

Hezron (Person)

1. Third Son of Reuben

Hezron (MT *Ḥeṣrôn*; LXX Ασζων) is the name of two individuals in the Bible. One is the third son of Reuben, Jacob's firstborn (Gen 46:9; Exod 6:14; 1 Chr 5:3). He is the eponymous ancestor of the Hezronites (Num 26:6). In 1 Chr 4:1, two of the sons listed as sons of Reuben in Gen 46:9 (Hezron and Carmi) are listed instead as sons of Judah, perhaps suggesting that their clans may have been assimilated into the tribe of Judah.

2. Son of Perez

Hezron is also the name of one of two sons of Perez and, thus, a grandson of Judah and Judah's daughter-in-law, Tamar, who came together in an unusual sexual union (Gen 38:29; 46:12). The Judahite family line of Hezron included several important biblical figures: his son Caleb (the faithful Israelite spy in Num 13:30; 14:22–24; see 1 Chr 2:18–24), King David (1 Chr 2:10–15; Ruth 4:18–19), and Jesus (Matt 1:3; Luke 3:33).

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Hezron (Place)

Hezron (MT *Ḥeṣrôn*; LXX Ασζων) was the name of a border station or village located between Kadesh-barnea and Addar which marked the southern boundary of the land allotted to the tribe of Judah (Josh 15:3). A parallel description of Judah's southern boundary in Num 34:4 lists instead "Hazar-addar" which may represent a mistaken assimilation of Hazar and Addar in Josh 15:3. Hezron should not be confused with another southern Judahite town, Kiriath-Hezron (Hazor).

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Hezronite

The Hezronites (MT *Ḥeṣrōnî*; LXX Ασζωνί) are listed as a clan of the Israelite tribe of Reuben in the census list in Num 26:6. Further down in the same census list, another clan of Hezronites is listed among the clans of the tribe of Judah as descendants of Perez, the son of Judah who himself had two sons (Hezron and Hamul – Num 26:21).

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See also → Hamul, Hamulites; → Hezron (Person)

Hibbat Zion

Hibbat Zion (*Hibbat Tsiyyon*, lit. "Love of Zion") was a movement, founded in 1881, that promoted Jewish settlement in Palestine and secular Jewish nationalism. The members called themselves *Hovevei*

Tsiyyon ("Lovers of Zion"), and they later formed a large part of the membership of the new Zionist organization created by Theodor Herzl in 1897. Their reevaluation of the importance of the Bible made itself felt particularly in two fields which later became major focuses of Zionist politics – territory and language.

The rise of Hibbat Zion took place against the background of a profound social and cultural crisis among the Jewish population in the Russian empire, Romania, and Habsburg Galicia. Jewish nationalism constituted a third avenue of Jewish response to modernity, which combined aspects of two earlier movements, Jewish enlightenment (*Haskalah*) and Jewish orthodoxy, and which joined together members of both groups (Bartal). In the late Russian empire, where the Odessa branch of Hibbat Zion, officially sanctioned only in 1890, was titled "Society for the Support of Jewish Farmers and Artisans in Syria and Palestine," the fragile alliance between freethinkers and traditionalists in the Hibbat Zion movement was stabilized by external pressure. Hibbat Zion thus included heterogeneous groups of Jews from a variety of social and ideological backgrounds, and their attitudes towards the Bible varied according to their world-view.

One of the founding documents of Hibbat Zion was Leo Pinsker's (1821–1891) manifesto "Auto-emanicipation! Ein Mahnruf an seine Stammesgenossen von einem russischen Juden" ("Auto-emanicipation: A Warning to his Fellow People, from a Russian Jew," 1882). To Pinsker it was obvious that antisemitism was a non-curable disease. He therefore urged western Jewry to come to the aid of their eastern brothers and sisters, while at the same time he invoked the ethos of self-help and "auto-emanicipation." His proposed solution was a form of Jewish sovereignty, preferably on a kind of national territory.

Even if Ottoman Palestine – at least for Pinsker – was not the only possible place for a future Jewish body politic, the majority of *Hovevei Tsiyyon* preferred it to any other territory. For the *Hovevei Tsiyyon* who had a traditionally observant background, the longing for Zion was a familiar concept. The majority of the observant Jewish population of Eastern Europe never embraced political Zionism, because they understood it – correctly – as a secular political movement.

While the Orthodox members of Hibbat Zion did not disengage themselves from the central religious meaning of the Torah and the life of *mitsvat* and biblical norms, the non-observant members saw the biblical scriptures as the national literature of the Jewish people, and as its holiest treasure. Pinsker put it this way:

We are in need of nothing except a large enough portion of land for our poor brethren, which remains ours and from which nobody can evict us. To this place we will bring the holiest of our treasures saved from the

shipwreck of our ancient fatherland: the idea of God and the Bible. For these are the things which made our ancient fatherland the Holy Land, not Jerusalem or the Jordan. (Schoeps: 54)

The conflict between Orthodoxy and secularism was also felt in the new agricultural settlements in Palestine. Orthodox Jews wanted to keep the settlements in Palestine subsidized by Hibbat Zion under the influence of traditional Judaism, while secular *Hovevei Tsiyyon* dreamed of transforming Jewish society through the landscape and soil of the Holy Land. An example for the resulting conflict was the controversy over the question of whether the fields should lie fallow in the seventh (*shemittah*) year as required by biblical and talmudic law.

The reevaluation of Jewish heritage in the Hibbat Zion movement also led to the introduction of Hebrew as a spoken language. The practice of reading the Holy Scriptures independently of their function in traditional Jewish liturgy and religion signaled a radical break with the rabbinic tradition, but in general, Hibbat Zion's use of biblical Hebrew was not aimed at creating a substitute for the Bible, but rather at its renaissance. Biblical names, allusions and metaphors were put into new contexts. For example, names of Hibbat Zion groups echoed the Bible while emphasizing new nationalistic meanings. In 1882 groups of Jewish students from Khar'kiv who wanted to emigrate to Palestine gathered under the name "Bilu," an acronym for "O House of Jacob, come, let us walk" (Isa 2:5). Other societies for the Jewish settlement of Palestine called themselves "Ezra" and "Nehemiah." Similarly, when Asher Ginzberg (1856–1927) chose the pen-name *Aḥad Ha-'Am* (lit. "one of the people") he played with the different layers of its meaning from biblical times (Zipperstein: 61).

Ginzberg wrote a major essay on Moses as a prophet (*Aḥad Ha-'Am* 1912), while one of his protégés, Joseph Klausner (1874–1954), later wrote a biography of Jesus. Another outstanding proponent of the reevaluation of once sacred texts in the guise of national literature was Ḥayyim Naḥman Bialik (1873–1934; Bialik: 55–59). All three are telling examples of the new perspectives on the Bible fostered by the particular Jewish nationalism of the *Hovevei Tsiyyon*.

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Hick, John

Educated in the UK at Edinburgh, Oxford, Westminster Theological College, and Cambridge, the British philosopher of religion John Hick (1922–2012), who taught in the US at Cornell, Princeton, and Claremont, and in the UK at Cambridge and Birmingham, is credited by some with having helped to revivify his field in the latter half of the 20th century. Converting to a Christian fundamentalist outlook in his late teens, Hick later abandoned his youthful evangelicalism and was trained in the analytic tradition of philosophy. He is best known for his advocacy of an Irenaean theodicy (Hick [1981] 1990a; [1966] 2007), and of religious pluralism as a philosophical means of reconciling "the conflicting truth claims of different religions" (Hick 1990b: 109). Throughout his development as a thinker, the Bible remained for him a crucial touchstone as "a medium of revelation"; as the place where the religious truths revealed first through the prophets, and later through Jesus and his apostles, "are authoritatively written down"; and hence as "not a merely human, and therefore fallible, book" (Hick 1990b: 56, 57).

While a young law student at University College, Hull, Hick "underwent a powerful evangelical conversion under the impact of the New Testament figure of Jesus" (Hick 2002: 33; cf. 1993: 139). This experience, together with his association with the evangelical campus organization, led him to accept unquestioningly "the entire fundamentalist theological package – the verbal inspiration of the Bible; creation and fall; Jesus as God the Son incarnate, born of a virgin, conscious of his divine nature; [etc.]" (Hick 2002: 34; cf. Hick 1993: 139). He thus engaged for a while in a kind of Bible-based, non-proof-based theism: "[T]he biblical writers ... did not think of God as an inferred entity but as an experienced reality. Many of the biblical writers were ... as vividly conscious of being in God's presence as they were of living in a material world" (Hick 1971: 102; cf. Hick [1961] 1973: 84; 1990b: 70–71).

Even later, as a philosopher of religion who defined that pursuit as "a second-order activity, standing apart from its subject matter" (Hick 1990b: 1–2), Hick acknowledged the Bible's "special character" as

a record of the stream of [divine] revelatory events that culminated in the coming of Christ. But [the Bible] dif-