

Finding Your Voice in *Hatikva*

Music is a powerful language. A single melody can stir hope, sorrow, pride, or peace, depending on how it is performed. Elements like tempo, rhythm, instruments, and even the context in which a song is recorded all shape the way we experience it. The power of music is rooted in the Bible. After crossing the Red Sea, Miriam took a tambourine and led the women of Israel in celebratory song and dance to thank God for saving them from the Egyptians (Exodus 15:20–21). Throughout Psalms, King David uses music to express sorrow, pain, praise, faith, longing, love, and hope. Although *Hatikva* has always been considered the national song of Israel, it did not officially become the national anthem until the Knesset passed a vote on November 10th, 2004.

Group Activity

Listen to [Hatikva](#) to learn and understand the lyrics. Compare the differences between the original words of *Tikvatenu*, the poem written by Naftali Herz Imber that inspired *Hatikva*, and the words of the national anthem.

Discussion Questions

- What do the words of *Hatikva* make you think and feel?
- Which words are repeated, and what is the significance of the repetition?
- What do the words say about past, present, and future Jewish experience?
- Do you like the words? Should anything be added or removed?
- Do Naftali Herz Imber's original words change your feelings and thoughts about the intention of the current words?
- Why do you think the changes to the words were made?
- Which version do you connect to more and why?

Creative Activity

In groups, learners listen to an alternative version of *Hatikva*, and using the [worksheet](#) analyze their version and add a stanza that reflects their connection to Israel. The groups then present their stanza to the class.

Three versions of *Hatikva*:

1. [Orchestra accompaniment](#) performed by Cantor Azi Schwartz
2. [Rock anthem](#) performed by Niro Knox
3. [Pop](#) performed by Omer Adam and Noa Kirel

Primary Sources in this Lesson

Naftali Herz Imber's original version of *Israel's national anthem*, [Abraham Schwardon Collection](#)