



Taste #3: Israel & Community Jewish Literacy Class

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Why Is There A People Israel The Jews?

God first tries to reveal Himself to all people – it doesn't work

- Adam & Eve - one commandment - they blow it
- Tower of Babel and Noah
- 7 laws of the children of Noah - what a gentile needs do to inherit all of the world to come:
 1. Prohibition against idolatry
 2. Prohibition against improper use of God's name (blasphemy)
 3. Prohibition against murder
 4. Prohibition against sexual immorality
 5. Prohibition against theft
 6. Prohibition against inhumane conduct (such as eating the flesh of a living animal)
 7. Obligation to set up courts of law and a system of justice

Why Is There A People Israel The Jews?

So then God tries Abraham and a particular people

The Covenant (Hebrew: *Brit* or *Bris*)

- God's side: you'll be numerous, you will be blessed, the nations of the world will be blessed by you, you'll get the land, I will be your God
- Our side: Obey the *mitzvot* & work on our mission
- We get the full text of covenant (Torah) only after slavery

Jewish focus is on actions not beliefs and on this world not the next.

Judaism: A Religion & A Nation

The Jews: People and Religion

- People/Nation/Tribe: born into Judaism
 - Jews are members of the nation/people Israel: *Am Yisrael*
 - Atheist/apostate Jew fully Jewish if born of a Jewish mother.
 - Reform/Reconstructionist approach
 - A child of a Jew and non-Jew is Jewish if raised Jewishly
 - Law of Return in Israel. A Jew is someone with one Jewish grandparent.
 - We have a language and a land
- The “deal” made after Roman destruction
- Religion: You can convert to Judaism and be fully Jewish
- Judaism is the one true religion for Jews: don’t seek converts.

The Jewish Mission

- To teach the world that there is one God whose primary demand is ethical behavior.
 - *Va-yom ha hu yih'yeh Adonai echad u'Shmo echad.*
 - “On that day Adonai’s will be one and His name one.”
 - This is why we are hated
 - We are to serve as an *Ohr l'Goyim* – A light to the nations
 - Choosiness in Judaism – means increased obligations not increased privileges.
- To perfect the world
 - Messianic age
 - Judaism is about this world
 - Salvation is a political concept
- The Three Essential Elements in Judaism
 - God
 - Torah (story of teach me all of Torah on 1 foot)
 - Israel
- Judaism also revolves around Creation, Revelation & Redemption

The Modern State of Israel

- Born in response to antisemitism and the *Shoah* (Holocaust)
- First independent Jewish state since the days of the Maccabees
- Key dilemmas
 - Can Israel be a “nation like any other nation” and a “light to the nations?”
 - Can Israel be a Jewish state and a democracy?
- Israeli Politics and the power of religious parties
- I am a member of the people Israel but I am not an Israeli

Israel in the Middle East



From Joseph Sonnenblick

Israel: A Tiny Nation Surrounded



- ✦ Arab Population
187 million
Israel 6 million
- ✦ Arab Countries Square Miles : 1.9 million Miles
Israel: 8000 Miles
- ✦ Arab Armies: 1.6 Million
Israel: 600,000(includes reserves)

From Joseph Sonnenblick

Israel in the 1940s



1947-48 UN Partition Plan



1948 Armistice

Israel: Changing Borders



1967: 6 Day War



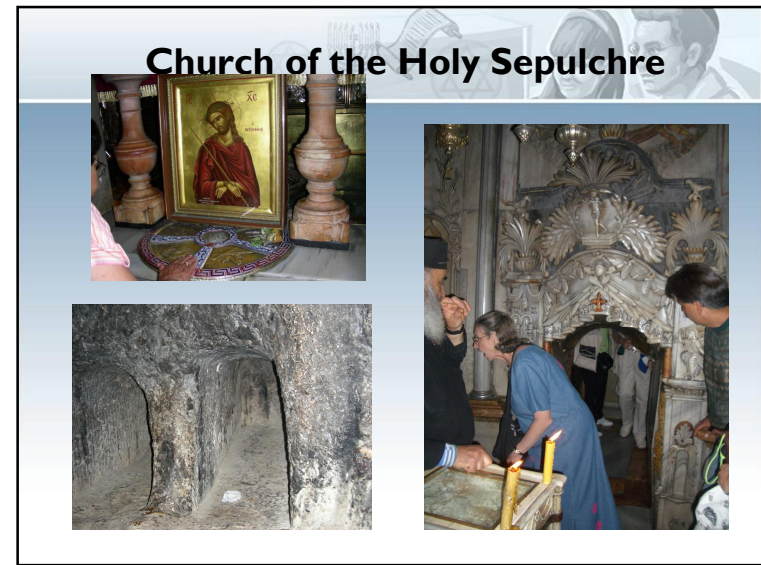
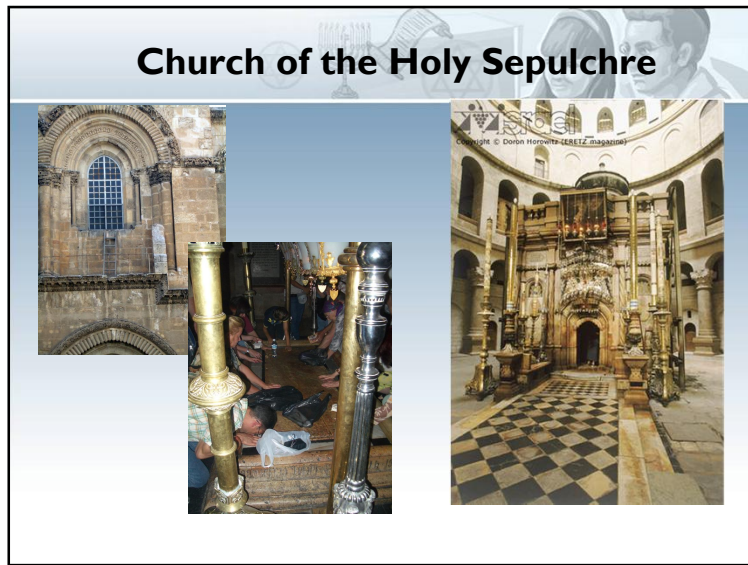
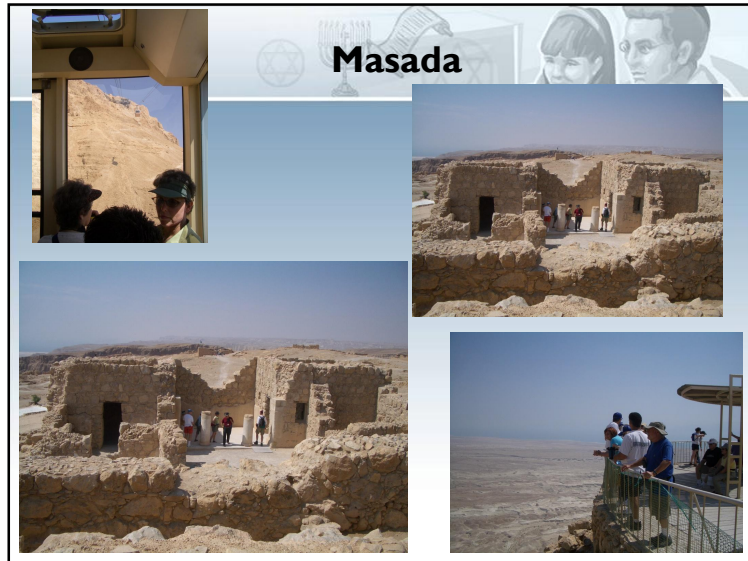
1993 Accords

Snapshots of Israel Trips



Tel Aviv





More Snapshots



Jewish Community

- You can be a Jew by Choice but not a Jew by self!
- Who is a Jew?
- People Israel and the State of Israel
- Choosiness
- Am I an Israelite or an American?

Life Cycle and Odds & Ends

Life cycle

- Birth and bris
- B'nai Mitzvah
- Marriage & Divorce
- Interfaith Marriage
- Death

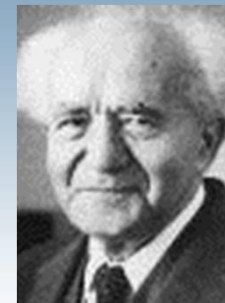
Odds and Ends

- Antisemitism and the Holocaust
- The afterlife

The Miracle of the Jewish People

“A Jew who does not believe in miracles is not a realist”

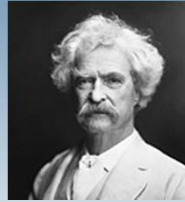
David Ben Gurion -
First Prime Minister
of the State of Israel:



From Joseph Sonnenblick

The Miracle of Jewish History

Mark Twain
Harper's Magazine, 1898



“The Egyptian, the Babylonian, and the Persian rose, filled the planet with sound and splendor, then . . . passed away. The Greek and the Roman followed. The Jew saw them all, beat them all... All things are mortal but the Jew; all other forces pass, but he remains. What is the secret of his immortality?”

From Joseph Sonnenblick

Jewish Contributions to the World

- The Bible – First System of Ethics & Monotheism
- Ten Commandments
- Ideas like “Love thy Neighbor as Yourself”
ואהבת לרעך כמוך
- Judeo Christian Heritage founded on Jewish ideas
- 740 Nobel Prizes Between 1901 and 2004 - 156 are Jews
- Medicine – 29%
- Chemistry – 19%
- Economics – 38%
- Physics – 26%
- Peace – 10%

From Joseph Sonnenblick

Bottom Lines

For non-Jews

- We applaud you – be religious!
- We welcome you – come join us!

For Jews – become serious (not necessarily Orthodox) Jews

- Equally committed to God, Torah & Israel
- Elevate yourself in these ideals
- Struggle and grow (read and study)
- Belong – can't be a Jew by self

Join us in the Jewish Literacy Class!

YOUR TURN

QUESTIONS ??????

AND (I HOPE) ANSWERS