

Zion: A Place Worth Defending

by **Nils A. Haug**

September 23, 2024 at 5:30 am

<https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/20964/zion-a-place-worth-defending>

- In essence, Zionism is simply an attempt to re-establish their ancestral home, their place of refuge and sanctuary in an alien world which largely despises them. Zion (now Israel), is a place they can gather to practise their faith without persecution. The six ancient cities of refuge were located only within the Land of Israel, just as, in a microscopic sense, the family is a city of refuge.
- The world desperately needs Jewish values and wisdom -- those detailed in the holy scriptures. Jewish wisdom was among the first, after the Babylonian Code of Hammurabi (c. 1,755 BCE), to present the world with social justice -- not only in the Ten Commandments -- but also in how we treat our fellow creatures:
- "But the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your ox, your donkey or any of your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns, so that your male and female servants may rest, as you do" (Deuteronomy 5:14);
- "Do not cook a young goat in its mother's milk" (Deuteronomy 14:21);
- "If you come across a bird's nest beside the road, either in a tree or on the ground, and the mother is sitting on the young or on the eggs, do not take the mother with the young" (Deuteronomy 22:6);
- "You shall not oppress a hired worker who is poor and needy, whether he is one of your brothers or one of the sojourners who are in your land within your towns" (Deuteronomy 24:14);
- "You shall give him his wages on the same day, before the sun sets - for he is poor and counts on it" (Deuteronomy 24:15);
- "You shall do no injustice in court. You shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great, but in righteousness shall you judge your neighbour" (Leviticus 19:15);
- "You shall not mistreat any widow or fatherless child" (Exodus 22:22).

- The true calling of the Jews, with "the world's most moral army," as the IDF is referred to by military expert Col. Richard Kemp, as they now wage a war that was forced on them, is to bring eternal values such as those above, found in the *Torah*, to the world at large. The Jews remain, after all, a "kingdom of priests and a holy nation." They are entitled to their land, a place historically theirs -- Zion, Israel, their ancestral home. This land was promised to the Jewish nation forever. It is a place worth defending.



In essence, Zionism is simply an attempt by Jews to re-establish their ancestral home, their place of refuge and sanctuary in an alien world which largely despises them. Zion (now Israel), is a place they can gather to practise their faith without persecution. Pictured: A view of Mount Zion, in Jerusalem, Israel, on December 10, 2019. (Photo by Ahmad Gharabli/AFP via Getty Images)

The concept of home resonates deeply in all those searching for connection, peace, love, permanence and tranquility. This is particularly so for Jews, who have been scattered among alien cultures for countless generations. Their common faith and the ideal of a home -- with specific focus on Israel -- has enabled them to maintain their sense of identity and culture despite tremendous odds, barely surviving in hostile lands.

The ancestral home of Jews is the Land of Israel, *Eretz Yisrael*, Zion. Perhaps that is why dispersed Jews have for millennia celebrated Passover and Yom Kippur with the cry of longing, "Next year in Jerusalem" (*L'Shana Haba'ah B'Yerushalayim*). The center of Jewish existence

for nearly 4,000 years has been, and remains, "the holy land and Jerusalem the holy city" --

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their forever home. The Welsh people, having lost independence of their homeland, call this sense of longing *hiraeth*: homesickness for a place of their past.

After the destruction of Jerusalem's Second Temple in 70 CE, Jews in the diaspora maintained their faith through community in little villages in Europe and Slavic lands (called *shtetls*) and in tight communities in the Middle East and Central Asia. After having lived in the Land of Israel continuously for so long, but forced from their ancestral residence to become itinerant, the Jewish people might well feel need to return to Israel as their home. They refer to it as Zion.

In essence, Zionism is simply an attempt to re-establish their ancestral home, their place of refuge and sanctuary in an alien world which largely despises them. Zion (now Israel), is a place they can gather to practise their faith without persecution. The six ancient cities of **refuge** were located only within the Land of Israel, just as, in a microscopic sense, the family is a city of refuge.

The increasing demise in the West of conventional two-parent households, where children can be raised in love and discipline, has led to an increase in single-parent and fatherless homes. The outcome is a rise in juvenile crime, illiteracy, loneliness, gender confusion and domestic violence. Recently, however, there seems to be growing **opposition** to fashionable **identity** theories of **race**, **gender**, **victimhood**, **entitlement** and other ideologies that adversely affect the traditional family structure. The common good of society would certainly be helped by a restoration of the core principles pertaining to family.

America was founded on traditional biblical values, as clearly reflected in the underlying values of the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution. These values form the basis of Western social virtues, laws and justice -- as in England's Magna Carta of 1215. It was adherence to the spirit of the Ten Commandments, the Mosaic codes, that helped make America and the West great; it is a greatness that can be revitalized. Concerned citizens need the determination and courage to re-establish where they live the values set out in the constitutional documents of the West.

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Jews have historically defended liberty against tyranny and moral confusion, with individual liberty such as the freedoms of speech and religion. The value of each person can again be revived.

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Nils A. Haug is an author and columnist. A Lawyer by profession, he is member of the International Bar Association, the National Association of Scholars, the Academy of Philosophy and Letters. Retired from law, his particular field of interest is the intersection of Western culture with political theory, philosophy, theology, ethics and law. He holds various degrees including Ph.D. in Theology (Apologetics). Dr. Haug is author of 'Politics, Law, and Disorder in the Garden of Eden – the Quest for Identity'; and 'Enemies of the Innocent – Life, Truth, and Meaning in a Dark Age.' His work has been widely published by such as Quadrant, First Things Journal, The American Mind, Gatestone Institute, National Association of Scholars, Jewish Journal, Anglican Mainstream, Jewish News Syndicate, and others.

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