

The religious roots of modern Zionism

Meir Seidler

General description of the course

The central theme in the longing for redemption in the Jewish tradition over the ages is the return to the Land of Israel. Thus Zionism, though being in its practical and pragmatical components a revolutionary movement among Jews, made in its philosophical and ideological discourse ample use of traditional sources. The course deals with the overt and concealed religious roots of modern Zionism. It concentrates on central 'Zionist' topics in traditional religious Jewish sources (the Written and the Oral Law, medieval Jewish thought and post-medieval religious Jewish thought prior to Zionism) and their modern implications:

- The longing for the return to the Land of Israel.
- The emphasis on the unique (material and spiritual) nature of the Land.
- The people of Israel as a nation among nations.
- Attitudes towards Jewish sovereignty and monarchy.
- Eschatological and pragmatical views of redemption and messianism.
- The relationship between state and religion.
- On the verge of modernity: ideological and practical Pre-Zionism etc.

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Source Texts

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