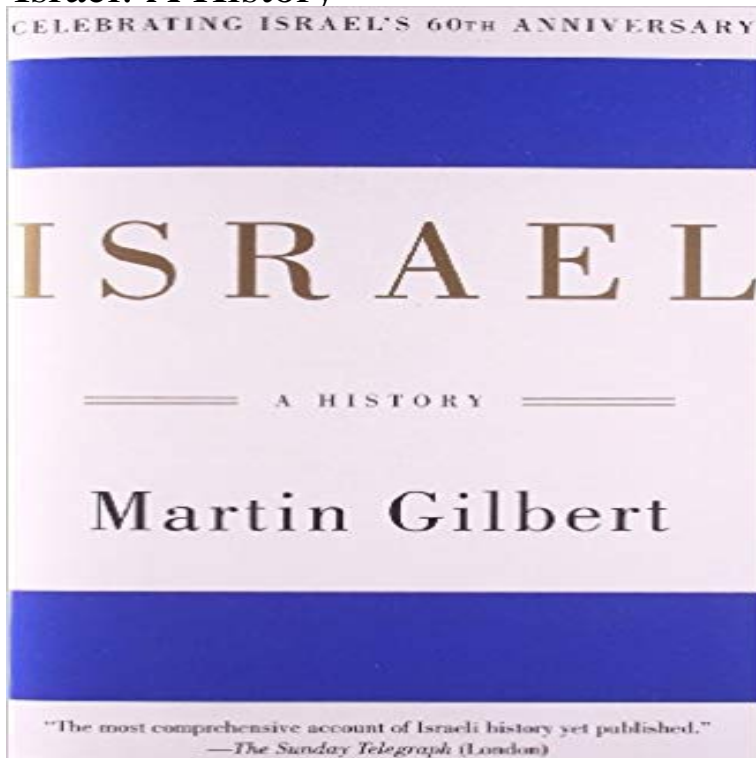


Israel: A History



Israel is a small and relatively young country, but since the day of its creation half a century ago, its turbulent history has placed it at the center of the world stage. In this new account, Martin Gilbert traces Israel's history from the struggles of its pioneers in the nineteenth century up to the present day. Along the way, he describes the defining moments in the history of the Jewish people, among them the Balfour Declaration of 1917; the United Nations Partition Resolution of 1947; and the founding of the State of Israel in 1948. The desire for statehood long preceded the declaration of the State: For two millennia the Jews, dispersed all over the world, prayed for a return to Zion. The prayer Next Year in Jerusalem seemed a fantasy--until Theodor Herzl, in the last decade of the nineteenth century, transformed Zionism into a modern political movement. Soon the earlier trickle of Jewish immigrants turned into a flood as Jews sought fulfilment of their national aspirations or fled persecution in Europe. The declaration of Statehood in May 1948 and the War of Independence were only the beginning of the drama. Israel's subsequent development was dominated by the conflicts of Suez, the Six Day War, the October War, the Lebanon and the Intifada, as well as by diplomatic watersheds--from the early armistice agreements to the Camp David negotiations, the Madrid conference, and the Oslo peace process. Guiding us through the events that have shaped modern-day Israel, Gilbert examines not only Israel's political history and personalities from Ben-Gurion to Rabin, Peres, and Netanyahu, but also its society, culture, and economy. Israel is often at the center of world attention--usually because of wars, political and social divisions, conflict with her Arab neighbors and the Palestinians in her midst, and the stark intrusion of acts of terror into daily life. But even though

conflict has been so much a part of everyday existence, the history of Israel ultimately uplifts and inspires. During the past fifty years, the quality of life has been transformed: Israel is a vibrant and flourishing nation that has made significant achievements in science, agriculture, trade, and industry--and has grown in population from just over half a million to almost six million. Basing his narrative on a wealth of contemporary documents and eyewitness accounts, as well as on his own intimate knowledge of the country, Martin Gilbert provides a riveting and moving account of the history of Israel. This is a riveting account of the history of Israel on its fiftieth anniversary by one of the world's preeminent historians. The founding of the State of Israel in May 1948 was a dramatic event in the history of the twentieth century. In *Israel: A History*, Martin Gilbert tells the gripping story of the events and personalities in the half century leading up to the declaration of statehood, and of Israel's subsequent development. It is a story punctuated by the conflicts of the War of Independence, Suez, the Six-Day War of 1967, the October War of 1973, the Lebanon and the Intifada, as well as by the diplomatic watersheds, from the armistice agreements of 1949 to the Camp David negotiations, the Madrid conference, and the Oslo accords. As Gilbert chronicles the growth of this flourishing but often troubled nation, he examines not only Israel's political history from Ben-Gurion to Rabin, Peres, and Netanyahu, but also its society, culture, and economy. Based on contemporary documents and eyewitness accounts, and rooted in the author's intimate knowledge of the country and its people, *Israel: A History* will be essential reading on the nation's fiftieth anniversary.

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