

Source Sheet Class 4-2000 Years of Jewish History-Rabbi Menachem Levine

Source 1

In the days to come, the Mount of God's House shall stand firm above the mountains and tower above the hills. And all the nations shall stream to it. And the many peoples shall go and say: "Come, let us go up to the Mount of God, to the House of the God of Jacob — that He may instruct us in His ways, that we may walk in His paths." (**Isaiah 2:3**)

And they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation. Neither shall they learn war anymore... (**Isaiah 2:4**)

[At that time] the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard lie down with the kid, the calf and the beast of prey shall feed together with a little child to herd them. (**Isaiah 11:6**)

Source 2

The King Messiah will arise and restore the kingship of David to its former state and original sovereignty. He will rebuild the sanctuary and gather the dispersed of Israel. All the ancient laws will be re-instituted in his days... Do not think that the King Messiah will have to perform signs and wonders, bring anything new into being, revive the dead, or do similar things. It is not so...

If there arise a king from the House of David who meditates in Torah, occupies himself with the commandments... observes the precepts prescribed in the Written and Oral Law, prevails upon Israel to walk in the way of Torah... fights the battles of the Lord, it may be **assumed** that he is the messiah. **If he does these things and succeeds**, rebuilds the sanctuary on its site, and gathers the dispersed of Israel, he is beyond all doubt the Messiah. He will prepare the whole world to serve the Lord together.

(Maimonides, *Mishnah Torah*; **Laws of Kings, Chap. 12**)

Source 3

Historically, it is quite doubtful whether Christ ever existed at all, and if He did we do not know anything about Him.

British Philosopher, Bertrand Russell, “*Why I am not a Christian.*”

Source 4

Christianity preserved all the advantages of its Jewish heritage but without the only two factors that might otherwise have inhibited its growth: the obligation of the ritual law and the close connection between religion and national identity. By proclaiming that the Christ was 'the end of the law' and by presenting itself to the world as 'the new spiritual Israel,' Hellenistic Christianity was able to reap the political and social fruits that had been sown by three centuries of Hellenistic Judaism.

John G. Gager, William H. Danforth Professor of Religion at Princeton University, in *Kingdom and Community: The Social World of Early Christianity* (p. 140)

Source 5

Numerically... they [the Jews] were fewer in those days than they are now-perhaps eight million... But no less than seven million of these eight million were in the Roman empire, where they constituted between six and nine percent of the population – in the eastern provinces, the percentage was perhaps as high as twenty. Comprising, as they did, such a high proportion of the total number of inhabitants, they could scarcely fail to exercise an influence upon events; given their highly distinctive beliefs and customs, so divergent from the Greco-Roman way of life which surrounded them, it was predictable that their relationship with their neighbors would become both dramatic and explosive.

(Grant, Michael, *The Jews in the Roman World*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1973, page xi.) Professor Grant translated Tacitus “Annals of Imperial Rome” and wrote seventy books on ancient history including several dozen on Rome.

Source 6

*The conditions were highly favorable. The old paganism... was decaying, and sensitive minds were repelled by it. The clear-cut monotheism and the rational practices of the Hebrews, expounded with charm by the Hellenized Jewish writers, made a deep impression. **There were great numbers of converts, if not officially to Judaism, at least to Jewish practices and ideals.***

Howard Sachar, Professor Emeritus at George Washington in Modern History, in his *History of Israel*, p. 111

Source 7

The christian religion and Masonry have one and the same common origin: both are derived from the worship of the Sun. The difference between their origin is, that the christian religion is a parody on the worship of the Sun, in which they put a man whom they call Christ, in the place of the Sun, and pay him the same adoration which was originally paid to the Sun, as I have shown in the chapter on the origin of the Christian religion.

British-American author, Thomas Paine (1737- 1809) “The Origins of Free-Masonry

Source 8

“The day will come when the mystical generation of Jesus, by the supreme being as his father in the womb in a virgin, will be classed with the fable of the generation of Minerva in the brain of Jupiter.”

Thomas Jefferson in a letter to John Adams

Source 9

Julian thought to rebuild at an extravagant expense the proud Temple once at Jerusalem, and committed this task to Alypius of Antioch. Alypius set vigorously to work, and was seconded by the governor of the province; when fearful balls of fire, breaking out near the foundations, continued their attacks, till the workmen, after repeated scorchings, could approach no more: and he gave up the attempt.

Ammianus Marcellinus (325/330–after 391); chronicled in Latin the history of Rome from 96 to 378)

Source 10

... But the Jews who slew Him, and would not believe in Him, because it behoved Him to die and rise again, were yet more miserably wasted by the Romans, and utterly rooted out from their kingdom, where aliens had already ruled over them, and were dispersed through the lands (so that indeed there is no place where they are not), and are thus by their own Scriptures a testimony to us that we have not forged the prophecies about Christ. And very many of them, considering this, even before His passion, but chiefly after His resurrection, believed on Him, of whom it was predicted, "Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, the remnant shall be saved." (Isa. x 22, as in Rom. ix. 27, 28)/ But the rest are blinded, of whom it was predicted, "Let their table be made before them a trap, and a retribution, and a stumbling-block. Let their eyes be darkened lest they see, and bow down their back alway." (Psalms lxxix 22, 23; Romans xi. 9,10). Therefore, when they do not believe our Scriptures, their own, which they blindly read, are fulfilled in them, lest perchance any one should say that the Christians have forged these prophecies about Christ which are quoted under the name of the sibyl, or of others, if such there be, who do not belong to the Jewish people. For us, indeed, those suffice which are quoted from the books of our enemies, to whom we make our acknowledgment, on account of this testimony which, in spite of themselves, they contribute by their possession of these books, while they themselves are dispersed among all nations, wherever the Church of Christ is spread abroad. For a prophecy about this thing was sent before in the Psalms, which they also read, where it is written, "My God, His mercy shall prevent me. My God hath shown me concerning mine enemies, that Thou shalt not slay them, lest they should at last forget Thy law: disperse them in Thy might." (Psalms lxxix 10,11) Therefore God has shown the Church in her enemies the Jews the grace of His compassion, since, as saith the apostle, "their offence is the salvation of the Gentiles." (Rom xi. 11). **And therefore He has not slain them, that is, He has not let the knowledge that they are Jews be lost in them, although they have been conquered by the Romans, lest they should forget the law of God, and their testimony should be of no avail in this matter of which we treat. But it was not enough that he should say, "Slay them not, lest they should at last forget Thy law," unless he had also added, "Disperse them;" because if they had only been in their own land with that testimony of the Scriptures, and not everywhere, certainly the Church which is everywhere could not have had them as witnesses among all nations to the prophecies which were sent before concerning Christ. (Augustine, City of G-d, Book 18 Ch. 46)**