



My Promised Land: The Triumph and Tragedy of Israel

Ari Shavit

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**NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY
THE NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW AND THE ECONOMIST**

Winner of the Natan Book Award, the National Jewish Book Award, and the Anisfield-Wolf Book Award

An authoritative and deeply personal narrative history of the State of Israel, by one of the most influential journalists writing about the Middle East today

Not since Thomas L. Friedman's groundbreaking *From Beirut to Jerusalem* has a book captured the essence and the beating heart of the Middle East as keenly and dynamically as *My Promised Land*. Facing unprecedented internal and external pressures, Israel today is at a moment of existential crisis. Ari Shavit draws on interviews, historical documents, private diaries, and letters, as well as his own family's story, illuminating the pivotal moments of the Zionist century to tell a riveting narrative that is larger than the sum of its parts: both personal and national, both deeply human and of profound historical dimension.

We meet Shavit's great-grandfather, a British Zionist who in 1897 visited the Holy Land on a Thomas Cook tour and understood that it was the way of the future for his people; the idealist young farmer who bought land from his Arab neighbor in the 1920s to grow the Jaffa oranges that would create Palestine's booming economy; the visionary youth group leader who, in the 1940s, transformed Masada from the neglected ruins of an extremist sect into a powerful symbol for Zionism; the Palestinian who as a young man in 1948 was driven with his family from his home during the expulsion from Lydda; the immigrant orphans of Europe's Holocaust, who took on menial work and focused on raising their children to become the leaders of the new state; the pragmatic engineer who was instrumental in developing Israel's nuclear program in the 1960s, in the only interview he ever gave; the zealous religious Zionists who started the settler movement in the 1970s; the dot-com entrepreneurs and young men and women behind Tel-Aviv's booming club scene; and today's architects of Israel's foreign policy with Iran, whose nuclear threat looms ominously over the tiny country.

As it examines the complexities and contradictions of the Israeli condition, *My Promised Land* asks difficult but important questions: Why did Israel come to be? How did it come to be? Can Israel survive? Culminating with an analysis of the issues and threats that Israel is currently facing, *My Promised Land* uses the defining events of the past to shed new light on the present. The result is a landmark portrait of a small, vibrant country living on the edge, whose identity and presence play a crucial role in today's global political landscape.

Praise for *My Promised Land*

"This book will sweep you up in its narrative force and not let go of you until it is done. [Shavit's] accomplishment is so unlikely, so total . . . that it makes you believe anything is possible, even, God help us, peace in the Middle East."—**Simon Schama**, *Financial Times*

"[A] must-read book."—**Thomas L. Friedman**, *The New York Times*

“Important and powerful . . . the least tendentious book about Israel I have ever read.”—**Leon Wieseltier**,
The New York Times Book Review

“Spellbinding . . . Shavit’s prophetic voice carries lessons that all sides need to hear.”—*The Economist*

“One of the most nuanced and challenging books written on Israel in years.”—*The Wall Street Journal*

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