

## **Marked for Suffering**

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### Slide 1

1. This is the second presentation about the anguish and achievement of the Jewish people over the last 2600 hundred years.
2. Last week we ended in about 400 A.D., when the Jews had become second class citizens within the Roman Empire after Christianity became the only lawful religion.
3. Today, we will look at the Jewish experience during the Middle Ages.
4. It was during this period that the perception of Jews went from being a people who deserved to suffer because they had killed Jesus to being a people who deserved to die for a variety of claimed crimes.
5. But the Middle Ages also included what has been called the “golden age of Judaism,” occurring in southern Spain after it was conquered by the Muslims.

### Slide 2

1. In 410, the Visigoths sacked Rome, beginning the collapse of the western Roman Empire, with its capital in Rome, and signaling the beginning of the Middle Ages.
2. We tend to think of these so-called “barbarians,” which simply means outsiders, as pagans.
3. However, in 376 A.D., the king of the Visigoths accepted Arian Christianity as the official religion for all his people.
4. Arians believed that Jesus and God are not equal.
5. The Visigoths persecuted the non-Arian Catholics, Christians who accepted the orthodox view that Jesus and God the Father are equal.
6. Refugees from Rome escaped across the Mediterranean to the Catholic Christian communities in North Africa.

### Slide 3

1. Augustine, the bishop of Hippo, was the most important bishop in North Africa.

2. Augustine wrote his famous book *City of God* in response to the claims of the refugees that they should have stayed with their Roman gods because the God of the Christians had not saved Rome from destruction.
3. Augustine argued that secular governments could never be counted on and the only true security comes from God, making the church a substitute for the state.
4. Because of his teachings on such subjects as original sin, Augustine is considered one of Christianity's greatest theologians, especially in the west.
5. Much less well known are Augustine's influential teachings about the Jews.

#### Slide 4

1. Augustine agreed with the Christian writers we saw last week that Jews had killed Jesus and that their suffering was a deserved consequence of their collective guilt.
2. For Augustine, Judas, the betrayer, was the Jews' namesake and model.
3. Like other Christians, Augustine was puzzled by the Jews' rejection of Jesus when it was clear to him that Jesus was the Messiah predicted by the Hebrew Scriptures.
4. Augustine came up with a novel theory to explain both the Jewish rejection of Jesus and Jewish suffering and dispersal throughout the Roman Empire.
5. Augustine believed that God had caused the dispersal and suffering of the Jews so that Christians everywhere could observe them and see the consequences of not accepting Jesus as the Messiah.
6. For Augustine, Jews were a "witness people," allowed by God to continue to exist **"for the salvation of the nation but not their own."** Flannery, *The Anguish of the Jews* at 53.
7. Because continued survival of Jews was essential to their continued witness to the consequence of not accepting Jesus, Augustine did not advocate that people should add to their suffering and preached against killing them.
8. For this idea, Augustine cited *Psalms* 59:11: **"But do not kill them, Lord our shield, people will forget. In your might uproot them and bring them down."**
9. But only part of Augustine's message got through to most people.
10. As Clark Williamson, Professor Emeritus at Christian Theological Seminary writes: **"As a rule, Christians remembered that Jews were supposed to suffer and, when they did not, took steps to put things right."** Williamson, *Has God Rejected His People* at 99.

## Slide 5

1. Consistently with the teachings of Augustine, Roman laws during the fifth century allowed Judaism to exist, but did not allow it to expand – old synagogues could be repaired, but new ones could not be built.
2. As a result, Christians frequently destroyed synagogues, hoping to force Jews to become Christians.
3. One of the most notorious synagogue burnings occurred during the late fifth century in Antioch in what is now Turkey during the reign of Zeno, the eastern Roman Emperor.
4. After learning that the arsonists had also burned the bones of Jewish dead, Zeno said **“that it would have been better to burn live Jews instead.”** Flannery, *The Anguish of the Jews* at 67.
5. Unfortunately, that time would come all too soon.

## Slide 6

1. The last Roman Emperor in the west gave up his throne in 475 A.D., but the Roman Empire continued in the east as the Byzantine Empire, with its capital in Constantinople.
2. Justinian became the Byzantine Emperor in 527 A.D. and served for almost 40 years.
3. Justinian was a devout Christian, famous for constructing the Hagia Sophia in Constantinople and other large churches throughout the Byzantine Empire.
4. During his reign, Justinian enacted a number of laws directed at the Jews, including ones preventing Jews from practicing law and testifying against Christians.
5. Laws also restricted Jewish ownership of property.
6. Justinian stripped Judaism of any remaining legal protection, leading to additional burnings of synagogues and forced baptisms of Jews.

## Slide 7

1. Justinian also imposed restrictions on Jewish religious practices that he thought showed Christianity in a bad light.
2. Laws barred Jews from celebrating Passover before Easter even when the Jewish calendar and Christian calendars called for that.

3. Because Justinian believed that the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures, was more consistent with Christian teachings than the Hebrew original, Justinian required that Jews use only the Septuagint in their worship.
4. Justinian barred the Jews from daily reciting the *Shema*, which declares: **“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.”** *Deuteronomy* 6:4.
5. So important is the *Shema* that Jews recite it daily and are instructed to wear it on their foreheads and post it on their door posts. *Deuteronomy* 6:8-9.
6. The *Shema* was the primary reason Jews could not accept the divinity of Jesus.
7. For Justinian, when teachings in the Hebrew Scriptures were inconsistent with Christian beliefs, the problem had to be with the Hebrew Scriptures.

#### Slide 8

1. Jews were also persecuted in the west, then under the control of barbarian tribes.
2. Perhaps the worst treatment of Jews at the time occurred in Spain.
3. In about 589 A.D., Reccared I, the Visigoth King of Spain, converted to Roman Catholicism and made his kingdom officially Catholic.
4. The previously tolerant treatment of Spain’s Jews changed dramatically.
5. From the capital in Toledo, Visigoth rulers and church leaders issued a series of decrees directed at Spanish Jews.
6. The decrees outlawed circumcision and observance of Jewish holy days.
7. Jews were given the choice of being baptized as Christians, leaving Spain or becoming slaves.
8. Jewish children over the age of seven were taken from their parents and delivered to Christian parents to be raised as Christians.

#### Slide 9

1. As one author writes: **“[T]he Jews did not behave passively in the face of their enemies, they had not, as yet, acquired that stubborn and touching resignation which became their characteristic later.”** Lazare, *Antisemitism* at 47.
2. In 556 A.D., Jews massacred Christians at Caesarea Philippi and burned their churches.

3. Fifty years later, Jews in Antioch, who had suffered repeated persecution, **“killed many Christians, burned their bodies and dragged the Patriarch Anastatius through the streets before killing him.”** Flannery, *The Anguish of the Jews* at 69.
4. More important, thousands of Jews joined with Persian forces in attacking Jerusalem, then under control of the Byzantine Empire and still off limits to Jews.
5. In 614 A.D., Jerusalem fell to the combined Jewish and Persian forces, which killed an estimated 30,000 Christians and destroyed many churches.
6. In 628, Byzantine forces under Emperor Heraclius recaptured Jerusalem from the Jews and Persians and authorized the massacre of the Jews who had supported Persia.
7. Some Jews escaped death by fleeing to Egypt or the mountains.
8. **“[I]n 632 Heraclius decreed that all Jews be baptized.”** *Id.* at 70.
9. Heraclius also reinstated the ban on Jews from Jerusalem.

#### Slide 10

1. The battles over Jerusalem weakened the Byzantine forces throughout the Middle East, making them more vulnerable to attacks from Islamic forces coming from Arabia.
2. As a result, only ten years after Heraclius had recaptured Jerusalem from the Jews and Persians, it fell to the Muslims, who went on to capture the surrounding areas.
3. The Muslim conquerors established the Al Aksa Mosque on Jerusalem’s Temple Mount, which eventually became the third holiest site in Islam.
4. For the remaining Jews in the Middle East, the Islamic conquest was good news.
5. The Islamic belief that Jesus was not divine was much closer to their beliefs than that of the Christians.
6. As People of the Book, Muslims generally allowed Jews to practice their beliefs as long as they paid a tax equal to the amount Muslims were required to pay for the poor.
7. As one author states: **“Jews generally fared better under non-Christian than Christian governance.”** Flannery, *The Anguish of the Jews* at 81.

#### Slide 11

1. That was certainly true in Spain, where Visigoth Christians had badly mistreated the Jews.

2. When a small Muslim force crossed the Straits of Gibraltar from Morocco into Spain in 711, the Jews welcomed and even assisted the invaders.
3. The invaders, later known as Moors, returned the favor, putting Jews in charge of the captured Visigoth towns as they moved north.
4. In 756, after a period of infighting, an Umayyad prince named Abd al-Rahman, who had been exiled from Syria, took control of most of the Iberian Peninsula, named al-Andalus in Arabic.
5. Al-Rahman's regime treated Spain's Jews much more tolerantly than did Christian regimes and Jews from all over Europe began moving to al-Andalus.
6. While Christian Europe was in a period so lacking in intellectual accomplishment that it is sometimes called the "Dark Ages," southern Spain under Moorish control enjoyed **"a period of prosperity and creativity that was perhaps unequaled in the entire postbiblical history."** Flannery, *The Anguish of the Jews* at 80.
7. It was an age of intellectual accomplishment some have compared to that of classic Greece or the Italian Renaissance, accompanied and nurtured by periods of tolerance and cooperation between the area's Jews, Christians and Muslims.
8. Because of this tolerance and cooperation, this period has been called "*Convivencia*," "the Coexistence" and is often referred to as the "golden age of Judaism," leading many Jews to settle in Spain.

#### Slide 12

1. A number of the Jews from Europe came to Cordoba, the capital of al-Andalus.
2. By the end of the tenth century, Cordoba, with a large Jewish population, had become the intellectual heart of Europe, if not the world.
3. Its population of about 500,000 made it the largest and richest city in the world, surpassing Constantinople and Baghdad, the previous leaders.
4. Well-lit streets and running water made Cordoba much more impressive than the dirty cities of Christian Europe.
5. The population of Rome at the time was about 30,000.
6. Cordoba's calligraphers were producing 6000 books per year on paper, a technology still largely absent outside Moorish Spain and Morocco.
7. The largest library in Christian Europe had no more than six hundred manuscripts, virtually all on sheepskin.

### Slide 13

1. People came to Spain to study in its universities and learn from Jewish scholars who became world famous.
2. Solomon ibn Gabirol, born in 1021 in Málaga, Spain, wrote works that influenced beliefs of medieval Christians, who erroneously considered him a Christian.
3. Judah Halevi, born in 1075 in Toledo, Spain, is considered one of the greatest of all Jewish poets, whose works continue to be used in Jewish worship services.
4. Abraham ibn Ezra, born in Tudela in 1089, was an influential commentator on the Hebrew Scriptures, whose works were later used to support modern ideas about the authorship of the Torah.
5. During the eleventh and twelfth centuries, Jewish residents of al-Andalus prospered in fields of commerce, agriculture and medicine.
6. Jewish writers translated the works of the ancient Greeks into Latin.
7. Cordoba became the center of Jewish philosophy.
8. From this period came Moses Maimonides, the most important Jewish intellectual of the Middle Ages, who was born in Cordoba in 1135 near where his statue now stands.

### Slide 14

1. At the same time that Jews in Spain were in their golden age, Christians in the rest of Europe began a period of **“a harassment of the Jews that, in duration and intensity, was unique in Jewish history.”** Flannery, *The Anguish of the Jews* at 91.
2. In 1095, Pope Urban II made a formal call for Roman Catholics to join in a war to evict the Muslims from Jerusalem and other parts of the Holy Land, promising the people that their sins would be forgiven if they joined this effort.
3. The response to the call of Pope Urban is now called the “First Crusade.”
4. Urban intended to use the knights that had beaten back the Vikings.
5. But the promise of having their sins forgiven and going directly to heaven was a powerful incentive for ordinary people to join the fight.
6. People with no military experience set out from Germany and France to attack the Muslims in the Holy Land – many were led by Peter the Hermit.
7. This became known as the People’s Crusade.
8. Many of these people did not get very far because of lack of supplies and training.

9. They decided that it made no sense to try to get to Jerusalem to kill Muslims, when they could kill Jews living in their own countries.

10. Here is the report of one eyewitness: **“Look now, we are going to seek out our profanity and to take vengeance on the Ishmaelites for our Messiah, when here are the Jews who murdered and crucified him. Let us first avenge ourselves on them and exterminate them from among the nations so that the name of Israel will no longer be remembered or let them adopt our faith.”** Armstrong, *Holy War* at 73.

11. **“From January to July of 1096, it is estimated that up to 10,000 died, probably one fourth to one third of the Jewish population of Germany and Northern France at the time.”** Flannery, *The Anguish of the Jews* at 93.

#### Slide 15

1. Since the time of the Maccabean revolt against the Greeks, when Jews chose to be killed rather than eat pork, Jews have been taught that it is better to “sanctify the name of God” by dying a martyr than to dishonor the name of God by engaging in idolatry and other forbidden practices.

2. As a result, during the People’s Crusade, a number of Jews committed suicide rather than being baptized or killed by the Christians.

3. Some also killed their own children to avoid them being raised Christian after their own deaths.

#### Slide 16

1. Knights of the First Crusade eventually reached Jerusalem in 1099.

2. They laid siege to the city and finally broke through the city walls.

3. On their first day in the city, the crusaders killed all the Muslims they could find – if they found any Jews, they killed them as well.

4. **“The synagogue in which the city’s Jews were hiding was set on fire to burn them alive.”** Moynahan, *The Faith* at 239.

5. At least 40,000 people were killed on the first day, including women and children.

#### Slide 17

1. Before the First Crusade, Christians had been content to see Jews being disadvantaged, but **“[u]ntil then there were few instances of organized violence against Jewish communities.”** Moynahan, *The Faith* at 239.



2. The widespread killings of Jews during the First Crusade created **“a new persecuting attitude that soon established itself at the heart of western culture.”** Riley-Smith, *Crusades* at 64.
3. Because the Christians had successfully retaken Jerusalem from the Muslims, Christians believed the First Crusade must have been God’s will.
4. By the same logic, the massacre of Jews during that crusade must also have been God’s will.
5. As Clark Williamson writes: **“After these bloodbaths, the minds of western Christians became sufficiently uneasy that the need for justification arose. Thus the notion took hold that the victims must have deserved what had befallen them.”** Williamson, *Has God Rejected His People?* at 114.
6. As a result, ordinary Christians ignored the admonitions of Augustine not to kill Jews and were all too willing to find justifications for why the Jews deserved to be killed, often resurfacing ancient claims against them.

Slide 18

1. One notorious justification for killing Jews during the Middle Ages has become known as the “blood libel.”
2. As we saw last week, the claim that Jews sacrificed human beings in the Jerusalem Temple was made in the first century writings of Apion and never really died.
3. That ancient slander merged with reports that Jews had killed their own children during the First Crusade, leading to claims that Jews annually killed Christian children to obtain their blood for use in connection with a supposed secret Passover ritual.
4. Christians **“maintained that the Jewish religion which approved of the Crucifixion of Christ, prescribed in addition the shedding of Christian blood.”** Lazare, *Antisemitism* at 160.
5. Eventually, the claim became that Jews needed the blood of a Christian child for their matzos and the Jews became the scape goat for any unexplained death of a child.

Slide 19

1. Those accused, sometimes including all the Jews in a village, were routinely killed, sometimes with no opportunity to make a defense.
2. For example, in 1171, 51 Jews in Blois, France, 34 men and 17 women, were burned when the person accusing them of ritually murdering a child passed a water test.
3. As one author writes: **“[I]t seemed totally consistent with Jewish behavior that the people who had spilled Christ’s blood would seek to reenact the crucifixion**

**by torturing and draining the blood of an innocent child and they would use the blood for some magical rite. Christians felt that by punishing these evil people in an appropriately cruel way, they were engaged in a salvific activity – avenging and honoring their Lord.”** Perry, *Antisemitism* at 47-48.

Slide 20

1. To their credit, some medieval popes tried to prevent claims of ritual murder, pointing out that the Hebrew Scriptures expressly forbid the consumption of blood and there was no factual basis for the charges being asserted against the Jews.
2. For example, in 1272 Pope Gregory X noted that parents of children occasionally hid their own children **“in order that they might be able to injure these [accused] Jews, and in order that they may be able to extort from them a certain amount of money by redeeming them from their straits.”** Perry, *Antisemitism* at 51.
3. But the unfounded charges continued.
4. As one author writes: **“[T]rapped by hate and seduced by myth, zealots ignored papal logic and appeals and continued with their bizarre accusations and murderous actions. Ritual murder had succeeded the Crusades as a pretext for the mass murder of Jews.”** *Id.* at 52.

Slide 21

1. By the Middle Ages, Christians had come to believe that the communion wafer or host was literally the body of Jesus, so it made sense to them that if Jews could not find a child to sacrifice, they could get the blood they needed from wafers.
2. **“Now Jews were accused of attacking not just any Christian child, but the Christ-child himself, in the form of consecrated hosts purchased or stolen.”** Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism* at 205.
3. Stories circulated that Jews had stolen and pierced wafers, with blood then coming from them.
4. Priests occasionally produced wafers showing drops of blood, probably put there by them to support the charges against Jews.
5. About 100 accusations of host desecration have been recorded, in some cases leading to the burning of all Jews in a village.
6. In 1298, up to 100,000 German Jews were murdered and 140 Jewish communities decimated when **“word went out that Jews had desecrated a host.”** Flannery, *The Anguish of the Jews* at 107.
7. As with claims of ritual murder, efforts by church and civil authorities to stop Christians from killing Jews for claimed host desecration proved futile.

## Slide 22

1. One of the most prevalent charges against medieval Jews was that they were engaged in abusive commercial practices, often in the context of lending money and charging high rates of interest, usually described as “usury.”
2. There are many reasons for the Jewish domination of money lending during the Middle Ages, the most often cited of which is theological.
3. Some passages in the Hebrew Scriptures, which Christians call the Old Testament, expressly forbid charging of **any** interest on loans. *E.g., Leviticus 25:36-37.*
4. As a result, Christians during the Middle Ages were generally barred from charging interest on loans to anyone.
5. On the other hand, passages in the Hebrew Scriptures allow interest to be charged to foreigners, leading medieval Jewish authorities to conclude that Jews were not forbidden from charging interest to Christians. *See Deuteronomy 23:20.*
6. After the First Crusade significantly expanded trade with the east, Christians had a growing demand for capital and Jewish moneylenders were often the only available source of that capital.
7. As a result, “[m]oney was in short supply, so prince and pauper alike avidly sought Jewish moneylending services.” Flannery, *The Anguish of the Jews* at 97.
8. By the beginning of the twelfth century, even popes were borrowing money from Jewish lenders to build their cathedrals.
9. In some cases, kings adopted Jewish financiers as part of their court, giving rise to the term “court Jew.”
10. These court Jews “**were permitted to dress like the Christian nobility and acquired the manners and language of the court.**” Trepp, *A History of the Jewish Experience* at 148.

## Slide 23

1. Other forces also contributed to Jewish domination of moneylending.
2. In the first place, many other occupations were no longer available to them.
3. The prohibition on the use of Christian slaves had essentially eliminated Jewish farmers, who were unwilling to till the soil themselves unless it was in Israel.
4. Laws kept the Jews from most professions and craft guilds, which were essentially religious institutions, limited membership to Christians.

5. Perhaps more important, most Jews during the Middle Ages were much better educated than their Christian contemporaries.
6. From at least the time of the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in 70 A.D., Jewish fathers had been commanded to educate their sons so they could read and interpret the Hebrew Scriptures in the synagogues.
7. As a result, Jews on average were much more able than others to draw up and understand the instruments needed to loan money and to calculate and collect interest.
8. One author says: **“In many parts of Europe, Jews, forced out of trade, turned to an area still open to them by the church’s war on clerical usury as well as by European backwardness in that sphere: banking and finance.”** Perry, *Antisemitism* at 122.
9. Another author summarizes the Jewish domination of moneylending this way: **“Thus a religious conception of the functions of capital and interest, and a social system that ran counter to this conception, led the Jews of the Middle Ages to adopt a profession cried down but made necessary; and in reality they were not the cause of the abuses of usury, for which the social order itself was responsible.”** Lazare, *Antisemitism* at 61.

Slide 24

1. Kings and princes encouraged Jewish money lending at whatever rates the markets would bear because they could tax the Jews as a way of collecting additional revenue.
2. As one author writes: **“[E]xactions on interest collected by Jews from Christians gave lords new access to the wealth of their Christian subjects.”** Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism* at 194.
3. Many people became indebted to the Jewish moneylenders, who often charged rates that could exceed the principal amount of the loan.
4. This not only led to resentment against the Jews, but to economic reasons for their killing, which voided debts owed to them by Christians.
5. As one author writes: **“Many who were killed were not only Jewish ‘unbelievers’ but also creditors.”** Flannery, *The Anguish of the Jews* at 98.

Slide 25

1. The importance of debt in the medieval persecution of Jews is evident in the incentives given to participate in the Second Crusade, begun in 1147 to try to retake the County of Edessa, a Crusader state that had been recaptured by the Muslims.

2. In the First Crusade, volunteers were told that their sins would be forgiven if they joined the crusade.
3. Those joining the Second Crusade were also told that their debts to Jewish moneylenders would be forgiven.
4. The idea that Jewish assets were subject to being appropriated by the church and/or the state for their purposes was a result of developments in medieval theology that regarded Jews as property.
5. Thomas Aquinas summarized this idea: **“It would be licit, according to custom, to hold Jews, because of their crime, in perpetual servitude, and therefore the princes may regard the possessions of the Jews as belonging to the State; however, they must use them with a certain moderation and not deprive Jews of things necessary to life.”** Flannery, *The Anguish of the Jews* at 96.
6. As a result, kings routinely confiscated Jewish wealth, claiming it as their own.
7. One author attributes Jewish lending practices to the Jews’ **“own need for money,”** because kings and princes, **“treated [them] as a sponge to be squeezed, refilled, and squeezed again.”** *Id.* at 97.
8. So dependent were some kings on tapping into Jewish wealth that some brought them back after expelling them.

#### Slide 26

1. In 1148, just after the initiation of the Second Crusade, the Almohads, a fundamentalist Muslim sect from North Africa, conquered Cordoba and threatened Cordoba’s Jews with death if they did not convert to Islam.
2. For 11 years, Maimonides and his family survived by pretending to be Muslims.
3. In 1159 they, like many other Jewish families, chose to leave Cordoba, leading to the decline of Cordoba and the end of the Spanish golden age.
4. But Maimonides’ family did not go to Europe, which had become increasingly threatening to Jews.
5. They went first to Fes, Morocco, and then to Egypt, both under Islamic control.
6. After the Crusades, Jewish life under Islamic control was, in most areas, decidedly preferable to life in Christian Europe.

#### Slide 27

1. Innocent III was one of the most important popes of the Middle Ages.

2. In 1204, Roman Catholic forces that Innocent had launched as part of the Fourth Crusade captured Constantinople, the headquarters of the Eastern Orthodox Church, hoping to impose Roman Catholic beliefs on what remained of the Byzantine Empire.
3. With his success in capturing Constantinople, Pope Innocent III turned his attention to the Cathars, who practiced a form of Christianity that had become very popular in the south of France.
4. In 1209, Innocent declared that the Cathars were heretics and ordered a crusade against them, with the pope promising the crusaders that they would be relieved from the consequences of any past sins.
5. Knights attacked the Cathars and quickly **“slew 20,000 men, women, and children in indiscriminate massacre.”** Durant, *Heroes of History* at 176.
6. In an effort to determine which people were Cathars and therefore heretics, Innocent III established the inquisition that was later used against the Jews in Spain and Portugal that we will talk about next week.

Slide 28

1. In 1209, Pope Innocent, wrote a letter to the Count of Nevers about the Jews, whom he suspected of being aligned in some way with the Cathars **“The Lord made Cain a wanderer and a fugitive over the earth, but set a mark upon him, making his head to shake, lest any finding him should slay him. Thus the Jews, against whom the blood of Jesus Christ calls out, although they ought not be killed, lest the Christian people forget the Divine Law, yet as wanderers ought they to remain upon the earth, until their countenance be filled with shame and they seek the name of Jesus Christ, the Lord.”**
2. In light of all the killings of Jews, Innocent was seeking a return to the teachings of Augustine that Jews were not to be killed so that they could become a visible sign of the consequences of not accepting Jesus as the Messiah.
3. But for Jews to be an effective “witness people,” as Augustine had advocated, they had to be distinguishable from Christians, who could associate their suffering with their being Jewish.
4. As a result, in 1215, the Fourth Lateran Council in Rome, called by Pope Innocent to implement his ideas, mandated that all Jews wear special markings, ostensibly so that Christians would not inadvertently have sex with Jews.
5. In support of this decree, the council cited *Numbers* 15:37-39, in which Moses told the Israelites **“to make tassels on the corners of your garments, with a blue cord on each tassel, [so] that you may obey [all the commandments of the Lord] and not prostitute yourselves by going after the lusts of your own hearts and eyes.”**

6. **“From this sprang the yellow hat in France, the peculiarly shaped hat in Poland, and other forms of dress elsewhere which set Jews apart and made them targets of abuse and ostracism.”** Williamson, *Has God Rejected His People?* at 109.

7. From **“this edict also came the badge, first introduced in France in the form of a yellow sphere called the *rouelle*”** that was later used as a model by the Nazis. *Id.*

8. As one author writes: **“Physically marked off from his social environment, [the Jew] stood out like a pariah, prey to insult in his daily life and to violence in time of crisis.”** Flannery, *The Anguish of the Jews* at 104.

#### Slide 29

1. The Talmud is a huge collection of Jewish writings, including teachings and opinions of rabbis, which has long been important to Jews.

2. It provides the basis for Jewish law, but also contains statements, from the first centuries after the death of Jesus, that are critical of Christian teachings.

3. For example, one of the writings of the Talmud repeats the claims of Celsus, a second century Greek philosopher and critic of Christianity, that Jesus was the illegitimate son of Pantera, a Roman soldier.

4. Because the writings were in Hebrew, Christians had little, if any, knowledge of what was in the Talmud.

5. In the 1230s, Nicholas Donin, a Jewish convert to Christianity, translated 35 passages from the Talmud he believed **“proved that the Talmud was offensive to Christianity and the chief cause of Jewish unbelief”** and asked Pope Gregory IX to condemn the entire Talmud. Flannery, *The Anguish of the Jews* at 104.

6. After a trial in 1240, the Talmud was condemned and 24 wagonloads of the Talmud, perhaps 10,000 copies, were burned in Paris.

7. Later popes repeated the condemnations, leading to further burnings.

8. **“These public condemnations of the Talmud contributed to the ‘poisoning of all Judaeo-Christian relations in the Middle Ages.’”** *Id.* at 105.

#### Slide 30

1. In 1253, King Henry III of England issued the Statute of the Jewry, including a number of ant-Jewish provisions.

2. One required that Jews always wear their badges on their breasts and another allowed Jews to remain in England only so long as they were valuable to others.

3. A statute issued by Edward I in 1275 barred charging interest on loans, a measure directed at Jewish money lenders who were banned from other trades.
4. In 1290, claiming that the Jews were continuing to charge interest, Edward I issued an Edict of Expulsion, expelling all of England's 16,000 Jews.

#### Slide 31

1. In 1306, King Philip IV of France, acting in response to public pressure, had all Jews in France arrested and ordered out of the country, leading to at least 100,000 Jews fleeing France.
2. But the Jews and their money and skills were soon missed.
3. As one author writes: **“Jewish moneylending, hated and proscribed though it was, had become an indispensable function of the medieval economy.”** Flannery, *The Anguish of the Jews* at 108.
4. As a result, in 1315, Louis X, Philip's successor, allowed the Jews to return.
5. In that same year, a devastating famine gripped France, which was almost immediately blamed on the return of the Jews.
6. Within a short time, a young shepherd, claiming to have received a vision from God, organized 40,000 rural residents of northern France to mount what became known as the “Shepherds' Crusade” against French Jews.
7. **“Scores of Jewish communities were exterminated by these fanatics, who believed that in killing Jews they were serving Christ.”** Perry, *Antisemitism* at 79.
8. You can see the yellow ring on Jews being burned.
9. **“[M]any Jews, confronted with baptism, killed themselves and their children.”** Flannery, *The Anguish of the Jews* at 108.

#### Slide 32

1. During the Shepherds' Crusade, rumors began to circulate that the Jews were out to exterminate all Christians in Europe by poisoning European wells with a mixture of urine, human blood and a communion host.
2. The secret formula had supposedly been given to the Jews by lepers.
3. As we saw last week, the connection of Jews with leprosy has a long history.



4. Pre-Christian writers such as Manetho and Apion claimed that the Jews had been driven from Egypt because they were spreading leprosy.

5. In 110 A.D., Tacitus, the Roman historian, wrote that Jews **“abstain from swine’s flesh, in consideration of what they suffered when they were infected by the leprosy to which this animal is liable.”** <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/tacitus-on-the-jews-110-ce>

6. Based on claims that Jews were poisoning wells, about 5000 French Jews were killed, many after being tortured.

7. **“In Chinon, France, 160 Jews were cast in a pit and burned.”** Flannery, *The Anguish of the Jews* at 108.

### Slide 33

1. The bubonic plague, the Black Death, came to Europe in 1347, quickly killing tens of thousands of people and eventually killing about one-third of all Europeans.

2. For the survivors, this was all the proof that they needed that the Jews were becoming successful in their plot to destroy all Christians by poisoning their wells.

3. Stories circulated that **“messengers had carried poison [from Toledo] in stitched leather bags with instructions from rabbis to sprinkle it in wells and springs.”** Moynahan, *The Faith* at 293.

4. Claims that Jews were responsible for the plague **“spread like wildfire”** and thousands of Jews were tortured and killed throughout western Europe. Flannery, *The Anguish of the Jews* at 109.

5. **“Six thousand Jews died in Mainz when the Jewish quarter there was set on fire. Two thousand were burned at Strasbourg on a scaffolding, singing and dancing, martyrs sanctifying the name of God.”** Williamson, *Has God Rejected His People?* at 117.

6. **“The Pope and the bishops tried to stop the pogroms; they could see that the Jews were suffering from the Black Death as badly as everyone else. But the masses were quite beyond logic and reason.”** Armstrong, *Holy War* at 461.

### Slide 34

1. Even as the plague subsided, the killings of Jews continued.

2. In March 1391, Christian mobs killed hundreds of Jews in Seville, Spain, after being egged on by a Catholic archdeacon.

3. The riot spread to other Spanish cities, with estimates of 50,000 Jews killed.
4. So extensive were the killings that Spaniards began to imagine **“the possibility of a world without Jews.”** Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism* at 222.
5. An important reason for the continued killing was economic.
6. Upon a Jew’s death, his debtors were forgiven and his property confiscated.
7. One observer noted at the time: **“The poison that killed the Jews was their goods.”** Flannery, *The Anguish of the Jews* at 110.

Slide 35

1. In France, the large debts to Jewish lenders led to cries for their expulsion.
2. On the Day of Atonement in September 1394, the King of France decreed that **all** Jews must be out of France by November 3.
3. You can see the rings on the Jews in this old print, showing them being forced to leave France by the king.
4. **“Thus came to an end a thousand years of Jewish life in France. The exiled went into bordering provinces, to papal Avignon, to Germany and to Italy.”** Flannery, *The Anguish of the Jews* at 108.

Slide 36

1. In 1405, a Dominican priest preached a series of sermons against the Jews of Toledo, Spain.
2. After one sermon, his listeners ran out of the church and went into synagogue, dragging Jews out of the synagogue and killing them.
3. Some of Toledo’s Jews fled to the mountains to avoid future attacks, but a large number of them publicly converted to Christianity to avoid being killed.
4. One Dominican priest **“was credited with 35,000 baptisms of Jews between 1411 and 1412.”** Flannery, *The Anguish of the Jews* at 134.
5. Some of the *conversos* who were baptized were either not sincere at the time or later regretted their conversion and continued their Jewish practices, becoming known as *Marranos* or pigs.
6. People thought to be *Marranos* were attacked and killed, even though they identified as Christians.

7. As one author writes: **“This hostility to conversos also contained a racial component as Old Christians insisted—even though it was heretical theology—that baptism could not cleanse the bad blood of the Jews.”** Perry, *Antisemitism* at 83.

8. That was an ominous new development in the Jewish experience that resurfaced in the nineteenth century and would be used by Hitler in justifying the Holocaust.

#### Slide 37

1. In 1453, the Turks conquered Constantinople, putting an end to the Byzantine Empire and providing a convenient date for the end of the Middle Ages.

2. Next week, we will look at the Jewish experience during what might be called the early modern era, between the middle of the fifteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century.

3. The period begins with the infamous Spanish Inquisition.

4. It also includes the Reformation and the Enlightenment, both of which had an effect on the treatment of Jewish people.

5. During this period Jews were forced to live in ghettos and during this period they began to be freed from that isolated existence, both physically and intellectually.

#### Resources:

Armstrong, Karen, *Holy War: The Crusades and their Impact on Today's World* (Anchor Books 2001)

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Williamson, Clark, *Has God Rejected His People?* (Abington 1982)