



Seek peace and pursue it  
Psalm 34



## Jerusalem Symposium Recap

On January 22<sup>nd</sup> 2012, The Avi Schaefer Fund held its second annual Jerusalem Symposium at the city's Hadassah Academic College. The large turnout far exceeded our own expectations, with over 300 participants gathered to partake in this year's forum – "The Z-Word: Re-imagining Zionism."

Partnering with StandWithUS, ROI, Hillel, Masa and the Shalom Hartman Institute, the 2012 Symposium focused on examining the role of Zionism today, both in Israel and the Diaspora as well as its evolving meaning throughout the world.

In his introductory remarks, ASF Program Director Elan Ezrachi made it clear that the immense progress of the Fund was a testament to both the intrinsic influence Avi had upon his peers as well as the commitment and support by those who knew Avi in making sure his remarkable achievements and vision for the future were not lost posthumously.

We were lucky to have the remarkable pairing of Natan Sharansky, chairman of The Jewish Agency for Israel, and Nadav Tamir, a political advisor to President Shimon Peres, as our opening speakers.

Mr. Sharansky specifically addressed the challenges facing the Agency as it focuses itself on reinvigorating the ideals upon which the Jewish State was founded in a way that connects to the array of Jews residing in the Diaspora. For his part, Mr. Tamir highlighted his short-lived yet inimitable connection to Avi while serving as the Israeli Consul General in Boston.

Projecting a humble sense of pride and enthused admiration for the continued efforts in advancing his twin brother's legacy, ASF co-founder Yoav Schaefer made it clear that in both his and Avi's eyes, Israel's vast historical achievements could only be defined in a relative context to the State's "future of infinite possibility and promise."

For our first plenary session, "100 years of Zionism: What now? ", attendees were sparked by the ideas of some of Israel's brightest minds including MK Dr. Einat Wilf, Dr. Tal Becker of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy and the Shalom Hartman Institute and Journalist/Author Yossi Klein Halevi, as they shared their thoughts about the necessary progression of Zionism in realizing the aspirations of the Jewish National movement and creating a flourishing Jewish Democracy, while simultaneously acknowledging the reality that 'Zionism' itself has become grossly manipulated as part of a global campaign to de-legitimize Israel.

Guests were then invited to partake in one of the many 'breakout sessions', aimed at encouraging each participant to more intimately express his or her own thoughts regarding some of the key debates surrounding Zionism and the State of Israel today. These sessions included some of the following topics:

- Practices and dilemmas of educating Jews in the Diaspora
- Being a Zionist and critiquing Israel
- Zionist messages within Israel's recent social protests
- The challenges of addressing Zionism on North American college campuses



Seek peace and pursue it  
Psalm 34



To conclude the Symposium, we were fortunate enough to have been joined by Prof. Gil Troy of McGill University and the Shalom Hartman Institute, who directed a panel with Col. (res.) Miri Eisen, formerly an Israeli Government Spokesperson/Media Advisor and the Director of the Ein Prat Academy for Leadership, Dr. Micah Goodman. These vibrant speakers grappled with the issues of redefining Zionism around the world and the inherent challenges of the next generation in shaping the role of Zionism – not only within Israel and the Diaspora, but also as a means to positively influence the global community around us.

The half-day event was not nearly enough time to address the expansive number of unique ideas and occasionally conflicting opinions surrounding the direction of Zionism today and its future role within our own communities; however, it definitely provided the participants with a new depth in addressing these increasingly crucial issues while at the same time allowing the Fund to pursue the incorporation of these dynamic ideas into both our current projects and future goals.

We would like to personally thank all of those who attended and especially the large contingent of organizations - the Reut Institute, Hillel Israel, Makom, Beit Ha'am, PresentTense, the Lone Soldier Center, IsraAID, the David Project, Encounter, Hebrew Union College, Ayalim and the Dror Israel Movement - and speakers who generously donated their time to making this year's Symposium such a success.

In addition to this, we express our gratitude to Emily Bernstein, assistant to our program director, Elan Ezrachi, who did a fabulous job coordinating the many details leading up to the event. The success of the program would not have been possible without the many volunteers and dozens of friends who generously donated their time and assisted us along the way in making sure everything went as smoothly as it did. We are indebted to Hadassah College for providing a beautiful venue for the event, for the warm and heartfelt welcome by college President Nava ben Zvi and for the assistance provided by their support staff.

For those of you who missed it, we regret that the livestream link is not operational at this time. We are working on an edited version of the video and will make it available on our website shortly. We will send out another notice as soon as the video is available.

Thank you for your continued interest and support of our projects.

Warmly,  
The ASF team