
Saving Israel by Daniel Gordis



I wrote [last month](#) about my enormous respect for Daniel Gordis and the thoughtful, personal books he has written about life in Israel. He has a new book out this month called *Saving Israel – How The Jewish People Can Win A War That May Never End*.

I strongly urge you to [buy it](#).

Saving Israel is not like any book of his that I've read before. Though he has lost none of his thoughtful eloquence, here is a more direct, steadfast Daniel Gordis than we encountered in his previous tomes. I heartily approve.

Gordis has no illusions about the many threats to its future that Israel faces. However, he shows that much of what needs to be done to save it from those threats can be done internally by Israelis themselves. Israelis, he believes, need to reconnect with the original purpose of the Jewish state in order to guarantee the state's future. He passionately restates that purpose and vividly re-creates the pioneering spirit that took the dream of Zionism and turned it into reality. He's on breathtaking

form in these passages as he laments the 'withering of Zionist passion' and shows how it can be – and must be – reawakened.

Then he turns to the issue of Israeli Arabs and the more steadfast Gordis begins to show his hand. He addresses the issue with humanity, but also unflinching honesty. When he turns to the many external threats to Israel's future, Gordis is again admirably frank. He shows once and for all the true intentions of Israel's enemies and then powerfully shows why – contrary to the views of some diaspora Jews – winning and fighting wars is not antithetical to Judaism. Sweeping deftly through Jewish history, this chapter is overwhelmingly powerful.

Much as I adored his previous books, there was an occasional tendency for hand-wringing in their pages. In *Saving Israel*, Gordis is far more partisan and route-one. This is not to say that he has lost any of his thoughtfulness and charm. Similarly, while this is a less personal book than his previous efforts, there are still some occasional insights into his family's life. (Once again, they leave you thinking: 'Oooh, he sounds like such a great Dad!')

And such a great thinker, too. I hope this book is read very, very widely. Not only will those who take the time to read it be entertained, informed and inspired. They will also emerge from the experience all the more able to do what must be done to save the Jewish state and take it to new heights.

In one section of *Saving Israel*, Gordis calls for the reinvention of the 'new Jew' of Zionism. Well, he walks it like he talks it. In this brilliant book we meet a new Daniel Gordis who has – in an entirely humane and appropriate way – taken the gloves off. Long may he spar.

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Posted by [Chas Newkey-Burden](#) on 03.02.09 (categories: [Books](#), [Israel](#), [Judaism](#))

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[...] I have written before about my admiration of the author Daniel Gordis, who has written several eloquent books about life in Israel, which I wrote about [here](#). His most recent book is called *Saving Israel*. It is a less personal but more passionate read, which I reviewed [here](#). [...]



[An interview with Daniel Gordis | Oy Va Goy! \(Chas Newkey-Burden\)](#) commented on [May 12 09 at 3:18 AM](#)