Qur'an versus Kabbalah: A Reading into Palestinian–Israeli Conflict

Elsayed Mohamed Abdalla Amin,[*] Arman Asmad,[**] Mohamed Mohi El-Din Ahmed[***]
& Ahmed Youssef[****]

Abstract

This paper examines the historical development of Messianic Kabbalah and its impact on the Palestinian–Israeli conflict. It argues that the concept of redemption (*tikkun*), a central theme in Messianic Kabbalah, has been a significant factor in the conflict and has contributed to using force for peace. It provides a detailed analysis of the historical evolution of Messianic Kabbalah and its role in shaping the religious and political beliefs of different Jewish groups, including the Zionist settlers. It also examines the theological and philosophical foundations of Messianic ideas, which helped to establish beliefs that influenced the development of Zionism, and uses a historical-critical methodology to analyse Jewish sources in the Qur'an. It focuses on 20th-century figures like Gershom Sholem and Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook rather than earlier Zionist figures (e.g., Rabbi Yehudah Alkalai, Rabbi Hirsch Kalischer, Ahad Ha'am, Rabbi Mohilever, Jacob Klatzkin). Sholem's pioneering analysis of Jewish mysticism and Kook's synthesis of Messianic Kabbalah with Zionist ideology together illuminate how mystical ideas were transformed into modern political practices. This approach contrasts with the works of other Kabbalistic authorities such as Jacob Emden, Leon Modena and non-Jewish scholars like Johannes Buxtorf, Jean Morin and Jacques Basnage, whose contributions are less directly connected to the evolution of Zionist thought. The study opens the door for future research to explore the lesser-known aspects of Islamo–Judeo relations during the 12th century. The main findings of this paper pave the way towards a better understanding of the intricate relationship between religion, politics and violence in the Palestinian–Israeli conflict through the framework of the Qur'an and, specifically, how the displacement of Palestinians witnessed in modern times can be traced back to Messianic ideas. Zionism adopted Kabbalistic Messianism to justify colonialist ideologies. The theological interpretation of Messianic Kabbalism is developed in isolation of the Qur'anic interpretation and Islamic influence.

Keywords: Kabbalah, Qur'an, Judaism, Messianic, Redemption (*tikkun*), Palestine, Israel.

Introduction

This study delves into Jewish 'salvation' as it pertains to the Messianic age, a fundamental aspect of Kabbalistic beliefs. It explores the arrival of the Messiah and his role in saving the Jewish people, as well as the impact this event is expected to have on the entire world. While the term 'Messiah' has evolved from its original meaning of 'the anointed' to encompass various rituals associated with Messianism, the concept of 'salvation' remains the same. It includes the arrival of the Messiah and the endeavours of both Jews and non-Jews to attain the ultimate phase of salvation history.[1] The current application of the idea by Zionism has impacted peace in the Middle East, causing wars in 1948, 1956, 1967, 1973 and the recent ongoing attack on Gaza that started on 7 October 2023. Kabbalistic themes of *tikkun* and salvation, though originally theological, subtly influenced secular political Zionism, and Lurianic concepts of cosmic repair (*tiqqūn*) and redemption echoed in Zionist ideology, so that the establishment of Israel was seen not merely as a territorial project but as a rectification of Jewish exile. Secular labour movements and state-building efforts reflected a secularized form of *tiqqūn ʿōlām* – working to 'repair the world' through collective action.[2] By

combining historical analysis with critical methodology, this study examines the evolution of these Kabbalistic ideas in their religious sources and attempts to interpret them in relation to Islamic frameworks found in the Qur'an.

The study hypothesises that the concepts of 'salvation' and *tikkun* in modern Jewish Kabbalah emerged in response to social and political forces, significantly impacting Jewish groups, shaping the formation of the State of Israel, and contributing to the Palestinian–Israeli conflict. The connection between secular political Zionism and the Jewish idea of *tiqqūnʿōlām* – 'repairing the world' – is thus rooted in historical transformations of Jewish thought. Initially, *tiqqūnʿōlām* referred to rabbinic policies for the common good,[3] but in Lurianic Kabbalah, it evolved into a mystical process of cosmic restoration.[4] In modern times, particularly within secular and reform movements, *tiqqūnʿōlām* has become a framework for social justice and, by extension, political Zionism.[5] Secular Zionist leaders, such as Theodor Herzl, prioritised the practical necessity of a Jewish state in response to antisemitism, yet their secular vision drew on cultural and historical Jewish themes, including *tiqqūnʿōlām*, recast as a nationalist imperative.[6]

This study uses a historical, analytical and critical methodology to explore how Kabbalistic ideas of *tikkun* evolved, were adapted within a nationalist context and ultimately shaped the ideological underpinnings of modern Zionism. Analytical and critical methods are systematic approaches that interrogate underlying assumptions, ideologies and power dynamics present in texts and historical narratives. Analytical methods involve deconstructing complex ideas into their components, whereas critical methods question the validity, context and impact of these ideas.[7] While the historical method provides a chronological framework for tracing the development of *tikkun* in Kabbalistic Messianism through its sources, analytical and critical methods deepen the investigation. By revealing the ideological underpinnings of religious movements, these approaches allow for a more nuanced understanding of how Kabbalistic interpretations have been adapted – or even manipulated – to serve contemporary political agendas.[8] This comprehensive methodology enables a historical examination of *tikkun* and a critical analysis of its interpretations within the framework of the Qur'an.

Literature Review

Messianism is central to the Judaic religion; hence, a vast amount of literature has been dedicated to this topic. Less literature can be found on Kabbalistic thought, and even more scarce is the literature on the Messianic development of Zionism, particularly as studied from an Islamic perspective. Meticulous research is thus required to fully comprehend the political use of *tikkun* and Messianism by Zionists.

In modern studies, Gerhard Scholem (1897–1982) is a significant figure. An expert on Jewish mysticism who contributed significantly to Kabbalistic literature, Jewish historiography, Zionism and contemporary Judaism,[9] Scholem mentored many Kabbalah scholars, played a vigorous role in the German–Jewish immigrant community in Mandate Palestine, and produced over 40 volumes and nearly 700 articles on Jewish mysticism, effectively establishing it as an academic field.[10] His book *The Messianic Idea in Judaism* is considered a primary source for the studies that appeared after him, specifically those on Kabbalistic Messianism and *tikkun*, and 'Redemption Through Sin' is the most thought-provoking chapter related to the current study.[11] Sholem's research was, however, criticised due to his Zionist affiliation, which was solely tied to Jewish beliefs.[12] While Scholem did not intend to address the political

---

Gurion, *Israel: A Personal History* (Funk & Wagnalls, 1954); Gerson Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (Schocken Books, 1971).

[3] Adam Schatz, "Tikkun Olam: Repairing the World," *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 103, no. 3 (2013): 358–74.

[4] Rachel Elior, *The Mystical Origins of Hasidism* (Oxford University Press, 2004).

[5] Jacob Katz, *Out of the Ghetto: The Social Background of Jewish Emancipation, 1770–1870* (Syracuse University Press, 2007).

[6] Theodor Herzl, *The Jewish State*, trans. Sylvie d'Avigdor (1896; reis., Dover Publications, 1997).

[7] Scholem, *Major Trends.*

[8] Scholem, *Major Trends.*

[9] Noam Zadoff, *Gershom Scholem: From Berlin to Jerusalem and Back* (Brandeis University Press, 2017).

[10] Zadoff, *Gershom Scholem*.

[11] Shaul Magid, "Gershom Scholem," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy,* accessed October 30, 2023, https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/scholem/.

[12] Orr Scharf, "The Dialectics of Feeling: Hugo Bergman's and Gershom Scholem's Political Theologies of Zionism," *Religions* 13, no. 7 (2022): 601.

circumstances of his era, and his works highlight the religious aspect preceding the political one,[13] his study of Kabbalah was influenced by his affiliation with Zionism, and he viewed political Zionism as a religious project.[14] Scholem's project was to revive the hidden power of Judaism inherent in Jewish mysticism.[15] However, his evaluation of the authenticity of the Kabbalah text was incomplete, and he gave insufficient attention to the impact of Islamic influence, two noticeable gaps this study attempts to address.

Another book of essays that discusses the Messianic idea is *Rethinking the Messianic Idea in Judaism*, edited by Michael L. Morgan and Steven Weitzman. This book focuses on the change of Messianism in late antiquity, the claims of Messianic figures throughout history, and modern Jewish thought on the future redemption and formation of Zionism. It also explores contemporary controversies surrounding messianic rhetoric and its connection with Christianity, shedding light on Judeo–Christian Messianism.[16] While this work is key to uncovering the Kabbalistic influence on Christianity, it overlooks the negative role that Messianism has played on the life of native Palestinians.

In the Arab world, the works of Abdelwahab Elmessiri (1938–2008), including the 7-volume *Encyclopedia of Jews, Judaism and Zionism,* are considered some of the most comprehensive sources of Arabic thought as it relates to Judaism, particularly Messianic ideas.[17] Elmessiri had reservations about discourses on Zionism that aim to influence attitudes, behaviour and power dynamics, alleging that this type of argumentation tends to be based on conspiracy theory that seeks to rally the masses against Jews. According to Elmessiri, such reasoning is reductionist as it conflates Israelites, Zionists and Jews without regard for their differences.[18] While his writings brought modern Jewish studies into the Arabic library, his argument is not only contradicted by modern Jewish thought, which confirms the theological foundation of Zionism, but it is also rejected by Arab thinkers.[19] In his study of Zionism, Elmessiri adopted a communist perspective, leaving a significant gap in his analysis. While he saw Zionism as a form of western imperialism, he did not give due consideration to its underlying Messianic drive. Additionally, his methodology lacked a deep Qur'anic understanding. This study attempts to bridge this gap in the literature through a more thorough use of analytical and critical methods. These methods are not confined to Qur'anic studies but universally applicable across all fields of historical and religious research. For example, Gershom Scholem's seminal work on Kabbalah demonstrated how critical methodologies can uncover ideological underpinnings and hidden influences within religious mysticism.[20] His comprehensive contributions to Kabbalistic literature, Jewish historiography and Zionism – captured in *The Messianic Idea in Judaism* – showed how analytical approaches can provide deeper insight into messianic concepts and their broader implications.[21] His later works, such as *Rethinking The Messianic Idea in Judaism*, expanded on messianic themes and their intersections with Christianity. The shortcoming of Scholem's research was that it tended to overlook the political and social consequences of Messianism on native Palestinian life. Elmessiri addressed the complexities of Judaic and Zionist thought, highlighting how discourses shape collective attitudes and power dynamics, and he used analytical methods to reveal how Messianic narratives have been used to mobilize ideology; however, his analysis lacked depth and proper Qur'anic interpretation.[22]

---

[13] Scharf, "The Dialectics of Feeling," 601.
[14] Shaul Magid, "Mysticism, History, and a "New" Kabbalah: Gershom Scholem and the Contemporary Scene," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 101, no. 4 (2011): 524.
[15] Moshe Idel, "Multiple forms of Redemption in Kabbalah and Hasidism," *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 101, no. 1 (2011): 27–70.
[16] Samuel Hayim Brody, "Review of Rethinking the Messianic Idea in Judaism by Michael L. Morgan and Steven Weitzman, eds.," *Studies in Christian-Jewish Relations* 10, no. 1 (2015): 1–4.
[17] Moulay Abdessadek AhlBenTaleb, "Abdelwahab Elmessiri's Theoretical Abrogation and Appropriation of Western and Zionist Terminology," *International Journal of Islamic Thoughts* 4, no. 2 (2015): 5–22.
[18] AhlBenTaleb, "Abdelwahab Elmessiri's Theoretical Abrogation," 5-22.
[19] Sakr Abufakhar, "Mawsoat al-Yahood wa al-Yahodiyah wa al-Sohyoniyah: Naqd Saqr Abufakhar" [Elmessiri's Encyclopedia of Jews, Judaism, and Zionism: Criticized by Saqr Abu Fakhr], *Hikmah Journal* (2015): 250–80.
[20] Scholem, *Major Trends.*
[21] Scholem, *Major Trends.*
[22] Elior, *The Mystical Origins of Hasidism.*

The Arabic PhD dissertation by Mona Nazim, titled 'The Messianic Idea in Judaism from Old Testament Till the Modern Age', traces the evolution of the concept until the establishment of Zionism.[23] This dissertation pioneered Arabic studies on Messianism, which is reason enough for its inclusion in this study. Another important and recent work is 'Kabbalah and Its Role in Forming the Modern Jewish Mind' by Huda Darweesh.[24] While insightful, this work lacks an in-depth understanding of the Messianic concept of Zionism. This research gap warrants further investigation especially in light of the geopolitical conflict in the Middle East, which has reached its peak and is interacting with Messianism as evidenced by the recurrent assaults on the Palestinian population since October 7, 2023, assaults which have been declared as genocide by the International Court of Justice.[25] Yet another source for the current study is Maximilian de Molière's work, *Confronting Kabbalah*, which contains nuances of the orientalist Widmanstetter's (1506–1557) views on Kabbalah and Jewish texts.[26] This text discusses Widmanstetter's library, which includes a collection of 195 manuscripts and Jewish books. In chapter 6, 'Muhammad's Jewish Heresies: Reading the Qur'an through Kabbalistic Books', de Molière analyses Widmanstetter's Christian Hebraist collection and his view that the Prophet Muhammad was inspired by Kabbalistic motifs and crafted his 'heretical' theology from them.[27] No holistic Islamic perspective is presented in Widmanstetter's work, which opens the door for further research to counter these allegations. For example, Widmanstetter argued that Muhammad unknowingly revealed a significant Kabbalistic truth, and betrayed the truth unintentionally.[28] Widmanstetter refuted what he saw as the denial of Jesus' Messiahship in the Qur'an and stated that those who claim that God had a son are ignorant.[29] He further argued that Muhammad contradicted himself since he referred to Jesus as the word and spirit of God in certain passages.[30] The Qur'an negates the idea that Jesus is God, in whole or in part; however, it confirms his Messiahship:

"وَقَالُواْ ٱتَّخَذَ ٱللَّهُ وَلَدًا ۗ سُبْحَٰنَهُۥ ۖ بَل لَّهُۥ مَا فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ كُلٌّ لَّهُۥ قَٰنِتُونَ"(البقرة: 116)

"They say, "Allah has offspring." Glory be to Him! In fact, to Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth—all are subject to His Will." (Al-Baqarah 2:116)

Widmanstetter, in his commentary on the Qur'an, responded to the accusations by arguing that it is unlikely Jews could have altered all texts across various languages and cultures, given their coherent content.[31] It is well known in Jewish studies that the word 'Kabbalah' was not mentioned in Judaic literature until the 12th century, and there is no reference to it in the Qur'an or early Islamic literature. De Molière's work is essential to reviving Widmanstetter's views on Kabbalah and the Qur'an, which warrant further investigation. It explains that Widmanstetter's argument regarding Kabbalistic influence on the Qur'an is based on historical misinterpretation void of sound Quranic exegesis or substantiation by other authentic Islamic sources.

A very recent study on Kabbalah by Chamiel, *The Dual Truth*, is worth noting for its relevance to discussions of modern scholarly Kabbalistic contradictions.[32] The book, which focuses on how 19th-century religious thought impacted 20th-century Jewish philosophy, highlights the challenges faced when attempting to harmonize belief in God with Western culture and philosophy. Chamiel discusses three eminent Zionist scholars: Reines (1839–1915); Rabbi Abraham Kook, also known as Rav Kook (1865–1935); and Soloveitchik (1903–1993). Interestingly, each scholar had a unique perspective on the topic at hand. Reines was a pragmatic Zionist, Rav Kook was a Zionist-Kabbalist-Messianist and Soloveitchik was

---

[23] Mona Nazim, "The Messianic Idea in Judaism from the Old Testament Till the Modern Age," PhD dissertation, 1983; Mona Nazim, *Kabbalah: Mysticism in Jewish Thought* (Al-Hikma Publishing, 1983).

[24] Huda Darweesh, "Aqidat Al-Qabbalah wa Dawruha fi Tashkil Al-Aqliyah Al-Yahudiyah Al-Mu'asirah" [Kabbalah and Its Role in Forming the Modern Jewish Mind], *Oriental Studies Magazine* 33 (2004): 264.

[25] "Genocide Case Against Gaza attack," *Herald Sun*, January 13, 2024, https://www.proquest.com/newspapers/genocide-case-against-gaza-attack/docview/2913516295/se-2.

[26] Maximilian de Molière, *Confronting Kabbalah: Studies in the Christian Hebraist Library of Johann Albrecht Widmanstetter* (Brill, 2024).

[27] De Molière, *Confronting Kabbalah.*

[28] De Molière, *Confronting Kabbalah*, 248.

[29] De Molière, *Confronting Kabbalah*, 15.

[30] De Molière, *Confronting Kabbalah*, 230.

[31] De Molière, *Confronting Kabbalah*, 170, n. 15.

[32] Ephraim Chamiel, *The Dual Truth, Volumes I & II: Studies on Nineteenth-Century Modern Religious Thought and Its Influence on Twentieth-Century Jewish Philosophy* (Academic Studies Press, 2020).

a dialectical-Zionist-existentialist.[32] Chamiel's book provides a comprehensive analysis of Jewish Messianism during a specific period through the lens of the scholars of that time. It attempts to address philosophical differences within Judaism; however, its proposed resolution does not satisfy either orthodox Jewish beliefs or contemporary principles of human rights.

While the above studies present various explanations of Messianic Kabbalah and its historical significance in Judaism, they do not discuss the evolution of this idea in Judaic sources. This is another lacuna the current study attempts to fill.

Development of Messianism in Kabbalistic Thought

Kabbalah is a meditative and practical philosophy based on the mystic doctrines of Emanation and Illumination. According to Kabbalistic teachings, Hebrew theology is comprised of three distinct components: the law, the essence of the law and the essence of the essence of the law. While the law was disseminated to all the children of Israel, the Mishna was reserved for Rabbis and educators, and the Kabbalah was exclusively imparted to the most advanced initiates.[33]

The concept of salvation or Messianism is a central doctrine in Judaism, particularly in Kabbalah. It aims to restore the earthly kingdom through the advent of a Messiah who will achieve political and religious salvation for the Jewish nation and establish a heavenly kingdom. This concept has developed over time to signify the advent of a Jewish king with unique combat capabilities to lead the sons of Israel to overcome the world. It originated during the time of the prophets and continued through the Talmudic era until the Middle Ages, when the first transformation of the term occurred.[34]

While a core concept within Judaism, Messianism has been variously interpreted across Jewish mystical traditions. A comparison of Messianism in Kabbalah, Merkabah Mysticism and Hasidism Messianism evidences both differences and similarities. In Kabbalah, Messianism is not primarily about cosmic restoration or the process of *tiqqun olam* as a prerequisite for the Messiah's arrival. The idea of repairing the spiritual fractures caused by the *shevirat ha-kelim* (shattering of vessels) is not universally seen as central, nor does the Messiah in Kabbalah uniformly symbolise a combined political, spiritual and mystical event.[35] Similarly, Merkabah mysticism does not focus on a communal vision of redemption. Its emphasis on individual spiritual experiences and transcendental divine encounters often lacks a pronounced Messianic hope or connection to political salvation.[36] Hasidism, influenced by Kabbalah, does not strictly align with democratized Messianic ideals, nor does it consistently tie collective spiritual elevation to the Messiah's arrival. While Hasidic teachings highlight the *tzaddik* (righteous leader) as a mediator, this emphasis does not create a uniform communal approach to Messianism across the movement.[37] Moreover, the assertion that Kabbalah's Messianism bridges mystical, political, and communal dimensions, and that it serves as a uniquely comprehensive and transformative model, is not universally accepted. Instead, Kabbalah's influence is diverse and its role in shaping modern interpretations of Messianism remains subject to debate.[38]

From the return from Babylonian captivity through the rabbinic epochs, Messianic ideas in Jewish literature can be classified as restorative and utopian. Restorative Messianism aims to bring back the greatness of the Davidic dynasty, and utopian Messianism describes a perfect society in the future. These two ideas are separate, but they were combined in Qumran literature through the Messiahs of Aaron, a priest, and Israel, a king in the Davidic dynasty.[39]

---

[32] Chamiel, *The Dual Truth.*
[33] Darweesh, "Aqidat Al QabbalahWadawraha," 13.
[34] Nazim, "The Messianic Idea in Judaism."
[35] Scholem, *Major Trends.*
[36] Ithamar Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism* (Brill, 1980).
[37] Moshe Idel, *Hasidism: Between Ecstasy and Magic* (SUNY Press, 1995).
[38] Elior, *The Mystical Origins of Hasidism.*
[39] Klausner, *The Messianic Idea,* 1.

Jesus confirmed that the Kingdom comes through the grace of God.[40] Its advent is preordained and inevitable. Those who fulfil the law truthfully and sincerely will be privileged to enter the Kingdom.[41] The attitude of Jesus towards the government was based on his apocalyptic beliefs.[42] He emphasized the importance of rendering unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's.[43] Paul, on the other hand, proclaimed Jesus as the Christ and stressed the imminence of Christ's return and the advent of the Millennium. [44]The disciples of Jesus continued to believe in the imminence of the Kingdom after his death and also believed that Jesus would return to complete his Messianic work.[45] Within Judaism, messianism became preeminent after the state's final collapse and the Temple's destruction.[46] The Quranic text explains that the Messiah will come at the end of the times to complete the final task, reiterating Prophet Muhamad's message.[47]

<div dir="rtl">﴿وَإِن مِّنْ أَهْلِ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ إِلَّا لَيُؤْمِنَنَّ بِهِۦ قَبْلَ مَوْتِهِۦ وَيَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا﴾</div>

Every one of the People of the Book will definitely believe in him before his death. And
on the Day of Judgment, Jesus will be a witness against them. (Al-Nisa 4:159)

The Arabic term for Messiah is '*masih*', used in the Qur'an 35 times for Prophet Isaa (Jesus), which means anointed. The Qur'an says:

<div dir="rtl">﴿يَٰمَرْيَمُ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكِ بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنْهُ ٱسْمُهُ ٱلْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ٱبْنُ مَرْيَمَ ...﴾</div>

O Mary! Allah gives you good news of a Word from Him; his name will be the Messiah,
Jesus, son of Mary. (Aali 'Imran 3:45)

Tannaitic literature of the first two centuries CE shared similarities with second Temple traditions but moved away from apocalypticism and utopianism.[48] However, these themes reappeared in Amoraic literature. In addition, the Messianic traditions had a significant role in developing Jewish Messianic and apocalyptic speculation from the Middle Ages to modern times. The esoteric element and the strong apocalypticism of Qumran literature spilled over into the literature of the Middle Ages, where they were evident in mysticism and false Messiahs.[49] The tension between Halakhah and Messianism in early rabbinic literature resurfaced in the 12th century CE, when a conflict broke out among the Messianic movements due to antinomianism.[50] Anti-apocalypticism crystallized in Maimonides' formulations of Messianism, which became the dominant view in Judaism that is still upheld today.[51]

One of the most notable historical figures in this context is Isaac Luria (1534–1572), also called the Ari, whose teaching centred on the concept of salvation through the Sons of Israel. According to Luria, every person must work towards rectifying their soul and that of others to gather the dispersed divine sparks that resulted from the retraction. This process ultimately leads to salvation, symbolised by the Messiah.[52] Scholem argued that Lurianism offered a gradual Messianism that focused on restoring the shattered cosmos. This theological framework emerged as a response to the needs of Jews for a new perspective after the Spanish expulsion and a desire to find theological justification for their exile. Lurianism gained importance with the Ottoman Sultan's invitation for Jews to resettle in Erez Israel. Lurianic Kabbalah

---

[40] Matthew 5:17-20; ESV.
[41] Abba H. Silver, *A History of Messianic Speculation in Israel: From the First through the Seventeenth Centuries* (Peter Smith Pub Inc, 1978), 10.
[42] Silver, *A History of Messianic Speculation.*
[43] Mark 12:17.
[44] Matthew 25:1.
[45] Silver, *A History of Messianic Speculation,* 28.
[46] Silver, *A History of Messianic Speculation.*
[47] Muhammad Saed Abdul-Rahman, *Tafsir Ibn Kathir Juz'4 (Part 4): Al-I-Imran 93 to An-Nisaa 23,* 2nd ed. (MSA Publication Limited, 2009).
[48] Klausner, *The Messianic Idea,* 1.
[49] Joseph A. Fitzmyer, review of *The Scepter and the Star: Messianism in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls* by John J. Collins, *Theological Studies* 57, no. 2 (1996): 339.
[50] Shaul Magid, "Rupture as Tikun or Anti-Traditionalism as Halakhic Salvation: A Response to Menachem Fisch's "Berakhot 19b: The Bavli's Paradigm of Confrontational Discourse"," *Journal of Textual Reasoning* 4, no. 2 (2006): 91–100.
[51] Magid, "Rupture as Tikun."
[52] Gershom Scholem, *The Messianic Idea in Judaism: And Other Essays on Jewish Spirituality* (Schocken, 2011).

emerged in Safed, one of the four holy cities (the others being Jerusalem, Hebron and Tiberias), and this development contributed significantly to Lurianic Messianism.[53]

A turning point in Messianism occurred during the 17th century when Sabbatai Zevi claimed to be the Messiah and his prophet, Nathan of Gaza, proceeded to challenge and subvert the established beliefs of Judaism and Halakhah.[54] During this period, 1500 families converted to Islam as a prerequisite for redemption; they coalesced first in Edirne and then, by 1683, in Salonika to formulate a centre for Kabbalah.[55] Scholars in Jewish history have reached a consensus that the Messianic fervour surrounding Sabbatai Zevi, including his apostasy and the continued belief in him for over a century, contributed to a decline in adherence to the Halakhah among Jews.[56] Although Rabbis rejected this change within orthodox Judaism, it became mainstream, particularly in mystical Judaism.

Afterwards, Salonika boasted a distinguished reputation for its Sufism (Bektashi and Mawlwe Order), Kabbalism and rabbinical studies. Since the 16th century, it has been predominantly Jewish and often referred to as the sole Jewish city in Europe, apart from Warsaw. It has also served as a sanctuary for conversos. Interestingly, a considerable proportion of the city's Muslim population has Jewish ancestry.[57] Another significant event occurred in the 16th century when the Shabbetain Movement arose, spreading over all the ranks of the world Jewry and revitalizing the messianic dream with its concepts of redemption and *tikkun*.[58] Jacob Frank, an Ashkenazi Jew from Podolia (present-day Ukraine) went from being a convert to Islam to later converting to Catholicism and becoming acquainted with the Dönme. He believed himself to be the reincarnation of Shabbatai Tzevi and the heir to Osman Baba. Ultimately, his followers were led to convert to Catholicism instead of Islam.[59] Following this stage of the formation of the Dönme and before the middle of the 18th century, Polish and Ukrainian Hasidism were formed by the famous saint Israel Baal Shem, who died in 1760 CE.[60]

The Messianic movements of the 18th century paved the way for the appearance of the Zionist movement. Many Jewish groups – such as Hovevei Zion ('Lovers of Zion'), founded in the late 19th century – played a significant role in fostering the concept of returning to Zion. Hovevei Zion, composed mainly of Eastern European Jews, combined Messianic aspirations with practical nationalism, focusing on agricultural settlements in the Land of Israel.[61] Similar efforts were made by Bilu pioneers, who shared this mix of spiritual and nationalist goals, as well as by Sephardic Jewish communities in Yemen, who tied Messianic expectations to a physical return to Zion.[62] While these groups embraced the idea of returning to Zion, the failure of certain figures, such as the 17th-century pseudo-Messiah Shabbetai Zvi, to bring about their promises of redemption led to a shift in focus. Jewish attention now began to turn toward Zionism as a movement emphasising human initiative rather than waiting for divine intervention.[63]

Analysing the intersection of Messianism, Kabbalah and Zionism reveals the complex relationship between religious tradition and modern political movements. The development of Zionism was deeply influenced by Jewish Messianic expectations, yet it evolved along two distinct paths: religious Zionism, rooted in Kabbalistic thought, and secular Zionism, driven by nationalist and pragmatic goals. Religious Zionists like Rabbi Yehuda Alkalai and Rabbi Zvi Hirsch Kalischer intertwined spiritual aspirations with political action, viewing settlement in the Land of Israel as a proactive step to hasten redemption.[64] In contrast, secular figures such as Theodor Herzl and Ahad Ha'Am rejected the theological dimensions of salvation, instead framing Zionism as a solution to antisemitism and a means of establishing Jewish cultural and political self-

---

[53] Scholem, *The Messianic Idea*.
[54] Scholem. *Major Trends.*
[55] Marc Baer, *The Dönme: Jewish Converts, Muslim Revolutionaries, and Secular Turks* (Stanford University Press, 2010), 4.
[56] Scholem, *The Messianic Idea*, 5 n 43.
[57] Baer, *The Dönme*, 44.
[58] Silver, *A History of Messianic Speculation*.
[59] Baer, *The Dönme*, 44.
[60] Scholem, *The Messianic Idea*, 43.
[61] Shmuel Ettinger, "The Roots of Modern Jewish Nationalism," in *Essential Papers on Zionism*, ed. Jehuda Reinharz and Anita Shapira (New York University Press, 1984), 54–73.
[62] Halperin, *Babel in Zion*.
[63] Scholem, *Major Trends*.
[64] Robert Eisen, *The Peace and Violence of Judaism: From the Bible to Modern Zionism* (Oxford University Press, 2011).

determination.[65] This divergence in interpreting salvation created lasting ideological tensions. Religious Zionists criticised secular efforts as undermining divine purpose, while secularists saw religious Messianism as incompatible with modern political objectives, a debate that continues today.

Within this framework, Kabbalistic Messianism played a significant role in shaping both religious and political Zionist thought. Influential figures like Rabbi Abraham Kook synthesized mystical, national and pantheistic elements, viewing Zionism as a divine instrument that sanctified the Jewish people, the Land of Israel and the State itself. His philosophy aimed to bridge religious and secular ideologies, positioning Zionism as an heir to Kabbalistic tradition while accelerating the redemptive process. However, not all Jewish communities embraced this synthesis. The Haredim (ultra-Orthodox), deeply connected to Kabbalistic mysticism, opposed Zionism on theological grounds, arguing that establishing Israel without the Messiah was heretical. These ongoing conflicts between mystical traditions, religious Zionism and secular nationalism reflect the enduring complexities of Jewish Messianism as it relates to the formation of modern Israel.

The Problematic Roots of Messianism

Before proceeding further, it is necessary to define 'salvation' and provide a clearer understanding of the terms 'Messiah' and 'Messianic'. The English term 'anointed' and Greek term '*Christos*' (which gave rise to 'Christ') both refer to a ceremonial act. This practice has its roots in the ancient custom of anointing kings with oil when they undertook a specific task or ascended the throne. The Hebrew word '*Mashiah*' translates as 'the anointed one' or 'rubbed with oil' and was especially associated with the roles of priest and king.[66] In Jewish belief, the most crucial anointing will occur when the *Mashiach* is anointed king at the End of Days.

'*Mashiach*' is often linked with the word 'Messiah', which means 'saviour' in Hebrew. The relationship between these two words is quite intricate. '*Mashiach*' originates from the Hebrew root '*Mem-Shin-Chet*', meaning 'to anoint, smear or paint'. On the other hand, '*Moshiach*' comes from the root '*Yod-Shin-Ayin*', which means 'to save or to help'. Interestingly, the only shared letter between these root words is '*Shin*', which is one of the most frequently used letters in Hebrew. The 'm' sound at the beginning of '*Moshiach*' is a prefix that changes a verb into a noun. For instance, the verb '*tzvah*' (meaning 'to command') becomes '*mitzvah*' (commandment) when the prefix 'm' is added. Various scholars, including Mona Nazem, have demonstrated that the notion of anointing in Judaism was influenced by ancient traditions from Iraq and the Canaanites. Twisting letters and changing words are criticized by the Qur'an:

﴿مِّنَ ٱلَّذِينَ هَادُواْ يُحَرِّفُونَ ٱلْكَلِمَ عَن مَّوَاضِعِهِۦ وَيَقُولُونَ سَمِعْنَا وَعَصَيْنَا وَٱسْمَعْ غَيْرَ مُسْمَعٍ وَرَٰعِنَا لَيًّۢا بِأَلْسِنَتِهِمْ وَطَعْنًا فِى ٱلدِّينِ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ قَالُواْ سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا وَٱسْمَعْ وَٱنظُرْنَا لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ وَأَقْوَمَ ...﴾

Some Jews take words out of context and say, "We listen, and we disobey," "Hear! May you never hear," and "Râ'ina!" [Herd us!]—playing with words and discrediting the faith. Had they said courteously, "We hear and obey," "Listen to us," and "Unẓurna," [Tend to us!] it would have been better for them and more proper. (Al-Nisa 4:46)

The term '*Mashiach*' or 'Messiah' in the Jewish tradition refers to a great political leader who is believed to be a descendant of King David.[67] The title '*Mashiach ben David*' (Messiah, son of David) is often used to refer to this leader.[68] According to the Jewish scriptures, the *Mashiach* will deeply understand Jewish law and strictly adhere to its commandments.[69] He will possess exceptional leadership qualities, inspiring others to follow him. He will also be a skilled military leader, winning battles for Israel, and an upright

---

[65] David Biale, *Not in the Heavens: The Tradition of Jewish Secular Thought* (Princeton University Press, 2012).
[66] Genesis 3:27; Exodus 28–41.
[67] Jeremiah 23:5.
[68] Nazim, 29, n 25.
[69] Isaiah 11:2-5.

judge who will make righteous decisions.[70] It is important to note that the *Mashiach* is believed to be a human being and not a god, demi-god or any other supernatural being.[71]

According to Ezekiel 38:16, there will be conflicts and hardships before the arrival of the *Mashiach*, who will bring about both political and spiritual redemption to Jerusalem.[72] The *Mashiach* will establish a centralized government in Israel that will serve as the centre of global governance for both Jewish and non-Jewish people, as outlined in Isaiah 2:2-4, 11:10 and 42:1. The *Mashiach* will also rebuild the Temple and restore its worship, as noted in Jeremiah 33:18. He will re-establish the religious court of Israel, and the law of the Jews will become the law of the land, as stated in Jeremiah 33:15.[73] Although the Qur'an does not mention the Jewish Messiah, it confirms that Jesus is the Messiah who will return at the end of times:

$$\langle\ldots \text{وَإِنَّهُ لَعِلْمٌ لِّلسَّاعَةِ فَلَا تَمْتَرُنَّ بِهَا}\rangle$$

And his second coming is truly a sign for the Hour. So have no doubt about it. (Al-Zukhruf 43:61)

The analysis above shows how the term 'Messiah' underwent a transformation from 'being anointed' to 'bringing salvation', with 'salvation' defined in largely political terms. This change symbolised the desire within the Jewish communities for social and political reform in the face of the hardships they were experiencing. They were seeking solutions from external sources to improve their conditions.

Towards the Messianic Age and Redemption (*Tikkun Olam*)

According to Jewish literature, *Olam Ha-Ba* refers to the afterlife. This is believed to be a serene spiritual realm which is free of war, hostility and predatory behaviour. It is a world without sin, murder, robbery, competition or envy. In this realm, the Jewish God is acknowledged as the ultimate deity and the Jewish faith as the true religion. *Tikkun olam* is a Jewish concept that means repairing or healing the world. It originated in Jewish religious literature (Mishnah and Talmud) and was later associated with Kabbalah.[74] *Tikkun*'s Kabbalistic interpretation focuses on restoring the world by studying the Torah and undergoing spiritual and moral rehabilitation. Today, the phrase '*tikkun olam*' is also used in socio-political discussions in the United States.[75] American Jews have utilised the concept of *tikkun olam* to harmonise their political liberalism with their theology. This melding together of religious beliefs with social and political thought has long been present among mainstream Jews.

Some Kabbalists propose a link between the national redemption of the Jewish people and the divine redemption of the Shekhinah.[76] According to the Kabbalah, Shekhinah is the feminine aspect of the divine and plays a great role in the final stage of redemption, which is characterized by violence. The merging of the feminine divine presence with male divine powers is believed to be part of the redemption process of both the divine realm and the world.[77] Moreover, a similarity exists between Ibn Arabi's Shekhinah (tranquillity) and Moses de Leon's Shekhinah.[78] In both, the process of redemption involves a singular event that could be regarded as political redemption, where the rise and fall of empires creates conditions for the national redemption of the Jewish people, leading to the establishment of a Jewish state.[79] Idel argues that this view appears in Abraham Abulafia's (1240–1291) text and is echoed in works by R. Joseph ibn Caspi (1279–1340) and Spinoza (1632–1677) as well as other modern writings on Zionism. Although Jewish Messianism is a theory of catastrophe, the elements of catastrophe and the vision of doom are

---

[70] Jeremiah 33:15.

[71] Nazim, 29, n 25.

[72] Isaiah 11:11-12; Jeremiah 23:8, 30:3; Hosea 3:4-5.

[73] Nazim, 30, n 25.

[74] Mürsel Özalp, "Yahudilik'te "Tikkun Olam: Dünyayı Tamir Etme" Kavramı Üzerine bir Araştırma" [A Survey on the Concept of "Tikkun Olam: Repairing the World' in Judaism] *Cumhuriyet Ilahiyat Dergisi* 23, no. 1 (2019): 291–309.

[75] Özalp, "Yahudilik'te "Tikkun Olam"."

[76] Idel, "Multiple Forms of Redemption'; Julia Alonso, 'The Divine Feminine Presence in Ibn 'Arabi and Moses de Leon," *Religions* 12 (2021): 156.

[77] Idel, "Multiple Forms of Redemption."

[78] Alonso, "The Divine Feminine Presence," 156.

[79] Itamar Ben Ami, "How Jewish Orthodoxy Became a State: Isaac Breuer and the Invention of the Statist Theocracy," *Harvard Theological Review* 116, no. 1 (2023): 123.

uniquely present in the Messianic vision.[80] Sholem stated that 'Zionism will survive its catastrophe. The hour has come when hearts must decide whether Zionism—whose meaning is preparation of the eternal—will succumb to the Zionism of the Jewish state, which is a catastrophe'.[81] In this way, through messianic Zionism, the word 'peace'('*sakina*' in Arabic; '*shakhinah*' in Hebrew) becomes an element of violence, which is a precondition that proceeds peace and the final stage of redemption.

Laitman, a well-known figure in Kabbalah studies, presented in his book *Chaos to Harmony* the idea that redemption in Kabbalah is a universal process dependent on returning to the land. He emphasised that Israel's healing is crucial for humanity's well-being.[82] Israel is the core that holds the key to the world's prosperity, while the other nations make up its outer shell. To achieve harmony with their selfless nature, individuals need to overcome their selfish desires by balancing the desire for Israel with the desire for the Nations of the World.[83] These ideas have urged Kabblistic groups to practically apply them. As Kabbalah has experienced growth and become a primary source in Judaism, it has inspired Zionism to search for religious foundations in order to persuade Jewish people to support the establishment of a state. Through these efforts, certain figures within Zionism have been able to create a system of beliefs that serves Zionism's objectives.

Scholarly Theories That Serve the Zionist Movement

Zionism is a national political movement that, despite its modern secular form, draws heavily on biblical themes. The biblical foundation lies in the covenant described in Genesis 15:18, where the land of Israel is promised to the Jewish people. For centuries, Jewish prayers and traditions, including the phrase 'Next year in Jerusalem', sustained the hope of a return to Zion.[84] However, biblical Zionism envisioned spiritual restoration through divine intervention, whereas modern Zionism, emerging in the 19th century, was a secular response to Europe's failure to integrate Jews into society.[85] Rather than waiting for a Messiah, modern Zionists focused on establishing a Jewish state as a practical solution to antisemitism and Jewish displacement. Influenced by European nationalist movements, they shifted their emphasis from religious redemption to political sovereignty, bridging biblical heritage with a contemporary and pragmatic vision for Jewish self-determination.[86]

In 1897, Theodore Herzl put forth the concept of Zionism in his essay 'The Jewish State'. Herzl is often regarded as the father of political Zionism, but his contributions were primarily organisational rather than ideological. Long before Herzl's 1896 publication of *Der Judenstaat* (*The Jewish State*), early thinkers such as Moses Hess, who authored *Rome and Jerusalem* (1862), Leon Pinsker, the author of *Auto-Emancipation* (1882), and Rabbi Yehuda Alkalai had already laid the intellectual foundations for Zionist thought.[87] Herzl's pragmatic blueprint for a Jewish homeland was not the first to use the term 'Zionism', nor did it deeply engage with its ideological history. His key accomplishment was convening the First Zionist Congress in Basel in 1897, which united disparate Jewish factions into a cohesive political movement.[88] This movement emerged against the backdrop of modernity, where the Jewish experience with the Enlightenment (*Haskalah*) and ongoing antisemitism – such as the Dreyfus Affair – made clear that assimilation into European society was not a viable solution. In response, Zionism offered a path away from integration and toward national self-determination.[89]

---

[80] Klausner, *The Messianic Idea*, 396, n 1.
[81] Zadoff, *Gershom Scholem*, 45.
[82] Michael Laitman, *From Chaos to Harmony: The Solution to the Global Crisis According to the Wisdom of Kabbalah* (Laitman Kabbalah Publishers, 2007).
[83] Laitman, 183.
[84] Biale, *Not in the Heavens*.
[85] Eisen, *The Peace and Violence of Judaism*.
[86] Aviezer Ravitzky, *Messianism, Zionism, and Jewish Religious Radicalism* (University of Chicago Press, 1996).
[87] Biale, *Not in the Heavens*.
[88] Eisen, *The Peace and Violence of Judaism*.
[89] Ravitzky, *Messianism, Zionism, and Jewish Religious Radicalism*.

Although prior proposals had been made for Jewish resettlement in Palestine, Zionism emerged from the intricate relationship between Jews and modernity.[90] Its extensive chronicle is replete with discrepancies, discussions, resistance and internal hurdles, as evident in 'the connection to the Diaspora, Orthodoxy and politics, theological obstacles, Messianism, the anti-Zionist left, justice issues, and the Israeli/Palestinian conflict.'[91]

Scholem played a pivotal role in bridging Jewish mystical traditions – especially Kabbalah and Messianism – with Zionist ideology. He argued that historical Jewish mysticism, including controversial movements like Sabbateanism and Frankism, expressed a deep-seated struggle with exile and redemption. Scholem's 'Zionizing' of these studies involved reinterpreting Jewish texts and traditions to affirm Zionism's spiritual necessity, positioning it as a natural culmination of Jewish history. This interpretation was not without its critics, however. Scholem's analysis of the antinomian (law-rejecting) tendencies in Sabbatean and Frankist thought raised questions about his academic objectivity. In works such as 'Nihilism as a Religious Phenomenon' and 'Redemption Through Sin', he explored how these heretical movements attempted to transcend traditional norms, revealing a persistent yearning for redemption that, in his view, only Zionism could fulfil.[92] While Herzl's political Zionism was firmly secular, Scholem's reinterpretations provided a spiritual and historical framework that lent Zionism an additional dimension of Messianic expectation.

Rabbi Yitzhak Reines's leadership marked a pivotal shift in the development of religious Zionism. While earlier figures such as Rabbi Yehuda Alkalai and Rabbi Zvi Hirsch Kalischer had built their arguments on Messianic foundations, Reines was more pragmatic, emphasising Jewish survival in the face of European antisemitism over direct theological aspirations. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Reines recognised that religious divisions could not overshadow the pressing need for a Jewish homeland. He founded the Mizrachi movement with the explicit purpose of integrating religious principles into the broader Zionist endeavour, but without making redemption the central aim. Instead, Reines maintained that Zionism's primary goal was to ensure Jewish existence in Palestine. His endorsement of Herzl's secular leadership was particularly significant, as Reines declared Herzl to be 'the man all Jews are looking towards'.[93]

This shift was not sudden or unanticipated. Alkalai and Kalischer had laid the foundation for religious Zionism by arguing that settling the Land of Israel was not only a political necessity but a sacred act that paved the way for divine redemption. Alkalai's writings called for the preparation for redemption (*hakhsharat ha-geulah*), envisioning settlement as a means of fulfilling Messianic prophecy.[94] Kalischer, similarly, framed the return to Palestine as a divine imperative, rooted in traditional Jewish eschatology.[95] However, their emphasis on theological and Messianic ideals meant that their vision was unattuned to the immediate, pragmatic concerns that Jewish communities faced in the late 19th century.

Reines, by contrast, shifted the focus toward practical cooperation between religious and secular Zionists, advocating for a strategy that addressed both the social and political realities of the time. By aligning with Herzl and placing Jewish survival at the forefront, Reines signalled a new approach within religious Zionism – one that saw practical action as the best path forward. This evolution from a Messianic theological framework to a pragmatic and politically engaged religious Zionism reflected the changing needs of the Jewish people and underscored Reines's central role in redefining the movement's purpose and direction.[96]

Another leading figure in religious Zionism was Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook, who frequently wrote about the relationship between religious orthodoxy and secular Zionism, the importance of Judaism and the Jewish State in redeeming the world, and the unique connection between the Jewish People and their land.[97]

---

[90] Laitman, *From Chaos to Harmony*.
[91] Laitman, *From Chaos to Harmony.*
[92] Scholem, *Major Trends*.
[93] Yitzhak Reines, 88–91.
[94] Yehuda Alkalai, *Minhat Yehuda: A Gift Offering* (Jerusalem, 1843).
[95] Zvi Hirsch Kalischer, *Derishat Tzion* [*Seeking Zion*] (Torat Chaim Publishing, 1862).
[96] Kalischer, *Derishat Tzion.*
[97] William Kluback, "Review of *The Making of Modern Zionism: The Intellectual Origins of the Jewish State* by Shlomo Avineri," *International Journal for the Philosophy of Religion* 15, no. 3 (1984): 181; Ghila Amati, "Discovering the Depths Within: Kook's Zionism and the Philosophy

Integrating Lurianic Kabbalah with Maimonaid philosophy, Kook distinguished between Zion and Jerusalem: Zion represented the external aspect of Jewish national identity, whereas Jerusalem embodied the spiritual dimension.[98] According to Kook, the goal of the holy is not simply a state but the presence of God in Jerusalem as the seat of glory and the temple's location.[99] He believed that the Jewish state was a tool for ushering in a Messianic era,[100] and that the secular and physical aspects of the Zionist movement were integral to this process.[101] Kook argued that the Jewish People would only be able to reconnect to their true identity, nature and destiny in the Land of Israel,[102] and he considered the settling of Jews in 'Judea and Samaria' (the Zionist name for the West Bank territories) to be a significant milestone in this salvation.[103] In the 19th and 20th centuries, Jewish thinkers adopted an increasingly radical interpretation of this idea which at times amounted to pantheism.

Kook's most significant work, 'Lights of Repentance', presents repentance as an all-encompassing movement toward reality that extends beyond individuals to encompass political, social and scientific processes.[104] It emphasises that the return of the people of Israel to their land and their national salvation is the ultimate form of repentance.[105] Rav Kook envisioned a unification of Jewish aspirations for individual rights, national and territorial rights, and a spiritual centre.[106] He proposed the establishment of a Jewish autonomous sovereign authority in any location, along with a spiritual Torah centre in the Land of Israel. Although he acknowledged that complete Jewish sovereignty in the Land of Israel would be unattainable during his era, he dedicated himself to pursuing this objective after relocating to the region.[107]

Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook serves as a crucial bridge between religious mysticism and secular Zionism. Kook saw the labour Zionist movements as unwitting agents of divine redemption, contributing to the Messianic process by reclaiming the land and reviving Jewish sovereignty. In his theological writings, Kook emphasised that even secular efforts to build the Jewish state were part of a divine plan, as they laid the groundwork for a spiritual renaissance.[108] His framework allowed for a reinterpretation of socialist Zionism within a mystical and redemptive paradigm. Other members of the Kook family had a significant impact on the religious Zionist movement. The father, Rav Kook (1865–1935), established the ideology and founded the religious school Yeshivat Mercaz Harav. His son, who developed his father's ideas further, founded the Gush Emunim movement and spearheaded settlement initiatives after the 1973 war with Egypt. This philosophy proved to be even more radical when politicians decided to increase settlement and forced displacement of Palestinians.[109]

Countering Zionism

During this time, some voices tried to shift Zionism away from colonialism but failed. A notable Jewish scholar who opposed Rav Kook and religious Zionism was Yeshayahu Leibowitz. While he initially participated in the religious Zionist 'Hamizrahi' movement, his views shifted after the 1967 war. He argued that the movement blurred the line between the sacred and the profane.[110] Leibowitz believed that only God was sacred and that people could pursue the sacred only through religious duties as everything else was profane and worldly.[111] It followed that the state had no sanctity at all, not even 'the Land of Israel'.

---

of Life of Henri Bergson," *Religions* 14, no. 2 (2023): 261.

[98] Chamiel, *The Dual Truth,* 22.

[99] Amati, "Discovering the Depths Within."

[100] Régine Azria, "Review of *Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook and Jewish Spirituality* by Lawrence Kaplan and David Shatz, eds.," *Archives des Sciences Sociales des Religions* 119 (1995): 120–21; Laitman, *From Chaos to Harmony*; Scholem, *The Messianic Idea.*

[101] Azria, "Review of *Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook*," 120–21.

[102] Amati, "Discovering the Depths Within'; Yitzhak Conforti, '"The New Jew" in the Zionist Movement: Ideology and Historiography," *The Australian Journal of Jewish Studies* 25 (2011): 100.

[103] Ehud Eiran, "Settling to Win: Strategic Settlement Projects in Post-Colonial Times," PhD dissertation, Brandeis University, 2010.

[104] Chamiel, *The Dual Truth,* 22; Rivka Horwitz, "Exile and Redemption in the Thought of Isaac Breuer," *Tradition: A Journal of Orthodox Jewish Thought* 26, no. 2 (1992): 77–98.

[105] Kluback, "Review of *The Making of Modern Zionism*"; Conforti, '"The New Jew" in the Zionist Movement."

[106] Chamiel, *The Dual Truth,* 22.

[107] Chamiel, *The Dual Truth,* 485, n 22.

[108] Abraham Isaac Kook, *Orot HaKodesh*, translated by Betzalel Naor (Jason Aronson Publishers, 1993).

[109] Chamiel, *The Dual Truth*, 22.

[110] Haim O. Rechnitzer, "Redemptive Theology in the Thought of Yeshayahu Leibowitz," *Israel Studies* 13, no. 3 (2008): 137–59.

[111] Rechnitzer, "Redemptive Theology."

Leibowitz did not see any religious meaning in establishing the State of Israel, and he was angered by the rhetoric of the secular and religious political right who justified their attempt to control and settle the occupied territories in Judea and Samaria by claiming a historical relationship with the 'land'.[112] While supporters of religious Zionism viewed the Messianic significance of Judaism as tied to the return of the people of Israel to their land and the establishment of a Jewish state, Leibowitz considered this belief to be entirely false.[113] Instead, he held that true salvation could only be achieved by studying the Torah for its own sake and not for political reasons. He likened the Jewish religion to a mistress who had been imprisoned by the secular system and believed that the liberation of the Jewish religion was of utmost importance.[114] His opposition to Zionism was shared by most orthodox Jews as well as many Jewish thinkers.

Three such figures were Rabbi Samson Raphael (1808–1888), founder of Jewish neo-Orthodoxy, Hirsch and Maimonides, all of whom argued there is no inherent sanctity to the Land of Israel or the Jewish people. The Jewish people are equal to other nations, and the Land of Israel is only a tool for observing the Torah. For Hirsch, exile is a model that allows the Jewish people to teach the morality of the Torah to other nations and prepare for redemption.[115] This view finds support in the Qur'an, which declares the equality of Jews with other people:

﴿وَقَالَتِ ٱلۡيَهُودُ وَٱلنَّصَٰرَىٰ نَحۡنُ أَبۡنَٰٓؤُاْ ٱللَّهِ وَأَحِبَّٰٓؤُهُۥۚ قُلۡ فَلِمَ يُعَذِّبُكُم بِذُنُوبِكُمۖ بَلۡ أَنتُم بَشَرٞ مِّمَّنۡ خَلَقَۚ ...﴾

The Jews and the Christians each say, "We are the children of Allah and His most beloved!" Say, O Prophet, "Why then does He punish you for your sins? No! You are only humans like others of His Own making. (Al-Ma'idah 5:18)

Opposing Zionism and the formation of the State of Israel, Neturei Karta, a community of Orthodox Jews known as 'Guardians of the City', have argued that the true Israel can only be restored by the Messiah's arrival.[116] To support this claim, they point to a Talmudic Midrash, which tells of a divine pact made between God, the Jewish People and the Gentiles when the Roman Empire exiled the Jews. One provision of this pact was that the Jews would not rebel against their non-Jewish hosts, and another was that they would not immigrate en masse to the Land of Israel. In exchange, the Gentile nations promised not to persecute the Jews too harshly. By their violation of this pact, it is argued that the Jewish People are openly rebelling against God,[117] usurping the Messiah's role and forcing the End Times.[118] Their understanding conforms with the Quranic text:

﴿وَقُلۡنَا مِنۢ بَعۡدِهِۦ لِبَنِيٓ إِسۡرَٰٓءِيلَ ٱسۡكُنُواْ ٱلۡأَرۡضَ فَإِذَا جَآءَ وَعۡدُ ٱلۡأٓخِرَةِ جِئۡنَا بِكُمۡ لَفِيفٗا﴾

And We said to the Children of Israel after Pharaoh, "Reside in the land, but when the promise of the Hereafter comes to pass, We will bring you all together." (Al-Isra' 17:104)

It seems the Qur'an does not recognise the Messiah's personality or the Neturei's explanation of events. Isaac Breuer (1883–1946), a prominent figure in the ultra-Orthodox political movement Agudath Israel, supported a religious-based state and a partnership between man and God for world redemption based on the Lurianic concept of *tikkun*.[119]

The Zionist movement's initial strategy was defensive. However, after the 'Arab Revolt' of 1936–1939, which protested the expansion of Jewish settlements, the movement adopted an offensive approach. This ultimately led to the war of 1948 and Israel's policy of serving Zionist interests.[120] This was the first step

---

[112] Rechnitzer, "Redemptive Theology."
[113] Rechnitzer, "Redemptive Theology," 90.
[114] Rechnitzer, "Redemptive Theology."
[115] Chamiel, *The Dual Truth,* 25, 22.
[116] Jewish Virtual Library, "Neturei Karta," accessed January 2, 2024, https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/neturei-karta-2.
[117] Jewish Virtual Library, "Neturei Karta."
[118] Ravitzky, *Messianism, Zionism, and Jewish Religious Radicalism.*
[119] Horwitz, "Exile and Redemption," 123–46.
[120] Tamar Amar-Dahl, *Zionist Israel and the Question of Palestine: Jewish Statehood and the History of the Middle East Conflict* (De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2016), 92.

towards using military force to establish the state of Israel, which can be compared to the current assault on Gaza.

While these early movements did not explicitly invoke religious or mystical doctrines, their emphasis on the return to the Land of Israel and the transformation of Jewish identity can be interpreted through a Messianic lens. The notion of *aliyah* (ascent), the agricultural settlement of the land, and the revival of the Hebrew language resonated with themes of *tikkun olam* (world repair) and redemption central to Kabbalistic thought. Gershom Scholem noted that secular Zionism, even in its rejection of traditional religiosity, often unconsciously retained the redemptive aspirations of Jewish Messianism.[121] Kabbalistic mysticism emphasizes the idea of *tikkun*—the repair and restoration of divine harmony. This parallels the socialist Zionist goal of building a utopian society through collective labour and social justice. The pioneers of the *Histadrut* and other labour movements, while secular, drew on a deeply rooted Jewish ethos of communal responsibility and collective betterment, ideas that could be indirectly linked to Kabbalistic visions of cosmic and societal repair.[122]

This understanding of political theology aims to build a relationship between politics and Messianic theology to justify war and ensure that the divine intersects with the secular state.[123] The idea, which reflects orthodox Judaism, is mentioned in the Old Testament: 'The sceptre will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet until he to whom it belongs shall come and the obedience of the nations shall be his.'[124] The Quranic text, however, confirms the coming of the Messiah (understood as Jesus), not to bring about war and establish a state, but to establish the worship of God:

﴿وَإِن مِّنْ أَهْلِ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ إِلَّا لَيُؤْمِنَنَّ بِهِۦ قَبْلَ مَوْتِهِۦ ۖ وَيَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا﴾

"Every one of the People of the Book will definitely believe in him before his death. And
on the Day of Judgment Jesus will be a witness against them." (An-Nisa 4:159)

Within the Kabbalistic tradition, Shekhinah embodies a sense of calmness and tranquillity. This tradition believes that creation originated from the union of God and the Shekhinah, who is considered to be the feminine aspect of God and the mother of the world. According to this belief, the Shekhinah is present in humanity and the world, residing within the temple and connected to the people. Often referred to as the 'mother of the world', the Shekhinah's absence from Palestine is attributed to the destruction of the temple and the sins of the Children of Israel. To facilitate the reunification of the Shekhinah with the people, one must follow the teachings and commandments of the Torah and engage in prayer and worship.

According to Isaiah, the Shekhinah was susceptible to violation by Satan, and the outcome was the creation of Gentiles. This and other portrayals of the Shekhinah underwent several phases of interpretation within Jewish Messianism until the late 19th and early 20th centuries when immigration and settlement became systematic and organised by various Kabbalistic Messianic factions, including and especially the Zionist movement.

Settlement and the Way Toward the 'Kingdom of God'

As Kabbalistic thought developed and immigration to Palestine was encouraged, some Hasidic groups joined the Zionist movement and became the pioneers of Ashkenazi Jews who settled in Palestine in the late 18th century.[125] They established the Bnei Brak settlement in 1924 CE, regarded as the first stronghold of religious people in Israel, located near Tel Aviv. In the same year, the settlement of Kfar Hasidim was destroyed. After World War II, additional Hasidic groups immigrated to Palestine, where they have remained.[126] Meanwhile, social, economic and educational institutions have continued to increase in the region.

---

[121] Scholem, 14–16.
[122] Elior, *The Mystical Origins of Hasidism*.
[123] Scharf, "The Dialectics of Feeling," 74.
[124] Genesis 49:10.
[125] Daniel Reiser, "Contemporary Uses and Forms of Hasidut (The Orthodox Forum)," *Tradition* 55, no. 3 (2023): 157–68.
[126] Reiser, "Contemporary Uses and Forms of Hasidut."

Over a century prior to the advent of Zionism, Hasidic doctrine led followers to migrate to Palestine as they believed it to be a sacred act. This eventually became a shared principle between Hasidim and Zionism, leading to a convergence of the two. Hasidic groups founded the Mizrachi and HaPoel HaMizrachi, two groups that incorporated to establish the Mafdal (National Religious Party) in 1956.[127] Martin Buber, a Jewish Hasidism pioneer and one of Zionism's founders, combined his philosophical thought with Kabbalah's ideas regarding the holiness of the Earth.[128] He called for the revival of the mystical atmosphere and millenarian dreams that had Palestine at the centre. One of Buber's ideas stemming from the Kabbalistic theory of 'Oneness' is that the existence of the divine will is equal to the existence of Israel. In Buber's theology, the Divine cannot be separated from the Land; both exist as authentic beings and are united. This, and other ideas, can be found in his book *The Prophetic Doctrine*, in which he used the term 'prophetic politics', arguing that religion, ethics and politics cannot be separated.[129] Buber believed that learning was a means of reaffirming one's Jewish identity, but he did not restrict its significance to Judaism or Jews alone.[130] He inherited a Hegelian legacy that emphasises the importance of addressing humanity's needs through social action.[131]

Between the 1930s and the establishment of the Israeli state, Jewish immigration waves (Aliyah) and the Jewish labour movement played a crucial role in laying the groundwork for future settlement efforts. Early Aliyah movements, beginning with the First Aliyah (1882–1903), were largely inspired by religious motivations, as settlers – many influenced by Kabbalistic and Hasidic doctrines – viewed their return to the Land of Israel as fulfilling a sacred duty.[132] The Second Aliyah (1904–1914), however, introduced a more secular and socialist ethos, emphasising agricultural labour and the creation of collective communities such as kibbutzim and moshavim.[133] These settlement models were central to Zionist state-building strategies, as they created a foundation for self-reliance and infrastructure that persisted through subsequent waves of immigration. In the 1930s, the Fifth Aliyah, driven by the rise of Nazism in Europe, brought tens of thousands of immigrants into Palestine, further expanding agricultural and urban settlements. This period also saw the increasing convergence of religious and pragmatic Zionist motivations, as religious groups supported settlement initiatives that aligned with both their spiritual goals and the practical necessity of providing a refuge for persecuted Jews.[134]

The Jewish labour movement was instrumental in ensuring the sustainability of these early settlements. Organisations like Hapoel Hatzair and Ahdut HaAvoda championed collective settlements, fostered economic independence, and centralised labour activities through institutions such as the Histadrut.[135] While these movements were predominantly socialist and secular, they occasionally intersected with religious and mystical ideologies. For example, some saw kibbutzim not only as socialist experiments but also as embodiments of the Kabbalistic notion of *tikkun* – reclaiming the land to transform it into a productive and spiritually meaningful space.[136] This blending of ideologies, along with the practical leadership provided by labour Zionist organizations, bridged the gap from the 1930s to the post-war years. After World War II, clandestine immigration efforts (Aliyah Bet) and the establishment of the State of Israel institutionalised these pioneering settlement initiatives, confirming the central role that both religious and secular movements played in creating a viable Jewish homeland.[137]

---

[127] Reiser, "Contemporary Uses and Forms of Hasidut."
[128] Daniel S. Breslauer, "Martin Buber's Myth of Zion: National Education or Counter-Education?," *Studies in Philosophy & Education* 35, no. 5 (2016), 493–511.
[129] Francesco Ferrari, "Between Conflict and Reconciliation: Martin Buber on the Jewish settlement of Palestine. With the Unpublished Manuscript "Fragen und Antworten. Die jüdische Besiedlung Palästinas" (1947)," *Jewish Culture and History* 10 (2024): 186–97.
[130] Ghilad Shenhav et al., *Modern Jewish Thought on Crisis: Interpretation, Heresy, and History* (Walter de Gruyter, 2024).
[131] Daniel S. Breslauer, "Martin Buber's Myth of Zion," 110.
[132] Ettinger, "The Roots of Modern Jewish Nationalism," 34.
[133] Halperin, *Babel in Zion*.
[134] Scholem, *Major Trends*.
[135] Halperin, *Babel in Zion*.
[136] Eisen, *The Peace and Violence of Judaism*.
[137] Ettinger, "The Roots of Modern Jewish Nationalism," 54–73.

From 1968 to 1977, Israel's Labour governments established more settlements in the West Bank to secure a Jewish majority in strategic areas like the Tel Aviv–Jerusalem corridor. By 1990, Gush Imunim, supported by 31 Knesset members (who called themselves the Land of Israel Lobby), were able to establish more settlers in Judea, Samaria and Gaza.[138]

Religious nationalist groups such as Gush Emunim significantly influenced Israeli settlement policy under both Labour and Likud governments, despite the secular ideological roots of these parties. During the Labour governments of the 1960s and 1970s, settlement initiatives initially centred on strategic security concerns, aiming to ensure a Jewish majority in key areas like the Jordan Valley and the Tel Aviv–Jerusalem corridor. However, the emergence of Gush Emunim introduced a theological justification for settlement expansion rooted in Messianic teachings that portrayed settlement as a divine commandment.[139] While Labour maintained a primarily secular stance, it increasingly accommodated religious nationalist narratives to secure political alliances. Thus, unauthorized outposts were allowed to remain and limited government oversight was provided.[140] By incorporating religious justification into its settlement strategies, Labour helped normalise the notion that the West Bank settlements served both a strategic necessity and a fulfilment of biblical prophecy.[141]

Beginning in 1977, under Likud governments, the convergence of religious and nationalist motivations became more pronounced. Likud's ideological foundation, shaped by Vladimir Jabotinsky's revisionist Zionism, was initially grounded in radical nationalism rather than theological principles. However, party leaders including Menachem Begin and Ariel Sharon increasingly adopted Gush Emunim's religious rhetoric to strengthen their justification for settlement policies. Begin's reframing of the West Bank as 'liberated' rather than 'occupied' echoed Gush Emunim's Messianic vision and reinforced the legitimacy of Likud's aggressive expansion efforts.[142] Although Likud's primary motivations, which emphasised sovereignty and territorial control, remained secular, the theological narrative offered by Gush Emunim provided a powerful moral framework that helped to rally political and public support for their policies. Over time, this alliance blurred the lines between secular and religious settlement motivations, entrenching religiously inspired justifications within Israeli political and policy frameworks and leaving a lasting impact on the country's approach to the occupied territories.[143]

The West Bank currently houses 128 Israeli settlements, accommodating more than 490,000 Jewish residents as of February 2022.[144] The majority of the world views these settlements as illegal under international law.[145] One-third of the settlers are Haredim, one-third are secular and the remaining third are religious Zionists.[146] The settlement policy has been a critical factor in the Zionist conflict with the Palestinians, and it remains a significant contributor to their dispossession.

As the wave of immigration has increased in the move toward the final stage of Messianism, the attacks against Palestinians have also increased. More extreme measures of violence and recurrent military attacks have occurred since 2004, producing 1.5 million refugees who now reside in Gaza, and since October 2023 alone, over 30,000 civilians have been killed.[147] At least 17,000 children in Gaza are unaccompanied or separated from their families, according to estimates by UNICEF, the U.N. children's fund, and more than 70 percent of Gaza's population are refugees or descendants of refugees.[148]

---

[138] Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, eds., *Fundamentalisms and the State: Remaking Polities, Economies, and Militance* (University of Chicago Press, 1993).

[139] Kook, *Orot HaKodesh*.

[140] Ehud Sprinzak, *The Ascendance of Israel's Radical Right* (Oxford University Press, 1991).

[141] Yizhak Vermes, *Messianic Expectations in Israel During the Second Temple Period*, translated by Yosef Green, (Magnes Press, 1977).

[142] Elior, *The Mystical Origins of Hasidism*.

[143] Gadi Taub, *The Settlers and the Struggle Over the Meaning of Zionism* (Yale University Press, 2010); Vermes, *Messianic Expectations.*

[144] Israel Policy Forum, "West Bank Settlements Explained," accessed March 20, 2023, https://israelpolicyforum.org/west-bank-settlements-explained.

[145] Israel Policy Forum, "West Bank Settlements Explained."

[146] Israel Policy Forum, "West Bank Settlements Explained."

[147] Ishaan Tharoor, "Gaza's Spiraling, Unprecedented Humanitarian Catastrophe," *Washington Post*, March 1, 2024, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2024/03/01/gaza-humanitarian-catastrophe/.

[148] Hiba Yazbek, "17,000 Children in Gaza Are Without a Guardian," *New York Times*, February 6, 2024, https://www.proquest.com/docview/2922314058?sourcetype=Newspapers.

The policies of Netanyahu's government, while often framed in nationalist and security terms, have been significantly shaped by religious Messianic doctrine propagated by smaller yet radical religious parties. These groups, although not large in numbers, have wielded outsized influence through strategic alliances and key ministerial positions. Figures such as Bezalel Smotrich and Itamar Ben-Gvir, who hold prominent cabinet roles, openly advocate for policies aligned with Messianic and Kabbalistic visions. For example, the Religious Zionism Party, which forms part of Netanyahu's coalition, has promoted territorial expansion and settlement growth as fulfilling divine prophecy.[149] This alliance has led to the normalisation of policies that blend Likud's traditionally secular, ultra-nationalist platform with the Messianic worldview, creating a hybrid framework that uses religious rhetoric to justify state actions, including aggressive settlement expansion and military operations.[150]

Concrete evidence of this integration can be found in the government's settlement policies and its approach to Gaza. Settlement expansion in the West Bank and East Jerusalem is not merely a strategic or nationalist objective; it also aligns with Messianic goals of reclaiming land as a divine mandate. The resulting displacement of Palestinians has been described by radical religious leaders as part of a broader redemption process.[151] Similarly, military offensives in Gaza – presented as security measures – have been portrayed by some religious extremists as a sacred duty, reinforcing the ideological fusion of secular and religious motivations. Even legislation such as the Nation-State Law, which prioritises Jewish identity, reflects a shift towards policies shaped by Messianic doctrine. This demonstrates that, while Likud's origins are rooted in secular ultra-nationalism, its dependence on religious nationalist parties has introduced a significant theological dimension into state policy, fundamentally altering its approach to settlement and territorial control.[152]

These casualties do not achieve redemption; instead, they do the opposite. As Brenner argues, Zionism believed that creating a Jewish state would end antisemitism, but this has not been the case. Antisemitism still exists and often appears as anti-Zionism, putting Jews in the diaspora at risk due to their association with Israel.[153] The Kabbalists were significantly affected by the development of ideas that eventually became beliefs. This impact was not limited to the adherents of these beliefs but also extended to others interacting with them.

Conclusion

This study highlights the historical significance of Kabbalistic Messianic ideas within Jewish history, demonstrating how these religious concepts eventually influenced the secular ideology of the Zionist movement. By tracing the intersection of political and religious beliefs in contemporary Israel to Messianic Kabbalah, the study identifies key moments when mystical doctrines were reinterpreted to justify territorial expansion and the displacement of Palestinians. For instance, religious Zionist figures such as Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook and the Gush Emunim movement integrated Kabbalistic Messianism into a divine mandate for reclaiming the land of Israel. These religious perspectives were then absorbed by secular Zionist leaders and parties, as evidenced by the settlement policies endorsed by Likud and their alliances with religious nationalist groups.[154] Despite their secular roots, these political actors increasingly utilised Messianic rhetoric, which helped normalise the use of militaristic and expansionist policies. Furthermore, sociopolitical conditions such as European antisemitism and historical persecution were catalysts that reshaped traditional Messianic ideals into exclusionary and militant frameworks. While this study also makes a preliminary inquiry into the under-examined connection between Kabbalah and Islamic mysticism, further research is needed to fully understand these historical and theological intersections.

---

[149] Gershom Gorenberg, *The Accidental Empire: Israel and the Birth of the Settlements, 1967–1977* (Times Books, 2006).

[150] Sprinzak, *The Ascendance of Israel's Radical Right*; Vermes, *Messianic Expectations*.

[151] Elior, *The Mystical Origins of Hasidism*.

[152] Vermes, *Messianic Expectations*.

[153] Anita Shapira, "Review of *In Search of Israel: The History of an Idea* by Michael Brenner," *Association for Jewish Studies* 41, no. 1 (2019): 254–56.

[154] Taub, *The Settlers and the Struggle*; Gorenberg, *The Accidental Empire*.

Redemption is an ultimate goal for all prophets, common to orthodox Islam, Judaism and Christianity, and it involves worshipping God, following His commandments and refraining from evil acts. These beliefs originate in sacred scriptures; the Qur'an, for example, stresses the importance of worshipping Allah alone and not associating partners with Him. As this study showed, however, the sociopolitical circumstances that Jews faced in the early 20th century led many to deviate from the scriptures and present more violent interpretations of Messianic ideas to justify demographic change to the native Palestine population.

The study's findings highlight the importance of addressing both the theological and socio-political dimensions of Kabbalistic Messianism. While the scope of the study is broad, it reveals how Kabbalistic Messianism can serve as a connective framework that links seemingly distinct areas of inquiry. Exploring the theological connections between Kabbalistic mysticism and Islamic interpretations of Messianic concepts can, on the one hand, deepen our understanding of shared eschatological themes and their doctrinal interpretations. On the other hand, examining how Kabbalistic Messianic doctrines have influenced Zionist political strategies paves the way towards better understanding their impact on the displacement of Palestinians and the ongoing conflict in the region. By recognizing the interplay between these divergent influences, the study sets the stage for more nuanced research that delves more deeply into the intersection of religious ideologies and political realities.

Further findings suggest that, in their pursuit of salvation, some Kabbalists were driven by material inclinations and psychological factors. Turmoil within Jewish communities may have given rise to heightened Messianic fervour. This study, by attempting to address a gap in academic studies, has sought to uncover the motivations leading to the displacement of Palestinians as well as the intersections between Qur'an and Kabbalistic traditions. Certain research areas, such as magic and the mystical science of letters tied to Messianic calculations, remain open for future research.

References

Abdul-Rahman, Muhammad Saed. *Tafsir Ibn Kathir Juz'4 (Part 4): Al-I-Imran 93 to An-Nisaa 23*. 2nd ed. MSA Publication Limited, 2009.

Abufakhar, Sakr. "Mawsoat al-Yahood wa al-Yahodiyah wa al-Sohyoniyah: Naqd Saqr Abufakhar" [Elmessiri's Encyclopedia of Jews, Judaism, and Zionism: Criticized by Saqr Abu Fakhr]. *Hikmah Journal* (2015): 250–80.

AhlBenTaleb, Moulay Abdessadek. "Abdelwahab Elmessiri's Theoretical Abrogation and Appropriation of Western and Zionist Terminology." *International Journal of Islamic Thoughts* 4, no. 2 (2015): 5–22.

Alkalai, Yehuda. *Minhat Yehuda: A Gift Offering*. Jerusalem, 1843.

Alonso, Julia. "The Divine Feminine Presence in Ibn 'Arabi and Moses de Leon." *Religions* 12 (2021): 156.

Amar-Dahl, Tamar. *Zionist Israel and the Question of Palestine: Jewish Statehood and the History of the Middle East Conflict*. De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2016.

Amati, Ghila. "Discovering the Depths Within: Kook's Zionism and the Philosophy of Life of Henri Bergson." *Religions* 14, no. 2 (2023): 261.

Appleby, R. Scott, and Martin E. Marty, eds. *Fundamentalisms and the State: Remaking Polities, Economies, and Militance*. University of Chicago Press, 1993.

Azria, Régine. Review of *Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook and Jewish Spirituality*, edited by Lawrence Kaplan and David Shatz. *Archives des Sciences Sociales des Religions* 119 (1995): 120– 21.

Baer, Marc. *The Dönme: Jewish Converts, Muslim Revolutionaries, and Secular Turks.* Stanford University Press, 2010.

Ben Ami, Itamar. "How Jewish Orthodoxy Became a State: Isaac Breuer and the Invention of the Statist Theocracy." *Harvard Theological Review* 116, no. 1 (2023): 123.

Ben-Gurion, David. *Israel: A Personal History*. Funk & Wagnalls, 1954.

Biale, David. *Not in the Heavens: The Tradition of Jewish Secular Thought*. Princeton University Press, 2012.

Breslauer, Daniel S. "Martin Buber's Myth of Zion: National Education or Counter-Education?" *Studies in Philosophy & Education* 35, no. 5 (2016): 493–511.

Brody, Samuel Hayim. "Review of *Rethinking the Messianic Idea in Judaism*, edited by Michael L. Morgan and Steven Weitzman." *Studies in Christian-Jewish Relations* 10, no. 1 (2015): 1–4.

Chamiel, Ephraim. *The Dual Truth, Volumes I & II: Studies on Nineteenth-Century Modern Religious Thought and Its Influence on Twentieth-Century Jewish Philosophy.* Academic Studies Press, 2020.

Collins, John J. "The Scepter and the Star: Messianism in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls." *Theological Studies* 57, no. 2 (1996): 339.

Conforti, Yitzhak. "'The New Jew' in the Zionist Movement: Ideology and Historiography." *The Australian Journal of Jewish Studies* 25 (2011): 100.

Darweesh, Huda. "Aqidat Al-Qabbalah wa Dawruha fi Tashkil Al-Aqliyah Al-Yahudiyah Al-Mu'asirah" [Kabbalah and Its Role in Forming the Modern Jewish Mind]. *Oriental Studies Magazine* 33 (2004): 264.

De Molière, Maximilian. *Confronting Kabbalah: Studies in the Christian Hebraist Library of Johann Albrecht Widmanstetter.* Brill, 2024.

Eiran, Ehud. "Settling to Win: Strategic Settlement Projects in Post-Colonial Times." PhD dissertation, Brandeis University, 2010.

Eisen, Robert. *The Peace and Violence of Judaism: From the Bible to Modern Zionism.* Oxford University Press, 2011.

Elior, Rachel. *The Mystical Origins of Hasidism.* Oxford University Press, 2004.

Ettinger, Shmuel. "The Roots of Modern Jewish Nationalism." In *Essential Papers on Zionism*, edited by Jehuda Reinharz and Anita Shapira, 54–73. New York University Press, 1984.

Ferrari, Francesco. "Between Conflict and Reconciliation: Martin Buber on the Jewish Settlement of Palestine. With the Unpublished Manuscript 'Fragen und Antworten. Die jüdische Besiedlung Palästinas' (1947)." *Jewish Culture and History* 10 (2024): 186–97.

Fitzmyer, Joseph A. "Review of The Scepter and the Star: Messianism in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls, by John J. Collins." *Theological Studies* 57, no. 2 (1996): 339.

Gorenberg, Gershom. *The Accidental Empire: Israel and the Birth of the Settlements, 1967–1977.* Henry Holt, 2006.

Gruenwald, Ithamar. *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism.* Brill, 1980.

Halperin, Liora. *Babel in Zion: Jews, Nationalism, and Language Diversity in Palestine, 1920–1948.* Yale University Press, 2009.

Herzl, Theodor. *The Jewish State.* Translated by Sylvie d'Avigdor. 1896. Reprint, Dover Publications, 1997.

Horwitz, Rivka. "Exile and Redemption in the Thought of Isaac Breuer." *Tradition: A Journal of Orthodox Jewish Thought* 26, no. 2 (1992): 77–98.

Idel, Moshe. *Hasidism: Between Ecstasy and Magic.* SUNY Press, 1995.

Idel, Moshe. "Multiple Forms of Redemption in Kabbalah and Hasidism." *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 101, no. 1 (2011): 27–70.

Ishaan Tharoor, 'Gaza's Spiraling, Unprecedented Humanitarian Catastrophe', *Washington Post*, March 1, 2024, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2024/03/01/gaza-humanitarian-catastrophe/.

Israel Policy Forum, 'West Bank Settlements Explained', accessed March 20, 2023, https://israelpolicyforum.org/west-bank-settlements-explained.

Jewish Virtual Library. "Neturei Karta." Accessed January 2, 2024. https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/neturei-karta-2.

Kalischer, Zvi Hirsch. *Derishat Tzion* [*Seeking Zion*]. Torat Chaim Publishing, 1862.

Katz, Jacob. *Out of the Ghetto: The Social Background of Jewish Emancipation, 1770–1870.* Syracuse University Press, 2007.

Klausner, Joseph. *The Messianic Idea in Israel from Its Beginning to the Completion of the Mishnah.* Franklin Classics Trade Press, 2018.

Kluback, William. "Review of The Making of Modern Zionism: The Intellectual Origins of the Jewish State, by Shlomo Avineri." *International Journal for the Philosophy of Religion* 15, no. 3 (1984): 181.

Kook, Abraham Isaac. *Orot HaKodesh.* Translated by Betzalel Naor. Jason Aronson Publishers, 1993.

Laitman, Michael. *From Chaos to Harmony: The Solution to the Global Crisis According to the Wisdom of Kabbalah.* Laitman Kabbalah Publishers, 2007.

Magid, Shaul. "'Mysticism, History, and a 'New' Kabbalah: Gershom Scholem and the Contemporary Scene." *Jewish Quarterly Review* 101, no. 4 (2011): 524.

Magid, Shaul. "Rupture as Tikun or Anti-Traditionalism as Halakhic Salvation: A Response to Menachem Fisch's "Berakhot 19b: The Bavli's Paradigm of Confrontational Discourse"," *Journal of Textual Reasoning* 4, no. 2 (2006): 91–100.

Nazim, Mona. *Kabbalah: Mysticism in Jewish Thought*. Al-Hikma Publishing, 1983.

Nazim, Mona."The Messianic Idea in Judaism from the Old Testament Till the Modern Age." PhD dissertation, 1983.

Özalp, Mürsel. "Yahudilik'te "Tikkun Olam: Dünyayı Tamir Etme" Kavramı Üzerine bir Araştırma" [A Survey on the Concept of "Tikkun Olam: Repairing the World' in Judaism]. *Cumhuriyet Ilahiyat Dergisi* 23, no. 1 (2019): 291–309.

Ravitzky, Aviezer. *Messianism, Zionism, and Jewish Religious Radicalism*. University of Chicago Press, 1996.

Rechnitzer, Haim O. "Redemptive Theology in the Thought of Yeshayahu Leibowitz." *Israel Studies* 13, no. 3 (2008): 137–59.

Reiser, Daniel. "Contemporary Uses and Forms of Hasidut (The Orthodox Forum)." *Tradition* 55, no. 3 (2023): 157–68.

Scharf, Orr. "The Dialectics of Feeling: Hugo Bergman's and Gershom Scholem's Political Theologies of Zionism." *Religions* 13, no. 7 (2022): 601.

Schatz, Adam. "Tikkun Olam: Repairing the World." *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 103, no. 3 (2013): 358–74.

Scholem, Gershom. *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism.* Schocken Books, 1971.

Scholem, Gershom. *The Messianic Idea in Judaism: And Other Essays on Jewish Spirituality.* Schocken, 2011.

Shapira, Anita. "Review of In Search of Israel: The History of an Idea by Michael Brenner," *Association for Jewish Studies* 41, no. 1 (2019): 254–56.

Shenhav, Ghilad, Cohen-Skalli, Cedric and Sharvit, Gilad. *Modern Jewish Thought on Crisis: Interpretation, Heresy, and History*. Walter de Gruyter, 2024.

Sprinzak, Ehud. *The Ascendance of Israel's Radical Right*. Oxford University Press, 1991.

Taub, Gadi. *The Settlers and the Struggle Over the Meaning of Zionism*. Yale University Press, 2010.

Vermes, Yizhak. *Messianic Expectations in Israel During the Second Temple Period*. translated   by Yosef Green. Magnes Press, 1977.

Yazbek, Hiba. '17,000 Children in Gaza Are Without a Guardian' *New York Times*, February 6, 2024, https://www.proquest.com/docview/2922314058?sourcetype=Newspapers.

Zadoff, Noam. *Gershom Scholem: From Berlin to Jerusalem and Back.* Brandeis University Press, 2017.