



Independence Day

Israel's Independence Day is a national holiday in the State of Israel that marks the declaration of the establishment of the State of Israel, at the end of the British mandate. Independence Day falls out on 5th Iyar, immediately after Memorial Day for the Fallen Israeli Soldiers ends.

Independence Day is marked through ceremonies and official events -from an official torch lighting ceremony to events and customs that have developed over the years. Independence Day is an official holiday and many people take advantage of the time off to relax, picnic, barbeque, hike, visit one of the many IDF exhibitions or other attractions.

On the eve of Independence Day, a torch lighting ceremony is held on Mount Herzl in Jerusalem, marking the end of Memorial Day and the beginning of Independence Day. During the ceremony, the Israeli flag is raised to full-mast and this moment symbolizes the official beginning of Independence Day.

Twelve Israelis are for their contribution to society and the country and light twelve torches. The ceremony includes an artistic section, as well as a flag performance in which soldiers are flag-bearers and form intricate patterns on the plaza.

Throughout the day, the President holds a reception for exceptional soldiers who have been selected from their units.

The IDF presents their weapons at IDF parking lots and bases that are specially opened for the day.

The Israeli Navy holds a flotilla and the Air Force a flyover over the country.

The international Bible Quiz for Jewish Youth is held in the afternoon in the Jerusalem Theater.

The events of the day end with the Israel Prize Ceremony. The Israel Prize is awarded to Israelis who have achieved outstanding accomplishments in their fields, specifically the sciences and humanities fields, and in doing so brought special pride to the State of Israel.

Independence Day expresses the great joy of the resurrection of the Jewish people in its land. It expresses the national pride of the Jewish people in their country and in their achievements. It reflects the power of the Jewish people who have returned to the Land of Israel, with an army of their own, a country of their own and a heritage and tradition of their own. After thousands of years of wandering, they were gifted freedom and independence and returned to Zion

(based on Wikipedia)





Memorial Day for Israel's Fallen Soldiers and Victims of Terror

Memorial Day for Israel's Fallen Soldiers and Victims of Terror, also known by the shorter "Memorial Day" is a national Memorial Day in the State of Israel for the memorialization of Israel's fallen soldiers and victims of terror throughout the years of the New Settlement period in the Land of Israel.

This day falls out on 4th Iyar, the day before Independence Day, reflecting the widespread outlook that we are to remember the price paid in establishing the state and protecting its existence.

The eve of Memorial Day opens with a ceremony that takes place in Yad LaBanim in Jerusalem at 16:00. At sunset, Israeli flags in public institutions and throughout the country are lowered to half-staff. At 20:00, a one-minute siren is heard throughout the country and Memorial Day officially begins.

Immediately after the siren, the state ceremony begins at the Western Wall in Jerusalem, attended by the President, the IDF Chief of Staff, and bereaved families. At the ceremony, the President, together with a bereaved sibling, lights a memorial torch. The President and Chief of Staff speak, and the prayer El Male Rachamim is recited. At the same time, memorial ceremonies are held in communities throughout Israel. In some communities, after the official ceremony, the evening is spent singing special songs connected to wartime and memorialization.

On Memorial Day at 11:00, another siren is sounded- this time for two minutes. After the siren, state memorial services are held in all military cemeteries. The main memorial service is held at the military cemetery on Mount Herzl, Jerusalem and is attended by representatives from other countries, the President, the Prime Minister and the IDF Chief of Staff.

At 13:00, the national memorial ceremony for victims of terror is held and attended by public officials, at the central memorial for victims of terror on Mount Herzl, Jerusalem.

The flag is lowered to half-staff and Kaddish and Yizkor (the prayers in honor of the deceased) are recited in the ceremonies in the military cemeteries. Public officials speak, the version of the El Male Rachamim prayer for fallen soldiers is recited, wreaths are laid by the monuments by different organizations and institutions and the ceremony ends with an IDF gun salute.

On Memorial Day, the Jewish people choose to express their appreciation for the soldiers who gave their lives when protecting the people and the land, and for the self-sacrifice of the soldiers and citizens who lost their lives in the Jewish state's fight for survival. This self-sacrifice is seen through the story of Sean Carmeli, a lone soldier who immigrated to Israel and chose to join the IDF.