by them in the the great struggle for the realization of the age old dream - the redemption of Israel” but it doesn’t prescribe exactly how to do so. Israel is clearly far from redemption, and there is much work to be done. But it is up to each person to decide if and how to take part. And perhaps even sitting together now and talking about it part of doing our part and maybe even bringing us one step closer to redemption.



## Session 5: “Placing our trust in the Rock of Israel”

Finding sources of faith, strength, and unity in diversity.  
Focusing on Israel’s Declaration of Independence, Paragraph 19  
**Facilitator’s Guide / Lesson Plan**

### SESSION OVERVIEW

The purpose of this session is to create a supportive space for sharing and exploring our different sources of strength and faith, especially in these challenging times, as well as to appreciate the ability to come together and find strength in community, even when we might not agree on everything (including and especially on our different sources of strength and faith).

This session focuses on Paragraph 19 of Israel’s Declaration of Independence, which is the closing paragraph of the declaration, and which opens with the words: “Placing our trust in the Rock of Israel...”. It should be noted that while there is no other reference to God in the document. For religious Jews, “Rock of Israel” is generally understood to be a reference to God, as this phrase is used as a reference to God in several traditional Jewish texts. At the same time, this phrase can be interpreted in other ways, especially by those who perhaps do not believe in God. The question of whether or not to refer to God in Israel’s Declaration of Independence nearly tore apart the committee tasked with finalizing it - less than 24 hours before the official declaration. The decision to use the phrase “Rock of Israel” was a compromise, which allowed everyone to interpret it as they saw fit, and allowed for the different parties to come together in consensus and sign on to the declaration. If the 37 diverse members of the People’s Council were able to all sign on to the Declaration of Independence in 1948, maybe we can still come together today, despite all of our disagreements.

### REQUIRED MATERIALS

- copies of the session handout.
- Paper and pens/pencils for writing activities.
- Optional: Method for playing “Hatikva” aloud (for example, mobile device and speaker).



## OUTLINE OF ACTIVITIES

Note: The amount of time you spend on each activity will depend on how much time you have with the group. Also - each one of the activities on its own is somewhat optional. So feel free to build a combination of activities that works for you and for your group.

### 1. Opening / Framing / Setting Safe Space

Welcome everyone to the session. In this session we're going to explore the significance of strength and faith, especially in challenging times. We're all experiencing these particular challenging times differently, and we each have different ways of coping, and that's fine. We're here today to learn, to share with one another, and perhaps gain some new sources of strength by learning and sharing together in community.

Because of the sensitivity of the times and of the topic, it may be helpful to set a few "safe space guidelines", such as:

- Make no assumptions. Do not assume others' experience is the same as yours. Use "I" statements instead of "you" or "we all" statements.
- Make no judgments. Do not impose value-judgments on others or on what they share, but respond with attentiveness, curiosity, and care. Our aim here isn't to convince anyone of anything, but to listen and learn from one another.
- Step up / step back. Notice if you're talking a lot or not talking a lot. Make room for others but don't be afraid to speak up if you feel there's something that needs to be said.

If not all members of the group know each other, allow them to introduce themselves. (Optional: as part of introducing themselves, ask each person to share one person or thing in their life that gives them strength.)

### 2. Individual Journaling Activity

Give everyone a few minutes (3-4) to journal / reflect quietly in writing on the question: "Who or what gives you strength, especially when times are tough?" The journaling can be in paragraph

form, a list, free association or drawing - whatever works best.

When the time is up, invite anyone who would like to share part of what they wrote.

Feel free to allow for a few minutes of discussion, reflection, relating and responding respectfully to one another.

### 3. All Together - Reading & Discussing Paragraph 19

Pass out the handout and invite a volunteer to read Paragraph 19 aloud. (Suggestion: Have a second volunteer read it again, to let the words sink in a little more.) (Optional: Especially if this group hasn't explored the document before, feel free to share a little bit of background about the Declaration of Independence and its context, i.e., that it was written in the midst of war.)

Before looking at the questions on the handout, invite participants to share any initial thoughts, reflections, or questions on the paragraph. Is there anything that stands out to them? Surprises them? Resonates with them?

Then feel free to discuss any or all of the questions on the handout with the group as a springboard for discussion.

### 4. Havruta (Pair or Small Group) - Reading & Discussing Hatikva

Divide the group into pairs or small groups, or let them divide themselves. Give them several minutes (5-10) to read Hatikva and discuss the questions on the handout. You might also want to ask each group to pick a representative to share something from their small group with the whole group.

Come back together. (Optional: Play a recording of Hatikva). Invite individuals to share something that they discussed or that came up in their discussions. Feel free to open this up to a broader discussion with the whole group, allowing individuals to respectfully reflect or respond to others.

## 5. Individual Reflection and Prayer Writing - The Prayer for the State of Israel

Invite everyone to take a few minutes (2-5) to quietly read this excerpt from the official “Prayer for the State of Israel” and quietly write their own prayer for Israel today. No one will have to share if they don’t want to and this isn’t going to be published anywhere, so we’re not striving for perfection or poetry, but just honest prayers or wishes that come from the heart.

Invite volunteers to share all or part of their prayers. Those who want to can say “Amen” to one another’s prayers.

## 6. Optional - Brief Conclusion

Invite individuals to share how this experience was for them. Or - go around in a circle and invite each person to share one word about how they are feeling right now.

Feel free to share your own closing words or messages - Perhaps how we all have different sources of strength, and that’s great, because maybe that’s just what we need. And maybe our ability to sit together - even when we don’t agree on anything - can also be a source of strength and hope.

