

Session #8 – Source Sheets

The Nation of Israel

1. Everyone can agree that the survival of the Jewish people, despite all the odds, is not just remarkable, but one of the greatest miracles.
2. The story is told that when King Louis XIV of France asked Pascal, the great French philosopher of his day, to give him proof of the existence of miracles. Without a moment's hesitation, Pascal answered, "Why, the Jews, your Majesty-the Jews."
3. History also attests to the significant contributions Jews have made to Western Civilization.
4. John Adams, Second President of the United States wrote in a letter.
5. (From a letter to F. A. Van der Kemp [Feb. 16, 1808] Pennsylvania Historical Society
6. "I will insist the Hebrews have [contributed] more to civilize men than any other nation. If I was an atheist and believed in blind eternal fate, I should still believe that fate had ordained the Jews to be the most essential instrument for civilizing the nations ... They are the most glorious nation that ever inhabited this Earth. The Romans and their empire were but a bubble in comparison to the Jews. They have given religion to three-quarters of the globe and have influenced the affairs of mankind more and more happily than any other nation, ancient or modern."
7. Mark Twain wrote in an article in Harper's Magazine, 1899
8. "...If statistics are right, the Jews constitute but one percent of the human race. It suggests a nebulous dim puff of stardust lost in the blaze of the Milky way. properly, the Jew ought hardly to be heard of, but he is heard of, has always been heard of. He is as prominent on the planet as any other people, and his commercial importance is extravagantly out of proportion to the smallness of his bulk. His contributions to the world's list of great names in literature, science, art, music, finance, medicine, and abstruse learning are also away out of proportion to the weakness of his numbers. He has made a marvelous fight in this world, in all the ages; and had done it with his hands tied behind him. He could be vain of himself, and be excused for it. The Egyptian, the Babylonian, and the Persian rose, filled the planet with sound and splendor, then faded to dream-stuff and passed away; the Greek and the Roman followed; and made a vast noise, and they are gone; other people have sprung up and held their torch high for a time, but it burned out, and they sit in twilight now, or have vanished. The Jew saw them all, beat them all, and is now what he always was, exhibiting no decadence, no infirmities of age, no weakening of his parts, no slowing of his energies, no dulling of his alert and aggressive mind. All things are mortal but the Jew; all other forces pass, but he remains. What is the secret of his immortality?"

9. But these statements alone attest to the usefulness of the Jews, but do not address the theological question about G-d's plan and purpose for preserving the Jewish people.
10. From a Biblical perspective, after G-d, the Nation of Israel is the most central feature in Scripture.
11. What we want to do tonight, is to look at the Jewish people and their role in the divine plan from the perspective of the Jewish Scriptures and then explore how it has been viewed through the lens of Christianity.
12. Finally, we want to look at the consequences of these views have been over the centuries.
13. I'd like to begin with a basic outline of Jewish history from Abraham until the end of the second temple period.
14. Abraham was raised in society of idolater. In fact, the Midrash relates that Abraham's father manufactured and sold idols for a living.
15. Abraham came to recognize through logical deduction that there must be One Creator that is greater than all that was brought into being.
16. G-d communicated with Abraham at the age of 75 and told him that He had been chosen for a mission and that he would become a great nation and be greatly blessed.
17. It doesn't explicitly state what the mission was, however, we see that Abraham and Sarah were busy converting people from worshipping idols to recognizing and worshipping The Creator of Heaven and Earth.
18. In Genesis 15, G-d promises the Land of Canaan to Abraham's descendants and informs Abraham about his offspring descent into Egypt and their exodus from Egypt.
19. Abraham and Sarah miraculously give birth to a son, Isaac and Abraham circumcises Isaac at 8 days as commanded by G-d.
20. He is then told to offer Up Isaac as an offering on Mount Moriah and is told at the last minute to not go ahead with killing Isaac.
21. However, G-d promised that all nations of the earth shall bless themselves by your offspring, because you have listened to my Voice.
22. Isaac marries Rebecca, gives birth to two sons, Esau a hunter and Jacob who is pious and remains in the tent studying Torah.
23. Isaac was considering leaving the land of Canaan due to a famine, but G-d tells him to remain in the land and assures him
24. Genesis 26:4 And I will make your descendants multiply as the stars of heaven; I will give to your descendants all these lands; and in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; 5 because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws."
25. Jacob receives the blessings from Isaac, passing on to Jacob the inheritance of the blessings given to Abraham.

26. Jacob flees Esau and goes to the house of his uncle Laban and marries 4 wives. Rachel, Leah, Bilhah and Zilpah and build a family, 12 sons and a daughter.
27. Jacob leaves his father in law and travels back to Canaan and settles there.
28. Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers and becomes viceroy of Egypt and the family of Jacob ultimately descend to Egypt due to a famine and after the death of the last of the brothers, the slavery begins.
29. Moses, who was saved by the daughter of Pharaoh flees Egypt after killing an Egyptian and while tending the flock of his father in Law, Jethro, he sees a burning Bush that was not consumed and drew near to it.
30. It was at that point that G-d told Moses to take His people, the Children of Israel out of Egypt and bring them to Mount Sinai where they would worship Him.
31. With wonders and signs and miracles, Moses led the Jews out of Egypt, split the sea and brought them to My Sinai.
32. G-d then proposed - so to speak - to the Jewish people. You will be My People, and I will be your G-d.
33. At that point Moses conveys G-d's message to the Jewish people about what this entails.
34. Exodus 19:5 Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. 6 And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel.
35. The Jews accept and G-d speaks directly to the Nation with the words, I Am The L-rd Your G-d That took you out of the Land of Egypt.
36. Moses goes up the mountain to receive the rest of G-d's instructions, but when returns he sees the Nation dancing with the golden calf. Which has G-d wanting to wipe out the Nation and start over. Moses pleads with G-d and saves the nation.
37. G-d tells Moses to build a Sanctuary for G-d. People collect Gold, Silver and Copper and build it and G-d's presence fills the Tabernacle.
38. Due to the sin of the 12 Spies who brought back bad report about the land, the Nation were destined to spend 40 years in the desert.
39. Moses and Aron were informed that they will not enter the land because of the incident with the rock they were supposed to talk to and instead they hit and Joshua was going to be the one to lead the next generation into the land of Canaan.
40. Before entering the Land, Moses speak to the next Generation reminding them of who they are what they are to remember, preserved pass on to future generations:
41. Deuteronomy 4:6 Therefore be careful to observe them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes, and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.' 7 "For what great nation is there that has G-d so near to it, as the L-RD our G-d is to us, in all that we call upon Him? 8 And what great nation is there that has such statutes and righteous

judgments as are in all this law which I set before you this day? 9 Only take heed to yourself, and diligently keep yourself, lest you forget the things your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. And teach them to your children and your grandchildren, 10 especially concerning the day you stood before the L-RD your G-d in Horeb, when the L-RD said to me, 'Gather the people to Me, and I will let them hear My words, that they may learn to fear Me all the days they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children.' 11 "Then you came near and stood at the foot of the mountain, and the mountain burned with fire to the midst of heaven, with darkness, cloud, and thick darkness. 12 And the L-RD spoke to you out of the midst of the fire. You heard the sound of the words, but saw no form; you only heard a voice. 13 So He declared to you His covenant which He commanded you to perform, the Ten Commandments; and He wrote them on two tablets of stone. 14 And the L-RD commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and judgments, that you might observe them in the land which you cross over to possess.

42. Deuteronomy 6:20 "When your son asks you in time to come, saying, 'What is the meaning of the testimonies, the statutes, and the judgments which the L-RD our God has commanded you?' 21 then you shall say to your son: 'We were slaves of Pharaoh in Egypt, and the L-RD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand; 22 and the L-RD showed signs and wonders before our eyes, great and severe, against Egypt, Pharaoh, and all his household. 23 Then He brought us out from there, that He might bring us in, to give us the land of which He swore to our fathers. 24 And the L-RD commanded us to observe all these statutes, to fear the L-RD our God, for our good always, that He might preserve us alive, as it is this day. 25 Then it will be righteousness for us, if we are careful to observe all these commandments before the LORD our God, as He has commanded us.'
43. Deuteronomy 26:18 Also today the LORD has proclaimed you to be His special people, just as He promised you, that you should keep all His commandments.
44. Deuteronomy 32:46 and he said to them: "Set your hearts on all the words which I testify among you today, which you shall command your children to be careful to observe—all the words of this law. For it is not a futile thing for you, because it is your life, and by this word you shall prolong your days in the land which you cross over the Jordan to possess."
45. The Jewish people cross over into the Land miraculously conquer and settle the Land.
46. After the death of Joshua we have the period of the Judges and the prophets which is marked by cycles of Idolatry, persecution of the Nation by the Canaanites the Midianites, Amalekites and the Philistines and their salvation through the various saviors of the Jewish people sent by G-d.
47. Then you have the period of the Kings of Israel starting with Saul, then David and Solomon followed by a split between the North and the South.

48. Many prophets were sent by G-d to rebuke the Nation and to remind them and encourage them in their mission.
49. And What is the calling or the mission of the Nation of Israel (the Jewish People) ?
50. The core calling of Israel as a nation before God is to bare witness and declare to all that there is but One Creator of all and that all existence owes everything to Him and to Him alone.
51. Isaiah 43:10, "You are My witnesses," says the LORD, "And My servant whom I have chosen, that you may know and believe Me, and understand that I am He. Before Me there was no God formed, nor shall there be after Me.
52. 44:8, Do not fear, nor be afraid; Have I not told you from that time, and declared it? You are My witnesses. Is there a God besides Me? Indeed, there is no other Rock; I know not one.'
53. Micah 4:5 For all people walk each in the name of his god, but we will walk in the name of the LORD our God Forever and ever.
54. This is not just done by proclaiming verbally, but by living our lives as servants of G-d.
55. Isa 41:8 "But you, Israel, are My servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, The descendants of Abraham My friend. 9 You whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called from its farthest regions, and said to you, 'You are My servant, I have chosen you and have not cast you away.
56. Jeremiah 7:23 But this is what I commanded them, saying, 'Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be My people. And walk in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well with you.'"
57. But the kings of the North of Israel were wicked and lead the people in idolatry.
58. They were taken off into captivity and never heard of again. G-d promises that he will bring them back in the end days,
59. The kingdom of the South was also punished for their idolatry, adultery and bloodshed, and the Temple was destroyed by the Chaldeans and the nation was exiled for 70 years.
60. Even during that time in exile, the Nation were called by G-d to follow the commandments.
61. Jeremiah 24:1 The L-RD showed me, and there were two baskets of figs set before the temple of the L-RD, after Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had carried away captive Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, and the princes of Judah with the craftsmen and smiths, from Jerusalem, and had brought them to Babylon. 2 One basket had very good figs, like the figs that are first ripe; and the other basket had very bad figs which could not be eaten, they were so bad. 3 Then the L-RD said to me, "What do you see, Jeremiah?" And I said, "Figs, the good figs, very good; and the bad, very bad, which cannot be eaten, they are so bad." 4 Again the word of the L-RD came to me, saying, 5 "Thus says the L-RD, the G-d of Israel: 'Like these good figs, so will I acknowledge those who are carried away captive from Judah, whom I have sent

out of this place for their own good, into the land of the Chaldeans. 6 For I will set My eyes on them for good, and I will bring them back to this land; I will build them and not pull them down, and I will plant them and not pluck them up. 7 Then I will give them a heart to know Me, that I am the L-RD; and they shall be My people, and I will be their G-d, for they shall return to Me with their whole heart.

62. Esther 3:8 Then Haman said to King Ahasuerus, "There is a certain people scattered and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of your kingdom; their laws are different from all other people's, and they do not keep the king's laws. Therefore, it is not fitting for the king to let them remain.

63. After this period of 70 years, Ezra led the people back together with Haggai Zechariah and Malachi to rebuilt the Temple.

64. To summarize, from a scriptural perspective, the calling of the Nation of Israel has been, to proclaim to the world the greatness of the Creator, like Abraham our forefather and to demonstrate through obedience how all of creation ought to be subservient to G-d, Creator of all.

65. We are promised that ultimately, we will succeed in this mission.

66. Zech 8:23 "Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'In those days ten men from every language of the nations shall grasp the sleeve of a Jewish man, saying, "Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you." ' "

67. , Isa 60:2 For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people; But the LORD will arise over you, And His glory will be seen upon you.

68. Isa 60:3 The Gentiles shall come to your light, And kings to the brightness of your rising.

69. Up until the advent of Jesus, we can all agree that this was the calling of the Nation of Israel. How well Israel dispensed their obligation can be discussed, however, there is no question as to what their role in the world was intended to be.

70. From a Christian perspective, however, something changed with the advent of Jesus.

71. The role of the Nation of Israel was no longer to be focused on the observance of the Law per se, but rather, their role is to extoll the "Son of G-d" and put their faith and trust in him.

72. John 3:14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15 that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. 16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. 17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. 18 "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. 19 And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 20 For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light,

lest his deeds should be exposed. 21 But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."

73. John 8:42 Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me. 43 Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word. 44 You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it. 45 But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me. 46 Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me? 47 He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God."

74. John 15:22 If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. 23 He who hates Me hates My Father also. 24 If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would have no sin; but now they have seen and also hated both Me and My Father.

75. Mat 21:33 "Hear another parable: There was a certain landowner who planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it, dug a winepress in it and built a tower. And he leased it to vinedressers and went into a far country. 34 Now when vintage-time drew near, he sent his servants to the vinedressers, that they might receive its fruit. 35 And the vinedressers took his servants, beat one, killed one, and stoned another. 36 Again he sent other servants, more than the first, and they did likewise to them. 37 Then last of all he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' 38 But when the vinedressers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.' 39 So they took him and cast him out of the vineyard and killed him. 40 "Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers?" 41 They said to Him, "He will destroy those wicked men miserably, and lease his vineyard to other vinedressers who will render to him the fruits in their seasons." 42 Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: 'The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?' 43 "Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it.

76. The meaning of the parable is obvious.

77. The owner of the vineyard is God, the vinedressers are the Jewish people, the son is Jesus, and the "nation bringing fruits thereof" is the Christian Church.

78. According to Matthew's Jesus, killing the "son" warranted that the kingdom of God be taken from the Jews.

79. Cf Luke 19 :27

80. 2 Co 3:14 But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains
unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the veil is taken away in Christ.
15 But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart. 16
Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.
81. Rom 11:1 I say then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not! For I also am an
Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. :2 God has not cast away
His people whom He foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah,
how he pleads with God against Israel, saying, 3 "LORD, THEY HAVE KILLED YOUR
PROPHETS AND TORN DOWN YOUR ALTARS, AND I ALONE AM LEFT, AND THEY SEEK
MY LIFE"? 4 But what does the divine response say to him? "I HAVE RESERVED FOR
MYSELF SEVEN THOUSAND MEN WHO HAVE NOT BOWED THE KNEE TO BAAL." 5
Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of
grace. 6 And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer
grace. But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work. 7
What then? Israel has not obtained what it seeks; but the elect have obtained it, and
the rest were blinded.
82. So we see that from the Christian perspective, by rejecting Jesus, we are no longer
considered part of the Kingdom of G-d.
83. Although many Christians believe that all Jews will eventually accept Jesus based on a
verse in Romans.
84. Romans 11:25 For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this
mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has
happened to Israel until the fullness 26 And so all Israel will be saved...
85. But if that is just something that will happen in the last scene of history – so to speak
– what purpose to Jews serve until then?
86. Saint Augustine of Hippo a Roman African, early Christian theologian and philosopher
354 – 430 CE came up with an interesting justification for the 'continuing existence'
of Jews, now that Christianity had come along. 'Doctrine of the Witness'.
87. This doctrine suggested that the continuing physical presence of the Jews was
desirable because the Jews themselves provided testimony to the truth of
Christianity in two ways:
88. First, the Jews possessed Scriptures, thereby proving that Scriptures were no means
invented retrospectively by Christians to predict the coming of Jesus...
89. Secondly, the physical status of the Jews provided testimony to the truth of
Christianity.
90. The Jews existed in a subjugated, second-class status as a defeated people...The
perpetual servitude of the Jews reminded the world that the Jews are being punished
for their rejection of Jesus. Therefore, it was desirable that the Jew remain in
Christian society. As long as Jews retained their second-class status, they would

remind the world of their crime in rejecting Jesus and their validity of Jesus's teachings...

91. Although the Jews' status would always be second-class, the Church Fathers decreed that the Jews must be protected and not eliminated.
92. ironically, in this context medieval Christian anti-Semitism provided a protective mechanism against the elimination of the Jews.
93. He develops his theory that the Jews had a continuing role to play in salvation history, and that this role was to form a living testimony to the truth of Christian claims.
94. Scattered throughout the Diaspora, they brought their own sacred texts with them. These texts (the Old Testament) carried the prophecies of Christ, and since they were borne by a people who were notoriously hostile to Christians, they had even greater veracity. A Christian could point to a Jewish text and say, "See, even our enemies attest to the prophecies."
95. St John Chrysostom (4th century) "Homilies Against the Jews"
96. The Jews sacrifice their children to Satan. They are worse than wild beasts. The synagogue is a brothel, a den of scoundrels, the temple of demons devoted to idolatrous cults, a criminal assembly of Jews, a place of meeting for the assassins of Christ, a house of ill fame, a dwelling of iniquity, a gulf and abyss of perdition. The Jews have fallen into a condition worse than the vilest animal ... It is the duty of all Christians to hate the Jews.
97. What these Christian perspectives produced was the dehumanization of the Jewish people and paved the way the death and persecution of millions of Jews by millions of Christians. Every negative stereotype of Jews has its roots in the teaching of the Church about Jews.
98. Dr. David R. Reagan from Lamb & Lion Ministries. The first time my wife heard me preach about the Jews in prophecy, she came to me and said, "When you talk about how much God loves the Jews, you make me want to be one." I responded by saying, "No, Honey, you don't want to be a Jew because if you were, you would most likely have a veil over your heart and would refuse to believe in Jesus as your Messiah" (2 Corinthians 3:12-18).
99. From a Jewish scriptural perspective our role has never changed since the time of Abraham/ Sinai.
100. Christians are still trying to work out how to view the Jewish people and their role in G-d's Divine Plan.