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Return to Zion: The History of Modern Israel

Eric Gartman
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The history of modern Israel is a story of ambition, violence, and survival. *Return to Zion* traces how a scattered and stateless people reconstituted themselves in their traditional homeland, only to face threats by those who, during the many years of the dispersion, had come to regard the land as their home. This is a story of the “ingathering of the exiles” from Europe to an outpost on the fringes of the Ottoman Empire, of courage and perseverance, and of reinvention and tragedy.

Eric Gartman focuses on two main themes of modern Israel: reconstitution and survival. Even as new settlers built their state they faced constant challenges from hostile neighbors and divided support from foreign governments, as well as being attacked by larger armies no fewer than three times during the first twenty-five years of Israel’s history. Focusing on a land torn by turmoil, *Return to Zion* is the story of Israel—the fight for independence through the Israeli Independence War in 1948, the Six-Day War of 1967, and the near-collapse of the Israeli Army during the 1973 Yom Kippur War.

Gartman examines the roles of the leading figures of modern Israel—Theodor Herzl, Chaim Weizmann, David Ben-Gurion, Golda Meir, Moshe Dayan, Yitzchak Rabin, and Ariel Sharon—alongside popular perceptions of events as they unfolded in the post-World War II decades. He presents declassified CIA, White House, and U.S. State Department documents that detail America’s involvement in the 1967 and 1973 wars, as well as proof that the Israeli attack on the USS *Liberty* was a case of mistaken identity. *Return to Zion* pulls together the myriad threads of this history from inside and out to create a seamless look into modern Israel’s truest self.

Eric Gartman is an intelligence analyst for the United States Department of Defense who has lived and studied in Israel and traveled extensively throughout the Middle East.

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