

**Document A: “History of the Jews”, Heinrich Graetz (1893)**

The Emperor Constantine, who had aggrandized the Church, and laid the dominion of the earth at her feet, had at the same time given her the doubtful blessing, “By the sword thou shalt live.” He had originally placed Judaism, as a religion, on an equal footing with the other forms of worship existing in the Roman Empire. ...

The more Christianity asserted its influence over him, the more did he affect the intolerance of that religion which, forgetful of its origin, entertained as passionate a hatred of Judaism and its adherents as of heathenism. Sylvester, Bishop of Rome, Paul, afterwards Bishop of Constantinople, the new capital, and Eusebius of Caesarea, the first historian of the Church, did not fail to incite the inhabitants of the empire against the Jews. Judaism was stigmatized as a noxious, profligate, godless sect (*feralis, nefaria sect*) which ought to be exterminated from the face of the earth wherever possible.

Source: “History of the Jews Vol. II”, Heinrich Graetz, The Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia, 1893 p. 562.

**Document B: “A Social and Religious History of the Jews”,  
Salo Baron (1952)**

Hearing of the irresistible march of Persian troops, the Palestinian Jews were perfectly convinced that these were signs of the approaching Messiah. Already in the reign of Maurice a dream of the head of the academy in Tiberias about the Messiah’s birth within eight years had found widespread credence. ...

At any rate it appears that the Jewish communities around Tiberias, led by the wealthy and learned Benjamin, opened the road for the Persian conquest of the administrative capital of Caesarea. When the Persians finally turned toward Jerusalem, the Jews seem to have obtained from them a formal promise that the city would be handed over to Jewish rule. After a twenty-day siege the Holy City surrendered (614). ...

Acting in accordance with a previous agreement, the Persian general, Romizanes, surnamed Shahrabaz (the Shah’s wild boar), entrusted the Jews with the administration of the Holy City. An unnamed leader quickly assumed the name of Nehemiah; he seems even to have attempted the restoration of Jewish sacrificial worship. Many Jews undoubtedly saw in these events a repetition of the reestablishment of a Jewish commonwealth by Cyrus and Darius, and behaved as rulers of city and country. After three years the Persians realized, however, that the Jews expected from them more than they were willing to concede. On second thought they also must have felt that the aid extended to them by the small Jewish minority could not in the long run compensate them for the animosity of the Christian majority, sectarian as well as orthodox, whose loyalty toward Byzantium could otherwise be easily undermined. We do not know of the actual incident which led to the breach between the allies, but about 617 the Persians suddenly suppressed the Jewish regime in Jerusalem, forbade Jews to settle within a three-mile radius from the city, and deported a number of obstreperous leaders.

Even more severe were the measures taken by the returning Byzantines in 629-630. Heraclius, to be sure, was statesmanlike enough to wish to pacify the restless Asiatic provinces, rather than to exacerbate the existing sectarian conflicts. ... After his entry into Jerusalem, however, he yielded to the entreaties of the ecclesiastical leaders, whom he was seeking to placate also by retrieving the True Cross from the Persians. The Church proclaimed a special “fast of Heraclius” (celebrated for centuries thereafter

in Coptic churches) to secure for the emperor expiation for the breach of his oath. This reversal opened the gate to formal prosecutions of individual Jews implicated in the previous attacks on Christians, as well as to mass lynchings.

Thus ended the last attempt by Palestinian Jewry to secure political independence, or at least autonomy under Persian suzerainty, and perhaps also to rebuild the Temple of Jerusalem. The ensuing disillusionment led to the conversion of many Jews...

*Source: "A Social and Religious History of the Jews Vol. III", Salo Baron, The Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia, 1957 [First Published 1952), p. 19-23.*

**Document C: “Israel and the Diaspora”, Ben-Zion Dinur  
(1969)**

Even the destruction of Jewish sovereignty in Palestine was not a single event, nor yet a series of events, but a long, fluctuating historical development, beginning with Pompey's conquest of the country and its partition by Gabinius, and only ending with the abolition of the Patriarchate in the reign of Theodosius II. This was a political and administrative process, in which the main factors were the Roman conquests in the Near East, the spread of Roman rule, and the consequent development of the Roman system of provincial government throughout the empire and particularly in the countries of the Near East. The territorial dispossession of the Jewish nation, on the other hand, was a social and colonizing process (though set, of course, in a certain political framework) in which the principal factors were, first, the continuous penetration of nomad desert tribes into Palestine and their amalgamation with the non-Jewish (Syro-Aramean) elements of the population; and, secondly, the domination of the country's agriculture by the new conquerors and the expropriation of Jewish lands for their benefit.

This was a long process. Its earliest beginnings go back to the reign of Hadrian, when the Roman government, in pursuance of its aim of obliterating all record of the Jewish state (the name "Judah" was now changed to "Palestine"), started a systematic harassment of the Jews, while strengthening and increasing the numbers of the non-Jewish settlements; and it finally ended with the ruthless slaughter of the remaining Jewish population of the country by the warriors of the Crusades, "the vanguard of western civilization," who vented the stored-up Christian hatred of generations on "the enemies of God," and whose crusading fervor was as much the result of their hunger for land and their desire to conquer Palestine and make it as of their religious faith.

However, the decisive event in this long struggle was the Arab conquest of Palestine, with the resulting expropriation of Jewish lands by the conquerors and the emergence of a new national majority in the country. This, therefore, is the right moment to choose as the starting-point of the era of "Israel in the Diaspora."

Source: *“Israel and the Diaspora”*, Ben Zion Dinur, *The Jewish Publication Society of America*, Philadelphia, 1969, p. 4-7.

**Document D: “Dispersion and the Longing for Zion, 1240-1840”, Arie Morgenstern (2002)**

Indeed, from the time of the Crusades until the nineteenth century Jewish life was infused with a sense of messianic anticipation, which found expression, among other things, in *aliya*. This messianic anticipation was focused on specific dates, which were endowed with mystical significance. Starting with the year 5000 on the Jewish calendar (1240 C.E.), the beginning of each new century signaled for many the possibility of redemption, leading large groups of Jews to make the journey to Palestine as a necessary step in bringing it about. ...

Although the number of Jews who succeeded in making the voyage and settling in Palestine never constituted more than a small portion of world Jewry, these messianic *aliyot* were of enduring significance, partly because of the renown of those who took part, partly because of their regular appearance over the centuries, and partly because of the variety of diaspora communities which participated. The messianic impulse which spawned these waves of immigration, and the belief in the centrality of the land of Israel upon which they depended, were in no way marginal to the Jewish tradition, but in fact became an axis of Jewish spiritual life. Indeed, the story of *aliya* from the thirteenth to the nineteenth centuries illustrates the depth and force of the Jewish people's connection to its ancestral homeland, a connection that was carried into the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, when modern Zionism found a new way of giving it voice.

Source: “Dispersion and the Longing for Zion, 1240-1840” Essay by Arie Morgenstern, *Azure: Ideas for the Jewish Nation* (quarterly journal published by Shalem Press) Issue #12 (Winter 2002), pp. 71-132

**Document E: “10<sup>th</sup> Prayer of Amidah Service”  
(ca. First – Second Century A.D.)**

Sound the great shofar for our freedom and raise a banner to gather the exiles and unite us together from the four corners of the earth. Blessed are you, LORD, who regathers the scattered of his people Israel.

*Source: Koren Sacks Siddur, Koren Publishers Jerusalem, 2009.*

**Document F: “My Heart Is in The East”,  
Judah Halevi, (c. 1141 A.D.)**

My heart is in the east, and I in the uttermost west —

How can I find savor in food? How shall it be sweet to me?

How shall I render my vows and my bonds, while yet

Zion lieth beneath the fetter of Edom, and I in Arab chains?

A light thing would it seem to me to leave all the good things of Spain

Seeing how precious in mine eyes to behold the dust of the desolate  
sanctuary.

*Source: “Texts Concerning Zionism: My Heart is In the East”, Yehuda Halevi, c. 1141,  
Jewish Virtual Library, Link: <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/quot-my-heart-is-in-the-east-quot-yehuda-halevi>*

**Document G: “Shebet Yehudah”,  
Solomon ibn Verga (1550)**

In the year 4971 (=1211 c.e.) God inspired the rabbis of France and England to go to Jerusalem. They numbered more than three hundred and were accorded great honor by the king. They built for themselves synagogues and houses of study. Our teacher the great kohen R. Jonathan Ha-kohen went there as well. A miracle occurred. They prayed for rain and were answered, and the name of heaven was sanctified because of them.

*Source: “Shebet Yehudah,” [“The Scepter of Judah”] ed. Yitzhak Baer and Azriel Shochat, Jerusalem, 1946-47, (This section is part of an appendix composed by Solomon’s son Joseph), p. 105.*

**Document H: “*Innocents Abroad*”,  
Mark Twain (1867)**

Palestine sits in sackcloth and ashes. Over it broods the spell of a curse that has withered its fields and fettered its energies. Where Sodom and Gomorrah reared their domes and towers, that solemn sea now floods the plain, in whose bitter waters no living thing exists – over whose waveless surface the blistering air hangs motionless and dead – about whose borders nothing grows but weeds, and scattering tufts of cane, and that treacherous fruit that promises refreshment to parching lips, but turns to ashes at the touch. Nazareth is forlorn; about that ford of Jordan where the hosts of Israel entered the Promised Land with songs of rejoicing, one finds only a squalid camp of fantastic Bedouins of the desert; Jericho the accursed, lies a moldering ruin, to-day, even as Joshua’s miracle left it more than three thousand years ago; Bethlehem and Bethany, in their poverty and their humiliation, have nothing about them now to remind one that they once knew the high honor of the Saviour’s presence; the hallowed spot where the shepherds watched their flocks by night, and where the angels sang Peace on earth, good will to men, is untenanted by any living creature, and unblessed by any feature that is pleasant to the eye. Renowned Jerusalem itself, the stateliest name in history, has lost all its ancient grandeur, and is become a pauper village; the riches of Solomon are no longer there to compel the admiration of visiting Oriental queens ... Palestine is desolate and unlovely. And why should it be otherwise? Can the curse of the Deity beautify a land?

Palestine is no more of this work-day world. It is sacred to poetry and tradition – it is dream-land.

*Source: “The Innocents Abroad or the New Pilgrim’s Progress Vol. II,” Mark Twain, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1922, p. 359.*