

"The Jews are a nervous people.
Nineteen centuries of Christian
love have taken a toll."

-Benjamin Disraeli

21 December 1804 – 19 April 1881

England's first and only Prime Minister with Jewish
heritage

The Romans

- 70 C.E. The Roman Army destroyed Jerusalem killing 1 million Jews, enslaving 100,000, and scattering the remaining population across Europe and North Africa
- After this event the Roman Empire frequently expelled Jews from various parts of the empire, encouraged mobs to destroy synagogues, forbid certain Jewish rituals, limit the rights of Jews

Placing Blame

- **415 C.E.** St. Augustine wrote "*The true image of the Hebrew is Judas Iscariot, who sells the Lord for silver. The Jew can never understand the Scriptures and forever will bear the guilt for the death of Jesus.*"

Under the Crusades

- On May 25, 1096, about 800 Jews were murdered in Wurms, Germany while many others chose suicide, Kidush haShem, rather than subject their families to torture, rape and murder at the hands of their tormentors. In Regensburg Jews were thrown to their deaths into the Danube, a "baptism" as entertainment for the mob. In Mainz, Cologne, Prague and many other cities, thousands were killed and their possessions plundered. During the nine crusades spanning nearly 200 years tens of thousands of Jews were massacred, thier property pilaged.

Blamed for the Plague

- As the Black Death epidemics devastated Europe in the mid-14th century, annihilating more than a half of the population, Jews were taken as scapegoats. Rumors spread that they caused the disease by deliberately poisoning wells. Hundreds of Jewish communities were destroyed by violence. Although the Pope Clement VI tried to protect them, 900 Jews were burnt alive in Strasbourg, where the plague hadn't yet affected the city.

Life in the Papal States Ghettos

- In the Papal States, which existed until 1870, Jews were required to live only in specified neighborhoods called ghettos. Until the 1840s, they were required to regularly attend sermons urging their conversion to Christianity. Only Jews were taxed to support state boarding schools for Jewish converts to Christianity. It was illegal to convert from Christianity to Judaism. Sometimes Jews were baptized involuntarily, and, even when such baptisms were illegal, forced to practice the Christian religion. In many such cases the state separated them from their families.

The Pogroms

- In 1543, Martin Luther wrote *On the Jews and Their Lies*, a treatise in which he advocated harsh persecution of the Jewish people, up to what are now called pogroms; Russian for Devestation. He advocated that their synagogues and schools be set on fire, their prayer books destroyed, rabbis forbidden to preach, homes razed, and property and money confiscated
- In Russia an estimated 70,000 to 250,000 civilian Jews were killed throughout the former Russian Empire

The interwar years

- Jews are blamed for the wide spread economic depression across Europe after World War I. Eastern European nations, like Hungary and Germany, begin to pass laws that limit the occupations that Jews can have, forbid intermarriage, and prohibit participation in government

