

# ESSENTIAL TEXTS OF ZIONIST THOUGHT AND MODERN JEWISH IDENTITY

*Rabbi Abraham Isaac HaCohen Kook  
and the Religious-Zionist Aspiration*

Regev Ben-David

May 23, 2023

In this three-part series, *Essential Texts of Zionist Thought and Modern Jewish Identity*, **Regev Ben-David**, Fellow at the Shalom Hartman Institute's Beit Midrash for Israeli Rabbis, explores the ideas of three highly influential Zionist thinkers of the early 20th century: Herzl, Ahad Ha'am, and Rav Kook. Together, we will examine their views on what it means to be a Jew in the modern world and the impact of their philosophies on the discourse about Jewish identity today.

This session is part of Ideas for Today, curated courses by Hartman Institute scholars on the big Jewish ideas of this moment.



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# IDEAS FOR TODAY

## *Rabbi Abraham Isaac HaCohen Kook and the Religious-Zionist Aspiration*

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# Series Outline

- *May 9<sup>th</sup>: Herzl—Between Theodor and Benjamin Ze'ev*
- *May 16<sup>th</sup>: Ahad Ha'am and Cultural-Secular Judaism*
- *May 23<sup>rd</sup>: Rabbi Abraham Isaac HaCohen Kook and the Religious-Zionist Aspiration*





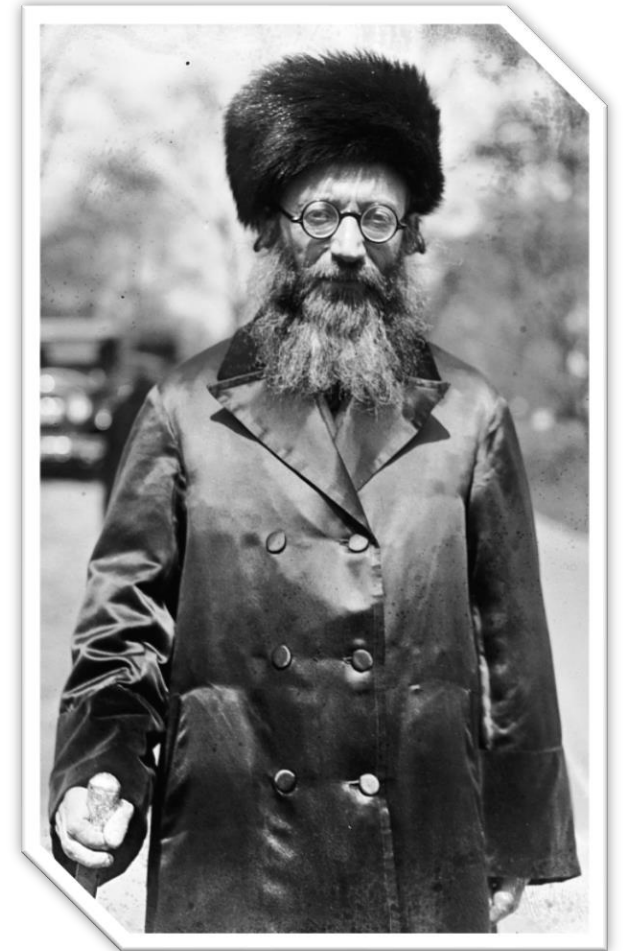
# Rabbi Abraham Isaac HaCohen (ראי"ה) Kook

- Born 1865, Griva (today's Latvia), Yeshivish father, Hassidic mother
- 1886 marries, studies at Volozhyn. Both Zionist and anti-Zionist rabbis
- 1888 rabbi at Zeimel, 1<sup>st</sup> daughter
- 1890-1 His wife passes away. Remarries, Zvi Yehuda is born
- 1895 appointed rabbi at Boisk
- 1904 makes 'aliyah
- 1906 The Shemita debate



# Rabbi Abraham Isaac HaCohen (ראי"ה) Kook

- 1913 “Delegation to the Colonies”
- 1914 WWI, Switzerland, London, visits America
- 1918 Returns to Israel, establishes “Jerusalem Flag” movement, appointed chief rabbi of Jerusalem
- 1922 Appointed Chief (Ashkenazi) Rabbi of Israel
- 1934 Arlosoroff’s Murder Affair
- 1935 Passes away







# Background: Early Religious Zionism and the Haredi objection

- “the Three vows” (BT Ketubot)
- Objections:
  - Expectation for *Divine* (non-human) Redemption
  - Problematic collaboration with non-observant Jews
  - Worsening the condition of the “old Yishuv”
- Early religious Zionists:
  - Alkalay (1840’s), Kalischer (1862), Guttmacher
  - Mohliver (1893), Reines (1903), Berlin, Spektor



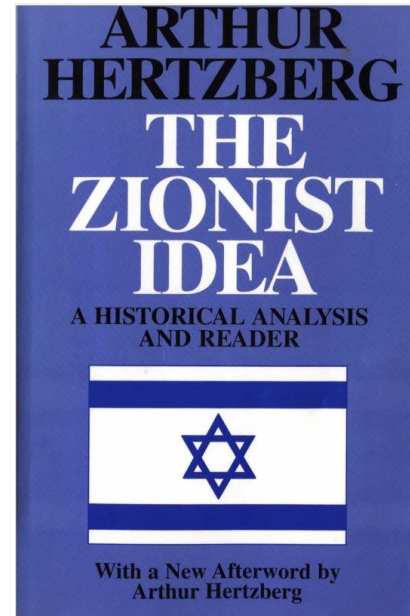
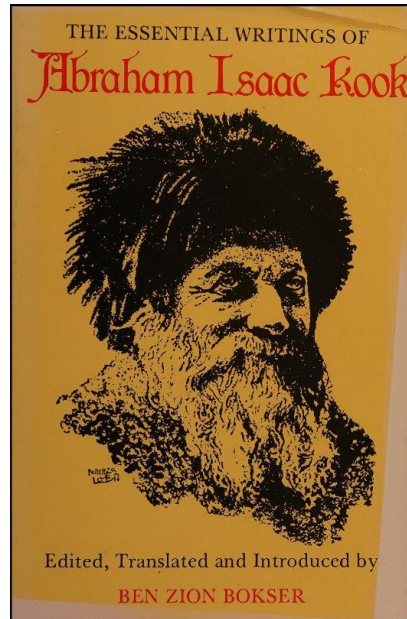
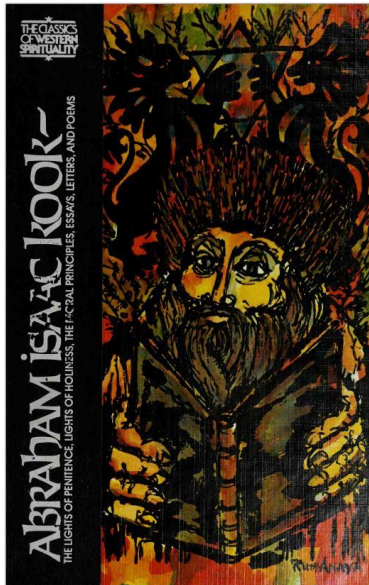


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# Writings—Editions and Translations



Rabbi Abraham-Yitzhak  
ha-Cohen Kook

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