

Trudy Gold | Holland and the Sephardim

- Morning, Trud.

- Good morning, Wendy, how are you?

- Good, thanks, and you?

- Oh, you're all right. Okay. Surviving. It's getting, I'm being inoculated on Thursday, so that's a step forward. You look lovely.

- Oh, thanks. Thank you. I'm sorry- I was a little bit late because we just, I just couldn't get in.

- Don't talk to me about machines. It's very funny when we talk and it comes up on the screen, they don't always get the lit- They don't always get the verbiage right. And it's quite funny, some of it. But I'm glad we're doing it. It's good for people.

- Absolutely. So we're a little past the hour, we're a little bit after the hour, so I want to just hand over to you.

- Okay. Thanks, darling.

- Yeah. Thanks. Morning, everybody. Handing over to Trudy now. I hope everybody's well. Thanks. Bye.

- Thank you very much, Wendy. And thank you very much, Judy. I think having this added to the screens is very good for people who are having problems with either hearing or, et cetera. So I think it's a very good addition. Now, why on Earth are we looking at the Jews of the Iberian Peninsula and Holland, when for the next few weeks we're going to be looking at America? And before I get onto the actual programme, I think I should explain what Wendy and I are trying to do. Next week in the main, because it's Holocaust Memorial Day on the 27th, we will be looking at various aspects of the Shoah. But then we are going to look at America up until about 1880. And then the following month, we will go on from Europe, 1939. Now by way of preamble, in order to really begin any kind of experience of the Jews in America, it's important to remember that today, the American Jews are the second largest Jewish community in the world.

And up to a couple of years ago, they were the largest Jewish community in the world. And one of the fascinating aspects of Jewish history is, of course, and Isaiah Berlin once said, the problem with the Jews, "Too much history, too much geography." We are the only people with this continuous history. And I'm going to read a couple of quotes to you on the whole essence of Jewish history because remember, I'm actually going to overview from 711, I'm going to overview nearly a thousand years for you today. Why? Because I want you to see the patterns of history. I want you to see the patterns of Jewish history. But before I can do that, I'm going to

read from two extraordinary individuals. The first is Isaiah Berlin. And those of you who have the bibliography will know that I highly recommend him. And I'm actually quoting from a brilliant book of his called, "Against the Current." And he says this, Isaiah Berlin was born in St. Petersburg. He himself is the story of the Jews.

He was born in St. Petersburg. Sorry, was born in Riga and then went to St. Petersburg. They finish up in Surbiton, a little suburb of London. Any of you who know it will know it's a really leafy little suburb. What a journey from Riga to Surbiton through St. Petersburg. And he finished up as a very influential historian of ideas and the first Jew to go to All Souls at Oxford. And this, set to become a fellow. And this is what he wrote. "All Jews who are too conscious of their identity as Jews are steeped in history. They are aware of a longer continuity as a community than any other that has survived. The bonds that unite them have proved stronger than the bonds of their detractors and persecutors. It's fascinating, isn't it? Because quite often when I'm speaking to you, the question of Jewish identity comes up. What on Earth does it mean to be a Jew? And what does it mean to be a Jew in the modern world?

And I've suggested to you that there are various ideas. None are right, none are wrong. It depends totally on your own personal viewpoint. For the religious, it's simple. If you are a religious Jew, it is religion. And a little more than that. If you are a Zionist, it's a nationality. It's possible to be a completely secular Jew. There is a strong Jewish culture. There is that more strange word I suppose, peoplehood, which is kind of a catchall word. But the point is, we have somehow survived as a coherent group, bounded, certainly up until the modern period, by religion. You can even make the case, And I know Jeremy's been discussing these ideas with you, that when the Jews were expelled from their own country, the Rabbanites built around them, what they call the possible homeland, the wall of law, the townward. But and of course, Jeremy's lecturing on that tonight. And the other point to make is, of course, in the modern period when so many of them plunged into the countries in which they live and became part of the culture, et cetera, et cetera, the art, the music, that's something that Norman Lebrecht discussed so brilliantly the other week.

And yet, what does it mean to be Jewish? And is there such a thing as Jewish literature? Jewish music, Jewish art? So this is by way of an introduction. I'm doing a very Jewish thing. I'm making it as obscure as possible because we need to find our own way through this. And this is what another fascinating man, Simon Dubnow said. Simon Dubnow was one of the earliest of the Jewish historians. And he said this, "A people small in number, situated on the crossroads of the giant nations, the Jewish people whose home is the whole world." And this is what he said. He was a very, in many ways, he had a very idealised vision of the Jewish people. But I think what he wrote is wonderful. And I'm going to read it to you now because we are living in such dark times that I think sometimes we do need a little bit of inspiration. And for me, Simon Dubnow is inspirational. "Every generation in Israel carries within itself the remnants of worlds created and destroyed during the course of the previous history of the Jewish people."

And this is what I'm going to be talking about today. "Each generation in turn builds and destroys

worlds in its former image, but in the long run, continues to weave the thread that binds all the links of the nation into the chains of generations. Thus, each generation in Israel is more the product of history than its creator. We the people of Israel, living today, continue the long thread that stretches from the days of Hammurabi and Abraham to the modern period. We see further than during the course of thousands of years, the nations of the world have borrowed from our spiritual storehouse and added to their own without depleting from our source. The Jewish people goes its own way, attracting and repelling, beating for itself a unique path amongst the nations of the world." He says this, "I am agnostic in religion and philosophy. I'm myself, have lost faith in personal immortality. Yet history teaches me there is a collective immortality and that the Jewish people can be considered eternal for its history coincides with the span of the world."

I just think that is absolutely beautiful. He was born in 1860. He was murdered in Riga in 1941. He was shot as an 81-year-old man, a man who gave so much to the world. And yet, his words are eternal. I'm reading them to you today. And remember, on this particular Zoom channel that Wendy has so brilliantly created, we are all over the world. And yet, there is a connection between us. The ties that bind us are stronger than that which differentiates between us. I know. I'm a British Jew. I'm just as much British as I am Jewish. And I'm sure the same would be said of my American friends. I know there are Dutch friends listening today. There are Israelis. There are Canadians. There are South Africans. Each with our own history, and yet, there is this link. And now I'm going to take you back to the Iberian Peninsula. Why? Because in order to understand the arrival of the Jews in North America, and for that matter, the arrival of the Jews in Britain, we have to look at the great branch of the Jewish community, the Sephardi.

Now, and I know there are many of us, there are many online who are Sephardi Jews, but the word originally, it's the Hebrew for Spanish, "sfaradit." And the majority of Sephardi Jews now who are online, I think are Jews who came from the Arab world. I myself, on my mother's side, I have a descendant that goes back to Holland and originally to Spain. So it's something that's always fascinated me. And of course, and I'm sure this will have all sorts of echoes with many of you. When my grandmother, who was Sephardi, married my Ashkenazi German grandfather, the Sephardi family was scandalised. And of course, that is also the story of the Jews. So anyway, let's go back. When the Jews were expelled from Judea by the Romans and Judea was named Palestine for the Philistines, the great enemies of the Jews, many of them dispersed throughout the Roman world. And some went into the Iberian Peninsula, which was conquered by a Germanic tribe, the Visigoths, who were Christianized.

So for a period of history, and remember the whole sway of Jewish history, the Barocka Benza debate, which we've often referred to. The Jews survived by becoming useful, forbidden from many trades or professions by Christianity. They were international. They moved into trades and professions, which hopefully made them useful to the host nation and that is how they survived. And another point the Zionist historian would make, the tragedy of the diaspora is all that could happen is the outside world acts and the Jews react. And the great event to react to was in 711. And that is when the people of Islam, Islam was the earliest, the youngest of the monotheistic religions. Both Christianity and Islam trace their dissent from Judaism. But they have

superseded Judaism. But the followers of Islam, sweeping out from the Hejaz, which is now Saudi, create an enormous land empire. All you have to do is look at the world of Islam today. You know, it's fascinating. The two most populous religions in the world, Christianity and Islam, are both seen as, in a way, as children of Judaism.

Judaism, which has maybe under 14 million adherence in the world today. And yet, you have these two huge religions. And Islam is due to overtake Christianity by about the year 2035. But they are the two major world religions, and they're both proselytising religions. So the followers of Islam, they sweep out of the Hejaz. They go all the way in the end to, if you think about Pakistan today, if you think about Indonesia, that's how far Islam spreads. They go all the way down into Africa. Just think Sudan, just think Egypt. They go up to where, what is today, Israel and the Middle East. They take all those lands, they then go along the south of the Mediterranean. And in 711, they cross over into the Iberian Peninsula. Now, it's interesting because, we know that when the Muslims conquered, the Jews looked after the cities for them, whilst they went further on their conquest and their conquests were extraordinary.

They were not stopped until they reached Pretoria. And something that William was talking about in his brilliant analysis yesterday, because one of the fascinating aspects of what we're trying to do in lockdown is William will talk about world history and now I have to slot the Jews in, but in a way, give you also a certain amount of world history. So what William was talking about yesterday was the clash of civilizations that both Islam and Christianity were proselytising religions. When the conqueror, Omar, think of the Mosque of Omar, had conquered Jerusalem from the Christians, what was laid down was how the Muslims dealt with other peoples. The pagans must be converted by the sword, but Jews and Christians are the people of the book. Consequently, they should live in peace under Islam. And if you look, they're called Dhimmis. They have to pay a body tax and a land tax. But what is certainly true of Islamic history, and one of the issues today is of course, there's a lot of revisionism on this.

But if you look at what the period of Spanish history called the Golden Age, certainly from the 700's right up, I would, suggest to the 1200's, it's what is known as a Golden Age. Yes, the Jews were still under the Muslims, but what is also going on is this great war between Islam and Christianity that doesn't really end until 1683 when the forces of the last great Muslim Empire, the Turkish Empire, are defeated at the gates of Vienna. Now that's a thousand years of history. So it's a very, and think of all the crusades. And when William talked about the Reconquista, the reconquest, it's very, the conquest, and when he talks about Spain, he talked about the reconquest because it's very interesting because there's religious connotations as well. When the Christians are going to come back and try and take that Muslim Spain, this is the reconquest. When the Spanish sent an armada against England, it was a jihad. Beg your pardon, it was a Holy War. The Muslim term is jihad. But the Christians also have their notion of Holy War. If the Pope has actually enjoined it, it is a Holy War.

So, we now enter into an extraordinary period of Jewish history. Jewish history in the diaspora is dotted with these periods of safety when there is relative peace and prosperity. And what

happens when there's relative peace and prosperity? Well, the Jews thrive, they thrive in all sorts of professions, but they, but Judaism itself thrives. And one of the greatest periods was in fact, for example, in the Caliphate of Cordoba whenever we go wandering again, and I hope it will happen this year, those of you who haven't visited Southern Spain, who haven't been to Seville, Cordoba, it's important actually. Toledo in the North, it's important because these were such important Jewish centres. And not only that, they are very beautiful, for their own sake. And in Cordoba, under Abd al-Rahman III, he created one of the greatest wonders of the world, in my view, the Mezquita. It is a mosque that was later made into a church. Architecturally, it's absolutely wonderful. And who was his Grand vizier? A man called Hasdai Ibn Shaprut, many of the Muslim rulers had Jewish advisors. Why were the Jews so useful? Think of them as traders. Who could cross the world of Christianity and Islam? The Jews.

The war doesn't go on all the time. There is this clash of civilization. So you have this peaceful coexistence where culture thrives as does wealth. It's the period of the great Jewish poets who write in Arabic. It is the period of Jews and Muslims working together in the academies. And what are they working on? They're working on philosophy. They're working on mathematics. There's a Jew who is for three generations, generals in the army of Cordoba. There was an extraordinary period in Seville. So from a city to city, it's a period of relative quiet, a period of a symbiosis of cultures where there is a mutual acceptance. Islam is not threatened. It changes in 1148 when a fanatical branch of Islam called the Almoravids invade from Morocco. Just think how, if you think of Gibraltar, which of course, was an Arab stronghold, think how easy it is to cross over. And they were intolerant both to Jews and to Christians, and they established the wearing of a Jew badge.

Now ironically, some Jews actually fled North to the Christian kingdoms where there was a relative toleration because the rulers realised how useful the Jews could be. So in the North, for a short time, Jewish life is actually thriving. Alfonso X of Castile, his dates are 1065 to 1109, he actually captures Toledo and that becomes, so gradually Christianity does become dominant in the Iberian Peninsula. That's one of the reasons the Almohad is invaded. They felt that the Sultans, the caliphs had become much too flabby. They were warlike. What they wanted to do was to push back Christianity. And what you see is the gradual reconquest of Spain by the Christians. They captured Toledo in 1212. There are still two synagogues, by the way in Toledo, that you can visit. One of them is a church. There are synagogues. There's a very interesting synagogue in Cordoba. Anyway, in 1212, the Muslim forces are defeated at the Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa, and they're gradually pushed back. So the only Muslim stronghold is now in the Kingdom of Granada.

Now the reconquest by Christianity also coincides with a very severe and savage period of church history. The church is fighting heresy on all fronts. How does this happen? You have the early Renaissance. You also have ideas coming in from the East. And... The Catholic church is an extraordinary organisations. It's monolithic. It understands the nature of power. The first, one of the reasons the crusades were fought was for the church, the first crusade is in 1095, and there are another seven. The crusades are a movement, ostensibly to take back the Holy Land

from Islam, but also to take Christian supremacy, church supremacy over the various Christian monarchs. Because one of the greatest things you could do to save your immortal soul was to go on a crusade. This is church power. So the church needs to bring together power and to fight heresy. The biggest heresy that they faced was actually in the south of France, in southwest France, around the town of Albi, Carcassonne, the Cathars or the Albigensians. They were gnostics. They believed there was a power beyond the power of this God of this world, who in fact was an evil God. They wanted to get rid of all the church functionaries. They were purists. They didn't have intervention between them and God. Anyone could be a priest. Women had a lot of rights. They were very, very popular. And it's at this stage that in various letters and councils in 1179 and 1215, because of the threat of heresy, the church tightens up and establishes something that William talked about yesterday, The Inquisition.

The Inquisition was a terrible, terrible device. The Inquisition only had power over heresy. You had to be a Christian, but the Albigensians were ostensibly Christian. So the first crusade was against, the first crusade against heresy was against the Albigensians. And there's a terrible story, there's a terrible story, I think it was in Albi, where one of the generals came up to the bishop, Catholic bishop and said, "We don't know who is a Cathar and who is a Catholic." And the bishop said, "We'll kill them all. God will know his own." So The Inquisition, now, who was going to administer The Inquisition? You also see the rise of monastic orders, particularly, the Dominicans, "The hounds of God." The majority of the inquisitors are going to be Dominicans or Franciscans. So The Inquisition is now a very powerful weapon in the hands of the church. And what it means is people accused of backsliding, heretics never had power over Muslims or Jews, by the way, per se, but anyone accused of backsliding now would be summoned before The Inquisition and they would be tortured for the sake of their soul.

Okay, so it's important to remember that there's a huge upswing in church power. Whenever the church is feeling threatened, it becomes far more dogmatic and fanatical. I think you can say that about many things, many ideologies. It's when you're threatened that any kind of liberalism goes out the window, okay. It happens, I'm turning, I'm moving on a century now because the Jews are still coexisting, they're managing. But then as this upswing in church power, particularly amongst the clergy, and in October, 1391, one, the first of Portugal died. He was succeeded by a child. So the regency went to his wife, Queen Leonor, and she was under the spell of her Dominican confessor, Ferrand Martinez. And he saw that he'd been preaching against the Jews for over 12 years. He saw them as the devil because if Christianity is suffering from heresy, who are the arch heretics? The people who Jesus was born amongst who totally rejected him. You are of my St. John's gospel. You are of your father, the devil. Think of that line in St. Matthew's Gospel when Pilate washes his hands of Jesus' blood, and the crowds say, "May His blood be upon us and upon our children for all generations."

Is it so surprising that antisemitism is such a foul disease? Because its roots, and this is ironic, its actual root, and I'm going to stand by this point, is in theology. And that's where we have an almost insurmountable problem. And not only that, you have the notion already of Jewish power. The Jews are capable of anything. They are devils. So I don't believe that all the Christians or

Muslims in Spain from, certainly not the Muslims or the Christians in Spain believe that at all. But the point is, it's there. And if I might illustrate that point even more strongly, there isn't a positive image of a Jew anywhere in European culture until the European enlightenment. So it's very important to remember this point. Anyway, think about Easter time. The majority of the population can't read and write. They are told the story of how Jesus, who is God, remember, is murdered by the evil Jews. And consequently, and Passover coincides with Easter. The Last Supper is the Seder night. Okay, the interlinking. And the mob whipped up, it's ash Wednesday. The mob is whipped up and it goes into the Jewish section of town and it absolutely sucks, it's murder. The civil authorities intervene, but the Judiaria was sat and 40,000 Jews were murdered. 40,000. The only safety was baptism.

This is in Seville, I'm sorry, this is in Seville. I made a mistake. I've been to Three Crosses Square, where in Seville alone, 4,000 were murdered. But in the region, it's going to spread to the region and 40,000 are going to be murdered. And I've been to Three Crosses Square, the square where the murders happened, and there's a tiny little plaque that you have to look for. And as I said, it spreads throughout Spain. So in the end, there are 40,000 victims. There are 4,000 in Seville, but it's in Cordoba, Carmona, Toledo, Valencia. In Valencia, not a single Jew was left alive. It spreads to the Balearic Islands. There's a massacre in Palmer. The mob are whipped up. It's Passover, and it goes on and on. The outbreak was avoided in Muslim Granada, where the authorities protect the Jews. And in Portugal. It starts in Seville, not in Portugal. Silly mistake I made. There also was, as a response to this, there was a large number of baptisms. Now, how religious were these baptisms? We don't know how many. We've got a real problem with numbers. There's a lot of revision of history here.

I mean, Cecil Roth puts the numbers of Jews in the Iberian Peninsula at this stage as upwards of 600,000. And he thinks nearly 200,000 converted. Other historians put it down to a hundred thousand. But I think what we see is a lot of conversion. And many of these individuals are going to return to Judaism in secret. Now, those who are still practising their Judaism are going to find more and more laws against them, making it harder and harder for them to maintain their positions in Spanish society. We know that there were quite a few sincere converts. Let me give you a few. Rabbi Solomon Halevi became Pablo de Santa Maria. Now the Conversos, they're called Conversos. There's a pejorative term, "marrano", which means swine. So let's call them Conversos. They outwardly lived as Christians. They baptised their children and then they would take their children home and wash the baptismal water off. They usually intermarried amongst themselves. They tried very hard to keep the Shabbat and the festivals. They still consulted with their co-religionists. And also, they avoided eating pork.

And some of them, so many of them were Christian by name but not in form. Now what is fascinating is these people, these Conversos make incredible social progress. Doesn't matter whether it's in the law, the army, administration, universities, some of them in the church itself. The Borgias, you know the Borgias, who get such a terrible press? They were descended from a Conversos family. And this will interest many of you, Nostradamus, later on to be thrown out of his family, were thrown out of Spain. He came from a Converso family. Some of the wealthiest

Conversos married into the Spanish aristocracy. They also dominated intellectual life. And you're talking at least a hundred thousand people. So if the Conversos are doing very, very well, the Jews called them anusim, "The forced ones." So the Jews, per se, are getting poorer and smaller in numbers. But there is a huge issue now with the Conversos. The Inquisition had been very successful in the south of France. And it goes on until two monarchs in Spain, already in 1391, you've had this terrible period. And then in 1470, there is a marriage, Ferdinand of Aragon marries Isabella of Castile uniting Spain. Isabella is a very religious Christian, and she has, as her confessor, a man called Tomas de Torquemada. And he persuades her to introduce The Inquisition into Spain. And as a response to that, 1492, it's a very important year. William talked about it yesterday. It is the year that Christopher Columbus, was he of marrano descent, Conversos descent?

There's a big question mark, but there's an even bigger piece of interest. His navigator and many of the people who sailed with him were Conversos. In 1492, Columbus... Makes it to the New World. It's also the year that the combined forces of Ferdinand and Isabella managed to defeat the last stronghold of the Muslims in Granada. And they expel the Muslims. Many Muslims convert to stay behind. 1492 is regarded by the religious, the ultra religious, who do not commemorate the Shoah as a separate event. They go to the Ninth of Av, they go to the expulsion from Spain, they go to the Chmielnicki Massacres. They see it as a continuum. Ironically, the man who financed the wars in Grenada was a man called Isaac Abarbanel. Arbarbanel was a Jew. He was Ferdinand's foreign minister, finance minister, one of the most brilliant men that ever existed. He went on to be finance minister to three other kingdoms, apart from Aragon. There was a lot of pressure put on him. And the other advisor, a man called Sinor, to convert. He doesn't, and there is a story, a story that he offered money to Ferdinand. Ferdinand was very avaricious.

And Torquemada came into the room and screamed, "30 pieces of silver." The story of Judas, that's a total digression, the Judah's story. But Hyam Maccoby has written a brilliant book on Judas and the myth of Jewish evil. Hyam Maccoby. Anyway. The expulsion from Spain, one of the great tragedies of Jewish history. Abravanel led, its thought that about 150,000 Jews fled. Many stayed behind to convert. Numbers are problematic. I've already said that. It depends which revisionist historian you want to deal with. Abravanel led a huge number into Portugal. But in 1497, when the King of Portugal married one of Isabella's daughters, written into the marriage contract was the expulsion of the Jews from Portugal. The largest number actually went into the Turkish Empire, which was very, very welcoming of Jews. In fact, the Sultan had ships to take Jews into the Turkish Empire. 10,000 went to Rome where Alexander Borgia allowed them in. They had to pay. And this is a terrible, terrible period. It's, as I said, it is regarded as one of the great tragedies of Jewish history.

You know, 700 years of really interesting Jewish existence in Spain. And now, the wandering Jews have to wander again. You know, those who stayed behind, particularly the Conversos, the Spanish introduced the blood laws, they were worried about any Converso because of the Jewish blood. They were worried about backsliding. And The Inquisition was a terrible



instrument because if you were accused of practising Judaism, and you've just got to remember, is your house going to be watched on a Shabbat? Is your house going to be watched a pacer or whatever Jewish festival? Think of the minyan. Say you have a business rival, you want to get rid of them. You tell them they're Judaizing. And The Inquisition, I think Williams said it pretty well. It was a horrific instrument of pain and torture. Last time I was in Cordoba, believe it or not, there is a museum to The Inquisition. And the horror of the bestiality. I mean, to make a museum is... It's beyond my imagining, beyond my, I think, what's that German term? Weltanschauung. Anyway. So expulsion from Portugal, expulsion from Spain, into the Turkish Empire. Where else can the Jews go? Now, this is where I'm going to have to take you into world history. Many of you will know this.

Those of you who studied European history will know quite a lot about this. Ferdinand and Isabella, the conquest of the New World. And if you remember from William, the Pope drew a very bad line through South America and gave half to the Portuguese and half to the Spanish. And that's why Brazil is Portuguese, Portuguese-speaking. So that was the idea. They were the only ones who could be part of the conquest, the Christian conquest, which was discussed yesterday. I now have to take you into a bit of dynastic history. Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain had four daughters and a son. The story goes that the Jews cursed them, but certainly, the son dies. He marries into the House of Habsburg, but he dies and his baby son dies. The eldest daughter dies. So the throne passes to the second daughter, called Joanna. She's also married into the Hapsburg family. The Hapsburgs, remember, and we've talked about them many times. They're that extraordinary ruling family that ruled much of the centre of Europe right up until the first World War.

And I gave you that wonderful quote, "Let others make war, the Hapsburgs marry." And the Spanish and the Hapsburgs, the Spanish monarchs and the Hapsburgs had married the son and a daughter of Spain to a son and a daughter of Hapsburg. But what happens is the crown of Spain is passed. Joanna marries Philip the Handsome, the Hapsburg prince. Joanna is called "Joanna the Mad." She's locked up in a castle, but she produces this son, Charles V, Carlos V., who is also the Holy Roman emperor, the secular arm of the church. He is a Christian Catholic monarch. And they called him "Stupor Mundi." The sun never set on his empire because through the Hapsburgs, he controls much of Europe. Through his mother's family, he controls the Iberian Peninsula and the islands. And now, he controls much of the New World. But he faced some extraordinary challenges because he becomes King of Spain in 1516 and the Holy Roman emperor in 1519. But he's got huge challenges.

The expansion of the Ottoman Empire, in 1526, his forces are going to be defeated by the Turks at the Battle of Mohacs. And Hungary is going to become part of the Muslim Empire. Just think, Islam, Christianity. But in many ways, from him, the biggest threat he faces is a religious threat. Because he's got such a large empire, he has no fixed capital. He goes from region to region because he is on the throne, at the time of Martin Luther. Martin Luther, remember, signals the Protestant Reformation. You might be saying to me, "What on Earth has this got to do with Jewish history?" It's got everything to do with Jewish history because these are the events

which is going to map out Jewish history, and in the end, send a lot of Sephardi Jews to the New World. But I have to get you there. Many of you will know this history. I find it absolutely fascinating. Martin Luther... What caused the Protestant reformation? As William would said yesterday, do you want to write an essay? The invention of the printing press?

Go back to the invention of the printing press. Go back to the fall of Constantinople. Go back to the ideas of the Renaissance. And people, more and more people are beginning to read. Think about 1492 when you got the Borgia Pope in Rome. Now, those of you who are benign about the Borgias will know that they were pretty licentious. Never forget that Borgias son, Cesare, Machiavelli wrote "The Prince" for him. Think of Lucrezia. You know, he had many children. They lived a life, he was a Renaissance prince. Many of the popes were Renaissance princes. Just think of the Renaissance and the wonderful art that they enabled. But the point is, think about ordinary Christian clerics reading the Bible. They can read now. What on Earth has this got to do with Catholicism? What has this got to do with the licentiousness we see in the Papacy? And it leads to a movement which is really heralded. There are other movements before. You have the Hussites, but it's really, it's Martin Luther who nails 95 thesis to a church door at Wittenberg proclaiming the Protestant Revolution. One of the funniest essays I ever had from an undergrad.

He actually wrote, "Martin Luther nailed 95 theocrats to a church door in Wittenberg." But the point is, it signals the Protestant reformation. And many princes, particularly in the middle of Europe, are going to become Protestant. And there are other branches of Protestantism. You have Calvinism in Scotland. You have Calvinism in some other parts of Europe. And of course, you have Zwingli in Switzerland. It's all about protesting, breaking away from the Catholic church. It is a lower form of Christianity insofar as it's not so, to quote the Russian Orthodox, "It's not so much smells and bells." It's what the puritans would call low church. It's a change in manner. It's going back to what is meant to be the essence of Christianity. Can you imagine, you are a pious cleric and you see all the corruption? You know, in Hamlet, when Shakespeare writes those wonderful words of, when Hamlet says to Ophelia, "Get thee to a nunnery," remember, he's writing in the reign of the Protestant Elizabeth. What that meant to the Protestant audience was go thee to a whore house. So the Protestant reformation is going to be very important from the point of view of Jewish history.

So one of the biggest problems of Charles V's reign is the Protestant reformation and how he dealt with it. Anyway... In 1556, he dies in 1558, he's worn out. He decides to go into a monastery and he divides his monarch, he divides his empire into Spanish branch and the Austrian branch. The Spanish Hapsburgs are going to be headed by his son, Philip II of Spain. The Austrians, headed by his brother, Ferdinand. But the Duchy of Milan and the Hapsburg Netherlands were left within personal union to the king of Spain. So it's important. These two Hapsburgs dynasties are going to be allied until the Spanish line dies of its own volition in 1700. But basically the Netherlands are part of the Spanish Empire. And in 1477, Mary of Burgundy married Maximilian Habsburg, as I've already mentioned. She's united Holland and Austria, and then Spain. And by 1560, Protestantism, especially Calvinism, has become very significant

amongst the people in Holland. Now, many of the individuals who turn to Protestantism, I'm talking now about rulers, they believed it was in their interest to break away from the Catholic church. Think about it.

As Williams said, it's the gold and the silver of the New World. This is the beginnings of the age of mercantilism. Just think, only the Spanish and the Portuguese can explore. Only the Spanish and Portuguese can bring back the wealth of the New World. So many of the conversions of the rulers were not necessarily sincere, but what's happening now is Europe is going to be cut asunder. The situation in Holland is made really difficult because of course, it's part of the Spanish Netherlands and the zealous Philip II. Philip II was a fanatical Christian ruler. Remember, he sends the Armada against Elizabeth, a Holy War against Elizabeth, the Protestant heretic, who has executed the Catholic Queen of Scotland, her cousin. That was the excuse for the Spanish Armada. Anyway, they set up The Inquisition in Holland. And actually, though, the goods of the New World coming to Holland through the Spanish Empire makes Holland a very important centre. By 1560, the population of Holland was three million.

You see the growth of ship building in Holland. England was supplying wool. It's really the beginnings of the Golden Age. 25 cities in the low countries had populations of over 10,000 people. Antwerp had a hundred thousand people. It's the largest urban population in Europe. The Dutch are going to be subjected to more and more harsh taxation by Philip II. He is determined to suppress heresy. And he sends in the Duke of Alba, it's known as the "Spanish Fury." It was a terrible period in Dutch history and it's remembered to this day as a terrible catastrophe. And the Protestant, seven provinces revolt against Philip. And eventually, they are successful and they break away from the southern provinces, which are present day, Belgium and Luxembourg, which continues under Hapsburg rule until 1714. The northern provinces after the most terrible wars, finally become independent in 1571. And the Dutch Republic is established, and it becomes an incredibly important republic.

It becomes a world power through its shipping, it's economic, it's cultural, it's scientific growth. It's going to become the most important trading centre in Europe. And it's going to lead to the founding of the Dutch East India Company, and of course the Dutch West India Company. Now, and this is where the obvious is going to happen. And it's going to attract Jews, particularly Conversos, who are living secretly as Jews more and more under the fear of The Inquisition. And now, Holland, Protestant Holland, which is not just the centre of trade, it's becoming a very cosmopolitan centre. It's a centre of new ideas. It's a centre of humanism. And when Patrick gave his brilliant lectures on Rembrandt and Vermeer, you can also see that it's a centre of culture. And this is the centre that is going to attract Conversos to Holland. And they are then going to outwardly practise as Jews. And furthermore, it's also going to be the basis of the readmission of Jews to England and the beginnings of the Jewish community in North America.

Because what's going to happen is, and I'm going to talk about that on, well, no, Thursday, I'm going to talk about this on Thursday. I'm going to talk about how some of these Dutch Jews are going to go trading to South America, settle in South America in Dutch colonies. But what

happened in a colony called Recife which was once called Pernambuco, when the Portuguese are destroyed, the Jews have to go on the move because they were terrified of The Inquisition following them there. And 23 people take ship and they land in New Amsterdam where the governor is a man called, Peter Stuyvesant. So I think that will be a good place to look at questions. I hope the history has been clear. I know a lot of you know a lot. One of the issues of Jewish history is, of course, we need to understand how the Jews fit in. You know, that's why I said to you, a Zionist historian would say, the world reacts... The world acts, all the Jews can ever do is react. But I think an understanding of this history also gives us a notion which kind of fits in with Norman Lebrecht's thesis.

You remember what he said, basically, genius and anxiety, when he was talking about ancestral memory. We are a people that's had to think on its feet. We are a people. Do we still have our suitcases packed? It's a question mark for you. Anyway, shall I see? I'm going to go over, let me explain. I know you don't like it when I raise my arms up. The reason is that I have the question and answer at the top of the page. Let me see what we've got. Okay, I'm going now I've got to, let's do it this way round. Oh, somebody's saying I look nice.

Q&A and Comments:

The name is Dubnow, yes. Could you post details about Simon Dubnow? Dubnow, it's D-U-B-N-O-W. He's a wonderful man and I will be referring to him in a lot of details soon because as I said to you in March, we're going to be looking at the Shoah. And he is, for me, one of the great heroes of the Shoah. This is from Rochelle Marks, origin of the word , to describe the Dutch Jews and where my grandparents lived in the 19th century. Don't know. And Joe is asking, oh, okay, trying to do this right. Okay. Do you, Trudy, do tours to Spain? A long time ago, we used to do tours to Spain. I have a colleague, I hope he's online. Lionel Holtzer, South African. Well, he used to organise amazing tours to Spain. Who knows whether we'll go travelling again.

Yes, somebody's recommended an excellent book of the Golden Age, "Ornaments of the World," by Maria Rosa Menocal, yes. This is from Victor. Can we have a talk on the achievement and life of Dutch Jews who went to the Colonial islands and to South America? If I can find someone who would know about that, Victor. Yes, it's not my, it's a special, that's very specialised. Yes, you see, the Jews went to the Caribbean. You know what else is interesting about the Jews in the islands? You know, in particularly, I think it was in Menorca, but they've also been found in parts of Spain and Menorca.

People who are Catholic lighting candles in their cellars. It goes very, very deep. Who were these Cathars? Okay, Cathars were a heresy of Christianity. It's agnostic heresy. There are lots of books on the Cathars. They're absolutely fascinating. Oh, they're also known as the Albigensians. Another very interesting tour for you is Southwest France, because you can also go to the land of the Cathars.

And there's a lot of good Jewish history in southwest France because it was the borderlands between France and Spain. What we got, else we got? The Dominican Order seemed to be responsible for the rise of antisemitism in the Middle Ages. Yes, yes, I'm afraid that the Dominicans, they were fanatics. People lived in a religious world view. You've got to remember that. I personally have a horror of closed systems. I'm always terrified when people tell me they have the only answer. I happen to believe there are lots of paths to the truth. Now, this is for Marina living in Greece. I told someone I'm Jewish, and they told me I shouldn't tell anyone, that people here hate the Jews. Yes, Marina, I'm afraid that, I'm going to give you a truism. When there is economic, social, and political unrest and you add to that a pandemic and all sorts of crazy conspiracy theories, people become tribal. And I'm not saying this glibly, it's an area I've studied for 40 years. I wish it wasn't true.

People become tribal and they blame the other. And tragically, the Jews become a very interesting other. Oh, this is Karen Smith recommending "The Friars and the Jews: The Evolution of Mediaeval Anti-Judaism," from Jeremy Cohen. Yes, there's some brilliant books on mediaeval anti-Judaism. I mean, there's so many. You see, this is the problem I have, and this is somebody... Who is this? This is from Romaine. She's saying group envy needs to be studied as a psychoanalytic phenomenon. Yeah, Romaine, it's a very important point you've made, and I've discussed this quite a lot with Wendy. I really do believe, you know, even the great Yehuda Bauer said, we can't study antisemitism without psychology.

- Trudy, I just want to jump in before everybody leaves just to say I'm sorry, this is completely, this has got nothing to do with the questions that you're asking, but there are people who are complaining about the captions. And I really want to add, that these captions are not for you because you clearly can hear. But these captions are really helping people who can't hear or have difficulty hearing. And they're able to get the gist of the presentations. And Judy and I have had many emails saying thank you for the captions, so I'm sorry if you found it a little bit distracting. But I am trying to accommodate and help, especially those people who are hard of hearing and who are enjoying this presentation. So it's really a fine balance. It's just trying to find the middle road. So, okay, back to you, Trudy.

- Thank you.

- We are going to continue with the caption because they are helping so many people. We've had maybe 200 emails saying thank you, or 300 emails saying thank you for the captions. And you know, those people are really appreciative and I do want to accommodate them. Thanks, Trudy.

- Yeah, thank you. And I totally agree with Wendy on this. It's important. Let me just get... This is from Elli. I've heard that the prevalence of pork in Spanish cuisine dates back to The Inquisition where it was a test of a Converso. Yes, very much so. It was a test of a Converso. No, Yolanda, I didn't say that the Jews being the second largest minority group in the world. I didn't say that at all. I said that they were an interesting minority group because they're from culture to culture, to

our culture. Can you avoid using the term the Jews to describe different Jews in various... It's complicated, isn't it? Sephardi Jews. Ashkenazi Jews. It is called the Ottoman Empire, not the Turkish Empire. You are totally correct, Jack. Thank you. Wasn't the switch to Protestantism also rebellion against the dominating part of the Catholic church? Yes, of course, it was, yes. There are many reasons for the Protestant revolution. Gail Roth, Christians rarely question their rightness of position, but Jews seem to look to who they are and where they fit in. Does that weaken the Jews? Very interesting debate, Gail.

Q: Who invented the blood libel?

A: That's an interesting one, Teddy. Teddy Herman. Yes, no, the blood libel, actually the blood libel, it first, people first used the notion of using the blood of babies and virgins at a time of disputes between the early Christian sex. And it's first used against the Jews in England in 1144 in the time of the English Civil War. That's when it's first used. It's the worst thing you can accuse anyone of. But I will be giving a lecture on the history of antisemitism, actually, when I look at the Shoah, and at some stage I will be going into much more depth.

Where did the Simon Dubnow... Simon Dubnow has written a quote. I got it from one of the books on Jewish history. He wrote a whole collection of books on Jewish history. Yes, this is from Bernard, the Dutch East India company, yes, of course, Cape Colony, again, you see this is where the first Jews to come to the Cape were these Jews originally from Spain and Portugal. Peter Stuyvesant was known to be anti-Semitic. Selena, wait for Tuesday? Wait for Thursday's lecture. I will be dealing with it then. It was my understanding the Jews were not expelled from Portugal. They were but many of them stayed behind. And it's a long story, actually what happened in Portugal is a long story. It's too long to answer now, but I'll try and deal with it properly at another time. We've got a lot of questions. I love it when you've got lots of questions. You know, you are the best group I have ever had the privilege of talking to. Okay.

- Today, you had over 2000-

- Wow. Wow, oh, that's amazing, Wendy.

- Yeah. Unbelievable. Well done, Trudy.

Q: What is the economic effect of the Jews who settled in Turkey?

A: We'll get there. As I said to you, the problem with Jewish history is it's everybody else's history. One of the richest women in the world, fascinating woman called Dona Gracia, was a Converso from Lisbon who went to Antwerp. And she finished up in the court of the Sultan, where she ran an amazing trade empire.

Q: Why are the Sephardic Jews from, because why are they referred to as Spanish and Portuguese Jews?

A: Because the Iberian peninsula was Spain and Portugal.

Can I recommend a book covering which... Covering Spain or covering Jewish history in Spain? Look, we've done one bibliography and we are going to work on another one. We've worked on a filmography for you. And can I say publicly, that was just our choices. You know, Wendy asked us to think about this. So Dennis, David, Patrick, and myself, we just sat down and wrote down our favourite films. That doesn't mean that there aren't a lot of other very, very good films. It was just lockdown is horrific. So we thought it would be good for people to have our list, but I know that many of you have come back with your own suggestions. It's great to make your own list for your own families. Thank you. Thank you. This is a very important question from Ralph Freeman.

Was there a difference between Martin Luther and Calvin? Yes, but not now. I'm going to give a lecture on the history of church antisemitism. Bags packed, based on history, where would we go next? What's that wonderful... Who was it who said, before the war, Jews were sleepwalkers. Now we're insomniacs. Bags packed based on the history. Look, you can't predict the future. We might not have to go anywhere. We don't know what's going to happen next. And remember, the world has changed dramatically. And I'm going to put in my own personal view, I think the world has changed dramatically for the Jews because there is now a Jewish state, made a huge difference. Ah, this is from Shauni Wilkins. My ancestor was Rabbi Abraham Zacuto. Wow, he was the astronomer for both Columbus and Vasco de Gama. And he was also a very, very famous scholar.

No, Muslim Spain was the success, the Muslims were a minority... No, they were in the majority for a long time in Spain. You know, it was a period of great cultural explosion. You know, in the old days, historians used to have the chutzpah to try and put patterns on history. Today we live in a world of micro-story. And for example, Toynbee, who believed that empires came and empires went. If you took the year a thousand and you were looking, where was a good place to live, you would certainly choose Cordoba above London, which had about 40,000 people in it. And it was mainly built of wood. Cordoba was a very sophisticated city. So was Kaifeng in China. In the year, a thousand, it had a million people. So Islam, the whole world of Islam and the last great Muslim Empire, the Ottoman Empire, it goes into decline as Europe goes into the ascendancy. It's the age of mercantilism that sends Europe into the ascendancy.

Europe then goes through an enlightenment. You know, if you want to go with that theory of history, I would suggest to you, many historians, many of my age, I'm afraid, 'cause the younger ones, because they do micro-story, they don't want to try and put a pattern. I suppose Niall Ferguson is the only one writing in the Western world who does this. I would suggest to you, we could well be living in the decline of the West and then you have to look to the East and where will the next civilization come from? Where will the next great empire come from? Will America still maintain its ascendancy or will it be India or will it be China? So it's, you know, William said very strongly yesterday that to understand where we are now, we can work out where we come

from. It doesn't mean we can work out where we are going, but I think it helps us make more informed choices. This is from Liliana Maurice, my family left Castile and ended in Rome where he was born. Wow, that's history.

Yes, when you spoke about, I did not hear you mention Maimonides. Yes, and of course, he is one of the greatest scholars in the Jewish world. This was not a lecture on Jewish scholarship, which in the past we have actually looked at. And I believe Jeremy will look at it again. And Maimonides, in fact, I'll show you how bereft Spain is now as far as, there's a statue of Maimonides in Cordoba. But it's ben Maimonides. It's actually is a statue, it's actually ben Maimonides. So what can you do? Very interesting. The Jewish Museum in Cordoba is run by... Actually, it used to be run, it used to be run. I dunno, the boy who ran it, I met him when I was there and he believed he was of Jewish descent and he was, the last time I saw him, which is about five years ago, he was studying at the Luebeck to be a rabbi. Yes, there are lots of Jewish history trips to Spain. DNA studies have indicated that Jewish DNA is prevalent in the current Spanish population. Sure and in the Portuguese population. Yes, definitely. How can I access your Thursday's lecture? You get in touch with Judy.

- We don't have anything available. Sorry, Trudy, it's just difficult at the moment.

- Oh, sorry darling, not at the moment, sorry.

- I'm going to say we are creating a website. And I hope pretty soon and then people will be able to access lectures.

- Thank you for that, Wendy.

- Understand there are 7,000 people, maybe seven and a half thousand people on our participants list and Judy has another job.

- Yes, I know, I'm sorry. As an American friend of mine said, "Judy, hush your mouth." Now there's a book here, that's been recommended, that's a super book, "The Embarrassment of Riches" by Simon Sharma about the Golden Age of fallen... Yes, Faye, that is a brilliant book for you to read. Did Jews go to Indonesia? Yes, they did, as traders. Yes, Jews went to Quiros. Yes, we saw a tiny synagogue, oh yes. Jewish tombstones in Nevi and Alaska. This is from Linda Lalus. My ancestors went from Spain to Turkey and ended up in Romania. Fascinating! Am I aware of the Jewish Pirates of the Caribbean? Oh, of course, I am. Oh, yes. Yes, in the north of the US state of New Mexico, this is from David, there are many Spanish-speaking Catholics who secretly light candles in their closets on Friday evening without generally understanding why. Also many families named . That's interesting, David. And this is from Jonathan. T

he book, "The Grandeers" is a fine history of the Sephardi Rise in America. Fabulous. This is from Wendy Lobato. She wants to know how to track down an ancestor's birth who was registered in Holland. You need to go to the Genealogy Society. They are brilliant. I dunno



where you live, Wendy. But I know that in America, in Britain, they have very good Jewish gen- And in Israel, of course. They have very good Jewish genealogy. I have an aunt who managed to get our family back to Holland in 1629 and then to England in 1749. And she managed it. And so I know it's quite possible to do it, so. Yes, this is a book, the "Jewish Pirates of the Caribbean" by Edward Kritzer. Thank you. This is from the recent UK Jewish Film Festival. A film called, "The Children of The Inquisition," which covered people who thought they were Catholics in the Americas, but discovered they were descended from Conversos. This is Michael saying what Jabotinsky would've said, you know, Michael, Jabotinsky is one of my heroes. That's all I'm going to say. Could we have a talk about Spinoza? I will talk to Wendy. Perhaps, we could talk to Jeremy about that.

- Yes, we can.

- [Trudy] That's very much, that's his field.

- Perfect. And he's on today at two o'clock, so.

- Yes.

- So whoever's-

- Yeah, I think it would be very, I think, Wendy, it would be very good if he could look at some of these characters.

- All right, so suggestions. I'm very happy to look at those suggestions. And you know, he is on it at two o'clock today, so why don't you send in that suggestion too. And also, yeah, that's it. We are reviewing the programme all the time. Thanks.

- And this is from Perry. Were the Jews ever expelled from the Netherlands? No, they weren't. But of course, tragically, so many Dutch Jews were murdered in the Shoah, 80% of them. The majority of them were actually Ashkenazis. And the group I'm talking about now are the Jews who came from the Iberian Peninsula, Spain and Portugal to Holland. And a lot of them then went off to the New World or to Britain. It's a fascinating story. Then, you had a flooding of Jews from Eastern Europe, the Ashkenazis, because of the Chmielnicki Massacres of 1648. A lot of people are very pleased, Wendy, about the subtitles.

- Trudy, I can answer that actually, Judy just sent me a text now because she is rush organiser and she said that participants that don't want the captions can click on the CC button and turn it off. So there is a way to turn off captions.

- Lovely. Thank you.

- Yeah, and we will distribute that, thanks.

- A lot of people are asking me about their own families. I really think if, and lockdown, I dunno what you think, Wendy, but lockdown's a great time to deal with genealogy. Get in touch. I know Arlene Beare, who I gave her address out. She runs JewishGen in London. but I know there are so many in America. I imagine you just type in Jewish genealogy because I think it's a very good thing to do. I'm doing it for my grandchildren. Mind you-

- What about-

- The family I'm finding, I should have left them behind.

- What about beta for thought? You know, we can ask. We can ask .

- Yes. Yes.

- Wonderful.

- Yes.

- Wonderful person.

- Yes, yes. She runs . I think she's the director. She is the director.

- Oh, fantastic. Fantastic. Now this is from Malcolm. Dubnow's history of the Jews in Russia and Poland is available on Amazon as a free e-book. Yes. That's great. Thank you. Yes, there are so many. I think it's genealogy you need, and yes, the Dutch East India Company never... Ah, Jill, the point about the Dutch East India Company, which I'll be dealing with, something like a quarter of the stockholders were Jewish. It's an extraordinary story. Now this is from Cyril. The Sephardic Synagogue in Amsterdam, built in 1652, has all the woodwork, the arc and the benches made with South American hardwood bought by the Jewish traders. That is fascinating information. And again, if you want to do a trip to the Spanish and Portuguese, to the synagogue in Amsterdam, it is magnificent. It's not used as a shul anymore. I remember about 35 years ago, I was with friends in Holland and it was open for Kol Nidre and we went there and we each had to take candles in. It was wonderful.

And the Bevis Marks in London was built as a sort of model of the synagogue in Amsterdam. It's a great city to visit from a Jewish point of view. This is from Cecil. What do I think of the invitation by Portugal and Spain now inviting descendants of Conversos to get back their original citizenship? What can you say? What can you say? This is from Romaine, psycho dynamically, yes, I'm going to talk to Wendy about this. Oh, this is from Monty. George Steiner said, "Have a suitcase packed and several passports ready at all times." Aye... Now, this is from Perry Myeroff, the sort of Constantine he's recommending as an excellent book on the history of antisemitism. Oh, Michael, there's a cookbook called the "Converso Cookbook." Am I going to

talk? Let me explain. Jeremy will be far better. That is very much Jeremy Rosen's area. So as Wendy's already said, she's going to speak to him about it. Beverly, it wasn't my great-grandmother who lit candles in the basement. Many people lit, many people, Catholics, it was discovered they were lighting candles in the basement. It was ancestral memory. They knew that when, but they no longer knew about being Jewish. It's a fascinating story. We're talking about quite a few people that this has been discovered.

The original Jews in South Africa were English Dutch. Yes, Jill. I'm just talking about the first person who actually landed, and the first Jew to actually land in the Cape was a Sephardi, that's all. No, they didn't settle there. They were Sephardi traders. Somebody talking about the synagogue in Quiros, saying, it's wonderful. We really must go travelling again. Oh, there's a fabulous novel by Naomi Reagan called "The Ghost of Hannah Mendes," the story of Garcia, Dona Garcia. Now she's the woman I mentioned, I'm going to mention her again on Thursday. She's a fascinating woman. Ashkenaz is the Hebrew for Germany, okay? Wendy, I think, shall I go on, Wendy?

- Trud, I think it's 20 past one.

- Already enough.

- It's enough. And we have in 40 minutes, we have another session.

- So we better stop now.

- We want enough time to go and have a cup of coffee. You know, just go and relax for a little bit and you too.

- Okay. God bless, darling.

- So thanks a million. Once again for an outstanding presentation.

- So we hit 2000, did we?

- I think, I'll tell you, wait a sec. I'll just take a picture for my mom , just in case you... 2031.

- Wow, wow, wow. And it started with under 31, didn't it?

- It started with under 20 under. Under...

- I love it. I love it. I will see you Thursday, that's right. God bless.

- Bye-bye. Night night.

- God bless. Bye-bye, everyone. Take care.