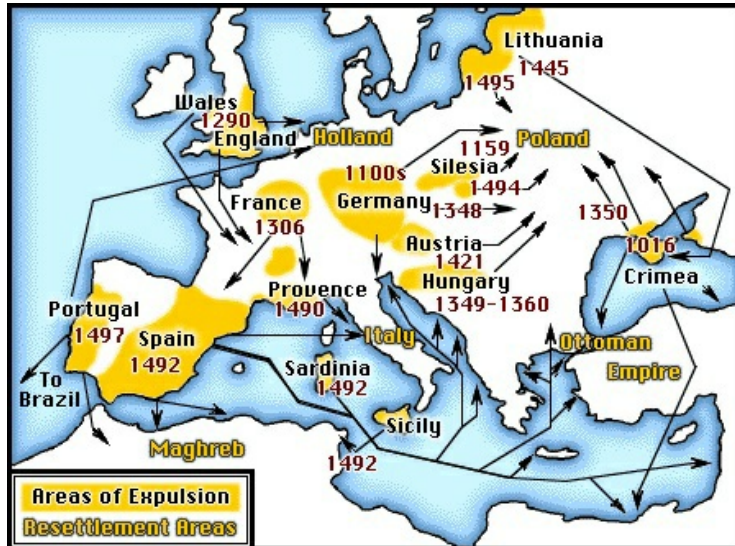


American Minute with Bill Federer

"Jews of the United States ... were free ... In a comparatively short time, prospered ... in a degree unexampled in Europe"-*London Jewish Chronicle*, 1862

Jews in Europe suffered major persecutions, such as:

- Black Death persecution, 1348–1350;
- Toulon, 1348;
- Massacre in Barcelona and Catalan cities, 1391;
- Erfurt Massacre, 1349;
- Basel, Aragon and Flanders Massacres;
- "Valentine's Day" Strasbourg pogrom, 1349, destroying over 500 Jewish communities;
- Brussels Massacre of 1370;
- Holy Saturday pogrom in Prague, 1389, burning the Jewish quarter;
- Khmelnytsky Uprising of 1648–1657 in Ukraine;
- Hep-Hep riots in the German Confederation, 1819.



In 1492, after seven centuries of **Islamic occupation**, which included episodes of forced conversions and massacres, **Ferdinand and Isabella** drove the last of the Muslims out of **Spain**.



The same year they sent **Columbus** on his voyage to find a sea route to **India** and **China**, as **Muslims** had cut off the **land route**.

Under the pretense that some **Muslims** might be staying in **Spain** posing as **Jews**, possibly to attempt an **assassination** or **coup**, King **Ferdinand** decided to order all **Jews** to **convert** or **leave**, thus ending one of the largest and most prosperous **Sephardic Jewish communities** in the world.



This was similar to **Jews** being expelled from **England** by **Edward I** in 1290.



Jews that converted and stayed in Spain were called **Marrano** or **Converso**, some of whom risked arrest by continuing to practice their Jewish traditions in secret.



In regret of this, on December 13, 2016, **King Felipe VI of Spain** addressed the **Conference of European Rabbis**:

"Our European identity cannot be understood nor complete without taking into account the decisive contribution of the **Jews**, who have lived in the continent since the dawn of history ...

Now -- as it did then -- Europe needs the

invaluable contribution of its **Jewish communities**, because we need to be honest and respectful to both our common **Judeo-Christian values and origins ...**

Esteemed **rabbis**, I welcome you to **Spain**, an open and tolerant country in which respect for diversity is a defining characteristic.

We are also filled with pride by **Spain's** active and flourishing **Jewish community ...** (whose) rites, liturgy, renowned surnames, ballads, proverbs and seasonings ... should never have allowed to be lost ... "

King Felipe VI
continued:

"(In) 1992 ... after entering the **Ben Yaacob Synagogue in Madrid**, the official welcome was marked by the words of my father **King Juan Carlos: 'Spanish Jews are in their homeland' ...**



Spain's efforts in recent years to return the country's **Jewish culture** to its rightful state are simply a duty in the name of justice.

The **Sephardim's** unyielding love and loyalty towards **Spain** represents a powerful example ... who, for **five centuries, stayed true to their heritage."**

In 1492, some of the exiled **Jews** went to the **Ottoman Empire**, or **Morocco**,

Tangier, Fez, and areas of North Africa, though they later suffered much persecution and bloodshed.



Some went to **Portugal**, but when **King Manuel I of Portugal** married the daughter of the **King of Spain**, he

instituted the same policy in 1497, of convert or leave.

Some **Jews** fled to the **Madeira Islands**.



Some **Jews** fled to **Poland** and **Lithuania**, which for centuries had been a **place of religious tolerance** for **Jews** driven out of other countries.

The Polish-

Lithuanian Commonwealth was known as *paradisus iudaeorum* -- paradise of the Jews, as



according to some sources, it was home to **three-quarters of the world's Jewish population** in the middle **16th century**.

Other Jews went to the **Netherlands**, which was western **Europe's center of religious toleration**.



Jews migrated to the **Netherlands' largest city, Amsterdam**, which went on to become **the wealthiest city in the world** in the 1600s.



Many **Jews** settled in the city of **Leiden, Holland**.

From 1575, the **University of Leiden** became known as a center of the study of **Hebrew, Aramaic and Syriac**, even

having a **Jewish rabbi** as a professor.

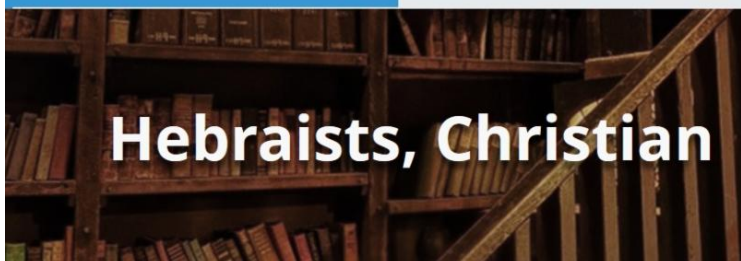
In 1607, the **Pilgrims** fled from **King James I of England**, crossed the English Channel, and settled in **Leiden, Holland**, where they became acquainted with the **Jews**.

Pilgrims identified with the **Jews**, whose **ancestors** **covenanted** **together with God**, fled from the persecution of Pharaoh, crossed the Red Sea, and entered into the Promised Land.



In 1620, the **Pilgrims**, having fled from the King of England, sailed across the Atlantic Ocean to settle **Plymouth, Massachusetts**, - their new **Promised Land**.

Scholars of the era were called "**Christian Hebraists**," as they were fascinated with the **ancient Hebrew Republic** and **Israel's concept of a people in "covenant" with each other under God**.



Hebraists, Christian

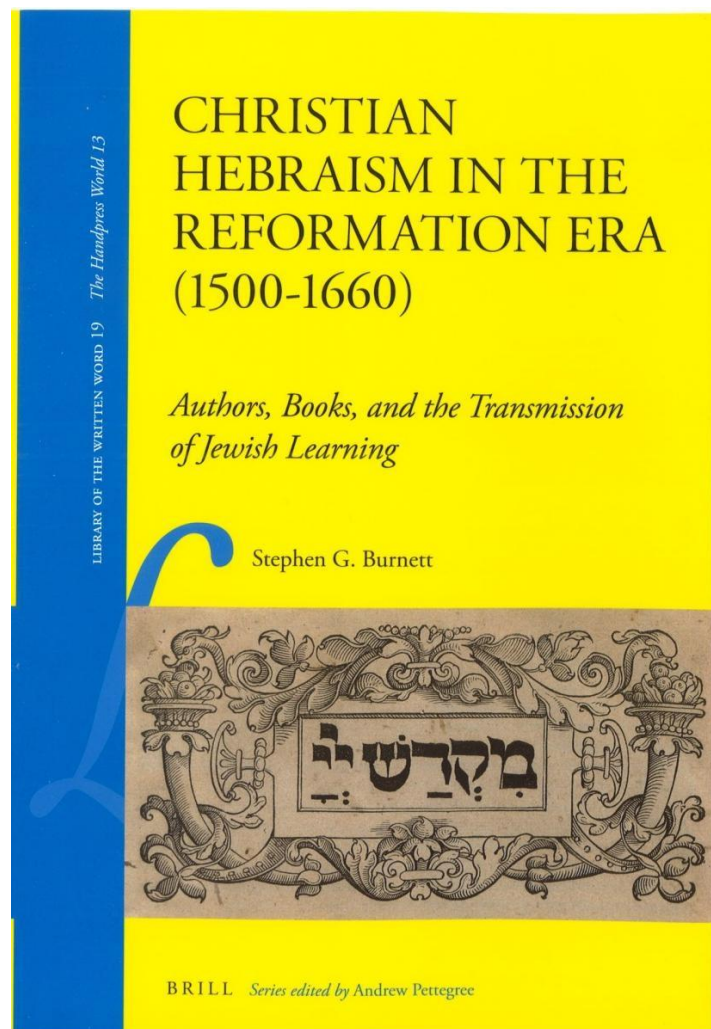
HEBRAISTS, CHRISTIAN (1100–1890). Factors governing gentile en latest phase of more widespread secular attitudes may be distingui and (3) occasion; appreciation and assessment of these ought to Hebraists in the context of the cultural background, including e history relevant in each case. Such considerations ought to prec

Notable "Christian Hebraists" were:

- **Thomas Erastus** (1524–1583);
- **Bonaventure Vulcanius** (1535–1614);
- **Joseph Scaliger** (1540–1609);
- **Johannes van den Driesche** (1550–1616);
- **Isaac Casaubon** (1559–1614);
- **Johannes Buxtorf** (1564–1629);
- **Daniel Heinsius** (1580–1655);
- **Hugo Grotius** (1583–1645);
- **John Selden** (1584–1654);
- **Thomas Hobbes** (1588–1679);
- **James Harrington** (1611–1677);
- **Petrus Cunaeus** (1586–1638), who published *The Hebrew Republic* in 1617; and
- **John Sadler** (1615-1674), whose sister, Ann, married **John Harvard**, namesake of **Harvard University**.

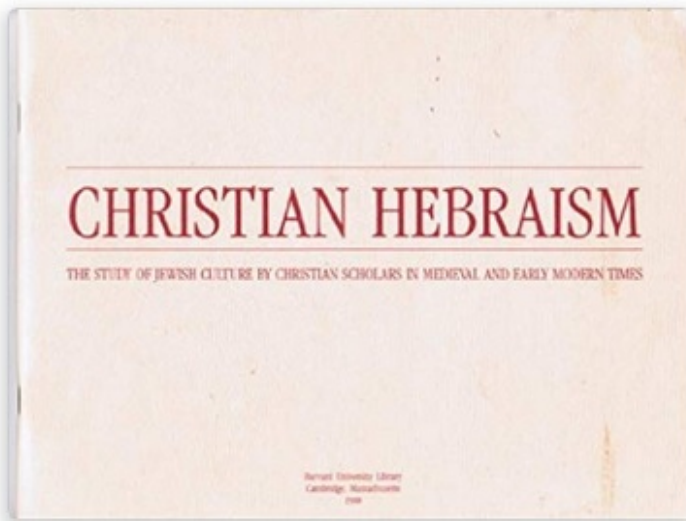
Christian Hebraists were Protestant and Catholic scholars, who, in the century between the **Reformation** and the **Age of Enlightenment**, studied:

- the ancient Hebrew republic;
- the Hebrew language;
- Jewish historian



Josephus (37–100);

- **the Jerusalem Talmud (2nd century AD);**
- **the Babylonian Talmud (4th century AD);**
- **Jewish philosopher Maimonides (1135–1204); and**
- **Rabbinic literature.**



Just as **Oxford** and **Cambridge** in England taught **Hebrew**, in America, **Harvard students** were required to study **Hebrew**.

In 1685, **Harvard's commencement**

address was delivered in the **Hebrew** language.

Other early American colleges, such as **Yale, Dartmouth, and Columbia**, had **Hebrew** taught at **Harvard, Yale, Columbia**, and other universities. also had **requirements for students to learn Hebrew**.

JewishEncyclopedia .com

The unedited full-text of the 1906 Jewish Encyclopedia

HEBRAISTS, CHRISTIAN:

By: Richard Gottheil

The work of Christian scholars in the field of Hebrew literature demands special treatment, not only as part of the history of Jewish literature itself, but also as an indication of the relation which existed between Jews and Christians at various epochs. The neglect by Christians of this study has given rise to many of the false ideas in regard to the Jews and their history which have been current down to the present day. The early fathers of the Christian Church recognized the necessity of understanding the ideas of the mother Synagogue, and got their knowledge of Hebrew traditions (*i.e.*, the Haggadah) from their Jewish teachers. This is seen especially in the exegesis of Justin Martyr, Aphraates, Ephraem Syrus, and Origen. Jerome's teachers are even mentioned by name—*e.g.*, Bar Hanina (Hananiah). This knowledge, however, gradually grew less and less as the separation between Church and Synagogue

In the Renaissance.

What was known of Jewish literature came to the scholastics entirely through translations: works of Albertus Magnus. That The Venerable Bede (673-735) knew anything of Hebrew

In 1722, **Harvard** hired **Judah Monis**, its **first full-time Hebrew instructor**, who published A

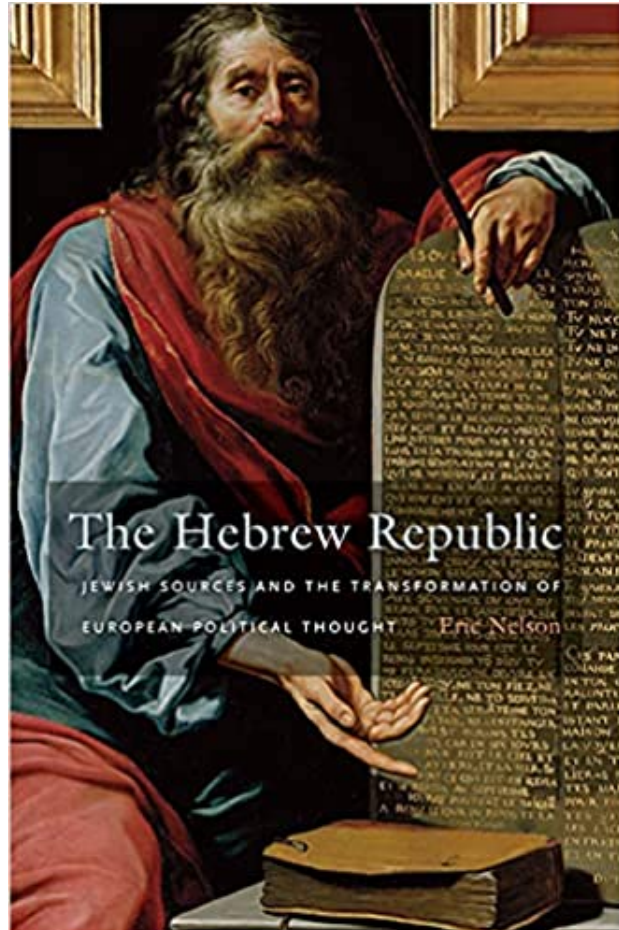
Hebrew
taught
at
Harvard
and
Yale



Grammar of the Hebrew Tongue (1735) - the **first Hebrew textbook published in North America.**

Eric Nelson's book, *The Hebrew Republic: Jewish Sources and the Transformation of European Political Thought* (Harvard University Press, 2011), has been described in the publisher's abstract:

"The **revolutionary politics of John Milton, James Harrington, and Thomas Hobbes** appear in a brand-new light. Nelson demonstrates that central features of **modern political thought** emerged from an **attempt to emulate a constitution designed by God.**"



Columnist **Don Feder** gave an address to the Friends of Israel, titled "America & Israel—Two Nations Joined At the Heart" (Grand Rapids, MI, May 15, 2014):

"More than Athens ... more than Roman Law, and English Common Law – **Israel shaped America.**"

Many **Jews** that

had been expelled from Spain sailed with **Dutch merchants** to settlements around the world, including the **South American city of Recife**.



There, **Jews** built the first **synagogue in the Western Hemisphere**, Kahal Zur Israel Synagogue in 1636.



When **Spain and Portugal**

recaptured **Recife** from the **Dutch**, the **Jews** were pressured to flee again.



Twenty-three Jews sailed from **Recife** to **Port Royal, Jamaica**.

Then they boarded the French ship *Sainte Catherine* and headed north,

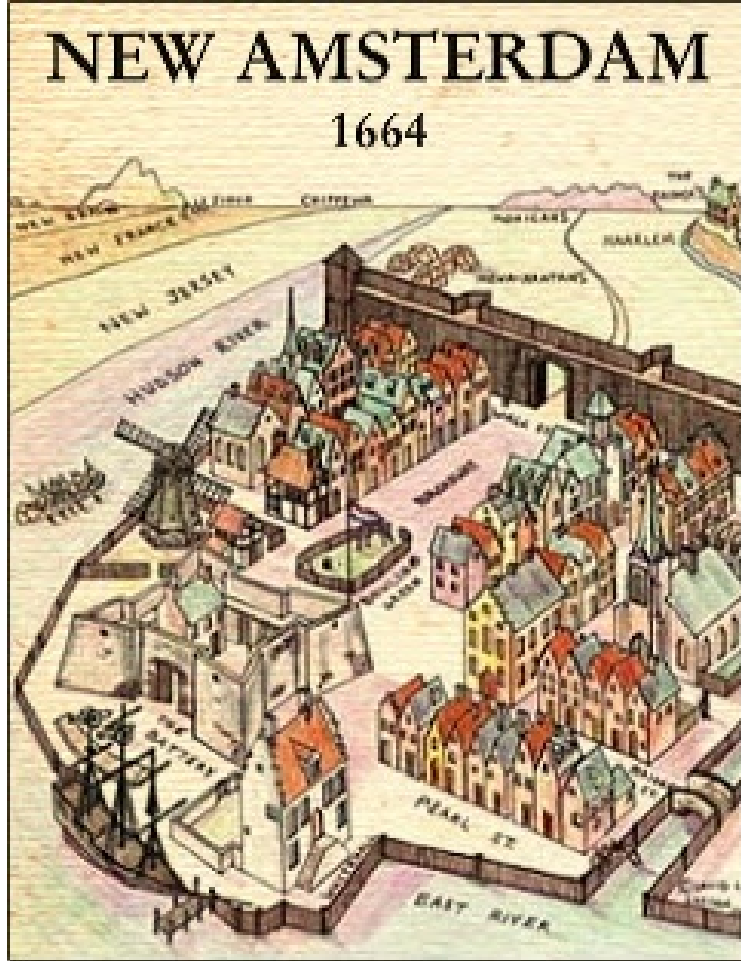
but were soon **robbed by a Spanish privateer** and stripped of their valuables.

Arriving in the **Dutch Colony of New Amsterdam** on August 22,

1654, they were considered the **first Jews to settle in North America.**

Being totally destitute after their voyage, members of the **Dutch Reformed Church** took care of the **Jews** that first winter.

New Amsterdam would eventually become **the richest city in the world** in the early 20th century.



New Amsterdam Director-General Peter Stuyvesant attempted to expel the Jews, as he had previously tried to expel **Lutherans.**

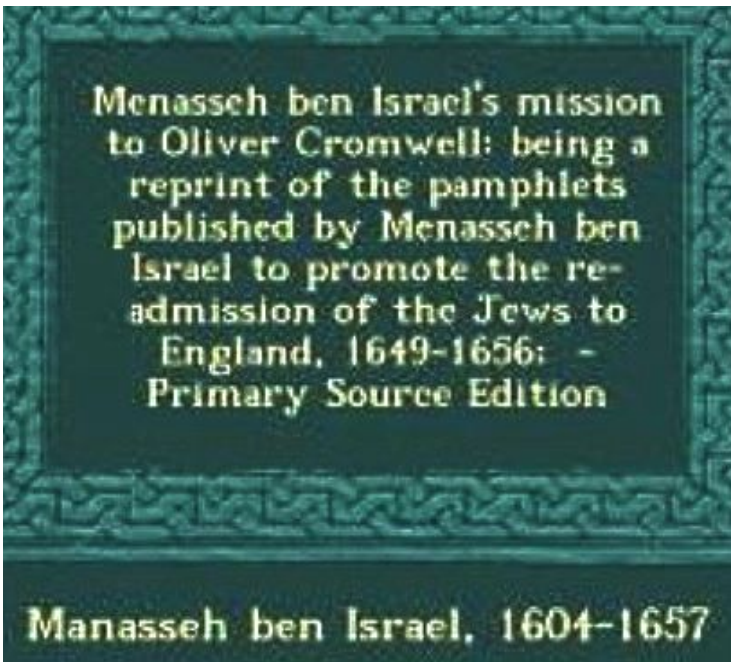
The **Jewish** arrivals were allowed to stay, though, because the **directors of Dutch West India Company** shared a common sympathy with

them, as both experienced **suffering under Spanish tyranny**.

The **Dutch** were in a global contest with **Spain, Portugal, and England** over possessions in **Indonesia, India,**



Africa and South America, and as a result, they wanted to **quickly populate the colony of New Netherlands** for its defense and profitability.



In 1657, **Oliver Cromwell** allowed **Jews** back into **England**, reversing the expulsion of Jews dating back to **King Edward I** in 1290.

In 1657, the **first Quakers** arrived in **New Amsterdam**, but **Director-General Stuyvesant** banished them.



In their defense, 31 residents signed a petition, the **Flushing Remonstrance**, but the signers, too, were **arrested**.

In 1663, the directors of the **Dutch West India Company**, after reading a lengthy



protest letter
written by **Quaker
John Browne**,
sent instructions to
Stuyvesant:

"Immigration ...
must be favored at
**so tender a stage
of the country's**

existence, you may therefore shut your eyes, **at least
not force people's consciences**,

but allow everyone to have his own belief, as long as **he
behaves quietly and legally**, gives no offense to his
neighbors and **does not oppose the government.**"

Jews were
allowed to stay in
New Amsterdam,
but were initially
not allowed to own
a home, or
worship outside
their residences,
or join the city's
militia.



In 1664, near the
beginning of the
**Second Anglo-
Dutch War** - a war
in which **British
Admiral William
Penn, Sr.**, fought -
English forces

took control of **New Amsterdam** and renamed it **New
York**.

This resulted in **Jews** having more freedom.

In 1730, **Jewish citizens in New York** bought land and built the small "**Mill Street Synagogue,**" the **first Jewish house of worship in North America.**



During the colonial era, **America's population** grew to **3 million**, which was approximately:

- **98 percent Protestant**
- **around 1 percent Catholic;** and
- **less than one tenth of 1 percent Jewish.**

CHURCH CONGREGATIONS IN 1775-76

Denomination	Number	Percent
Congregational	668	20.7
Presbyterian*	588	18.2
Baptist**	497	15.4
Episcopal	495	15.3
Quakers	310	9.6
German Reformed	159	4.9
Lutheran***	150	4.6
Dutch Reformed	120	3.7
Methodist	65	2.0
Roman Catholic	56	1.7
Moravian	31	1.0
Separatist and Independent	31	1.0
Dunker	24	0.7
Mennonite	16	0.5
Huguenot	7	0.2
Sandemanian	6	0.2
Jewish	5	0.2

By the time of the Revolution, **America's Jewish population** was estimated to be somewhere between **1,000 to 2,500**, located in **seven Sephadic congregations:**



- **Shearith Israel**, New York City, begun 1655;
- **Yeshuat Israel**, Touro Synagogue, Newport, Rhode Island, begun 1658;
- **Mickve Israel**, Savannah, Georgia, begun 1733;
- **Mikveh Israel**, Philadelphia, begun 1740;
- **Shaarai Shomayim**, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, begun 1747;
- **Kahal Kadosh Beth Elohim**, Charleston, South Carolina, begun 1749; and
- **Kahal Kadosh Beth Shalom**, Richmond, Virginia, begun 1789.



From the 3rd century on, **Jews** scattered around the world followed the teaching of **Rabbi Samuel of Nehardea in Babylonia**, namely, that **"the law of the land is the law."**

This resulted in **Jews refraining from trying to change the politics of the host countries they lived in**, similar to the practice of **early Christians** during their

first three centuries.

This teaching is **diametrically opposed to fundamental wahhabi Islamic teaching**, which attempts to **overthrow governments of host countries to establish sharia law.**

During the **Middle Ages**, the **Jew's** insistence on non-involvement in city politics **unfortunately caused them to be held suspect** by all political parties.

The **American Revolutionary War** was the **first time since being exiled from Jerusalem** that **Jews fought alongside of their Christian neighbors as equals in the fight for freedom.**



Jewish merchants, such as Aaron Lopez of Newport and Isaac Moses of Philadelphia, sailed their ships past British blockades to provide clothing, guns, powder

and food to the needy Revolutionary soldiers.

Some merchants lost everything.

An estimated 160 **Jews** fought in the **Continental American Army** during the **Revolutionary War**, such as:

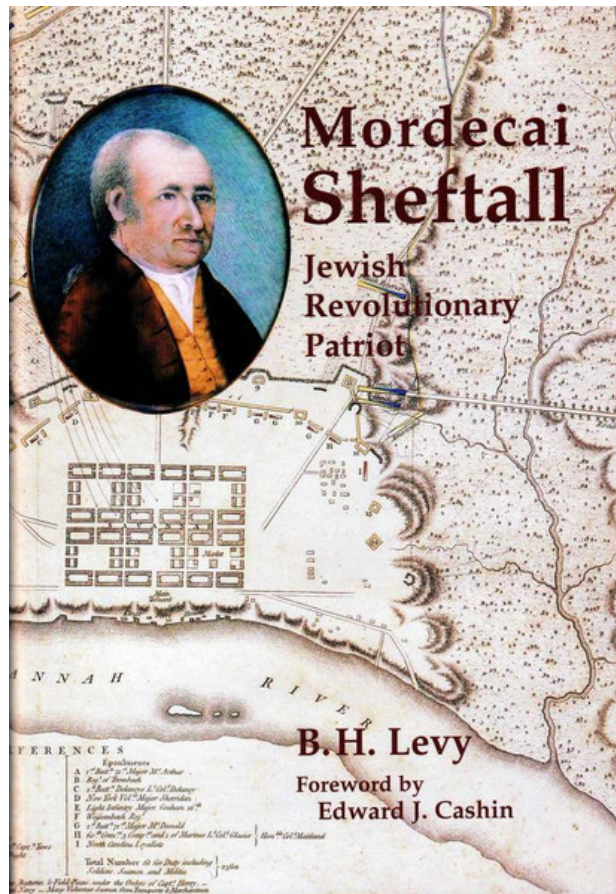
- **Lieut. Col. Solomon Bush**

fought in the Battle of Long Island and the Battle of Brandywine, where he was wounded and his brother, Capt. Lewis Bush, was killed;



- **Francis Salvador** of South Carolina, the first Jewish State Legislator, who was killed in the Revolutionary War;

- **Col. Mordecai Sheftall** of Savannah was Deputy Commissary General for American troops, 1778;



- **Abigail Minis** supplied provisions to American soldiers in 1779; and

- **Capt. Reuben Etting** fought in the Revolution, being captured at Charleston. He was later appointed U.S. Marshall for Maryland by Thomas Jefferson, 1801.

- Jewish physician, **Dr. Philip Moses Russell** was **George**

Washington doctor, who even suffered with him at **Valley Forge**.



President Calvin Coolidge recounted, May 3, 1925:

"Haym Solomon, Polish Jew financier of the Revolution. Born in Poland, he was made prisoner by the British forces in New York, and when he escaped

set up in business in Philadelphia.

He negotiated for **Robert Morris** all the loans raised in France and Holland, pledged his personal faith and fortune for enormous amounts,

and personally **advanced large sums to such men as James Madison, Thomas Jefferson, Baron Steuben, General St. Clair**, and many other patriot leaders who testified that **without his aid they could not have carried on in the cause.**"



In 1975, a U.S. postage stamp honored **Haym Solomon**, with printing on the back:

"Financial hero-businessman and broker **Haym**

Solomon was responsible for raising most of the money needed to finance the American Revolution and later saved the new nation from collapse."

Yale President Ezra Styles identified the country as "**American Israel.**"

In the spirit of Christian Hebraists, **Harvard President Rev. Samuel Langdon**

gave an address at the New Hampshire ratifying Convention, titled "**The Republic of the Israelites an example to the American States,**" June 5, 1788:

"The **Israelites** may be considered as a pattern to the world in all ages ... (of) government ... on republican principles ...

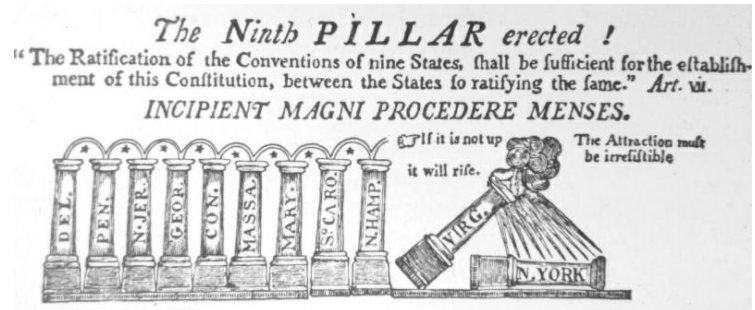
How unexampled was this quick progress of the **Israelites**, from **abject slavery**, ignorance, and almost total want of order, to a **national establishment perfected** in all its parts far beyond all other kingdoms



and States!

From a mere mob, to a well regulated nation, under a government and laws far superior to what any other nation could boast!"

After Rev. Langdon's address, New Hampshire's delegates voted to ratify the U.S.



Constitution, and being the 9th State to do so, put the Constitution into effect, June 21, 1788.



On June 19, 1790, George Washington sent a letter to the Levi Sheftal and the Jewish Congregation in Savannah, Georgia:

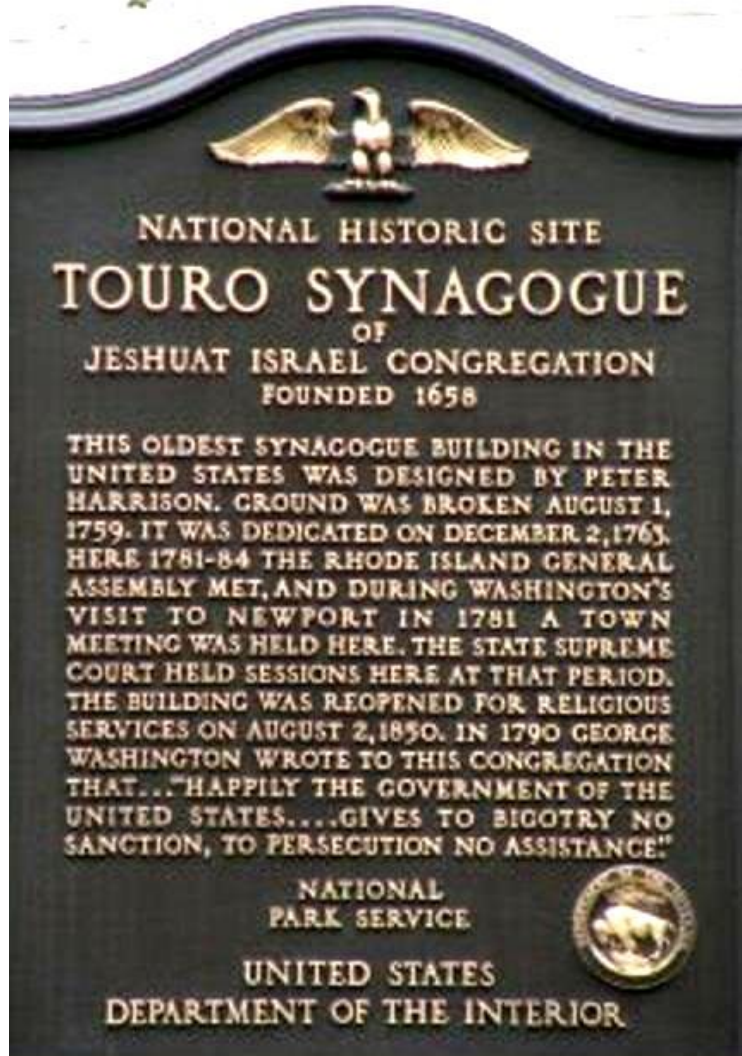
"May the same wonder-working Deity, who long

since delivered the Hebrews from their Egyptian oppressors, planted them in a promised land, whose providential agency has lately been conspicuous in establishing these United States as an independent nation, still continue to water them with the dews of heaven."

On August 21, 1790, President Washington responded to a letter from Moses

Seixas and the
**Hebrew
congregation of
Newport, Rhode
Island:**

"The Citizens of
the United States
of America have a
right to applaud
themselves for
having given to
mankind examples
of an enlarged and
liberal policy ... All
possess alike
**liberty of
conscience** and
immunities of
citizenship.



It is now no more that **toleration** is spoken of, as if it was by the **indulgence of one class of people**, that another enjoyed the **exercise of their inherent natural rights**.

For happily the Government of the United States, which **gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance** requires only that they who live under its protection should demean themselves as good citizens, in giving it on all occasions their effectual support ...

May the **children of the Stock of Abraham**, who dwell in this land, continue to merit and enjoy the good will of the other Inhabitants; while **every one shall sit in safety under his own vine and fig tree**, and there shall be **none to make him afraid**. (Micah 4:4)

May the **Father of all mercies scatter light and not darkness in our paths** and make us all in our several

vocations useful here, and in his own due time and way everlastingly happy." (Job 36:30; Psalm 119:105; Isaiah 42:16)



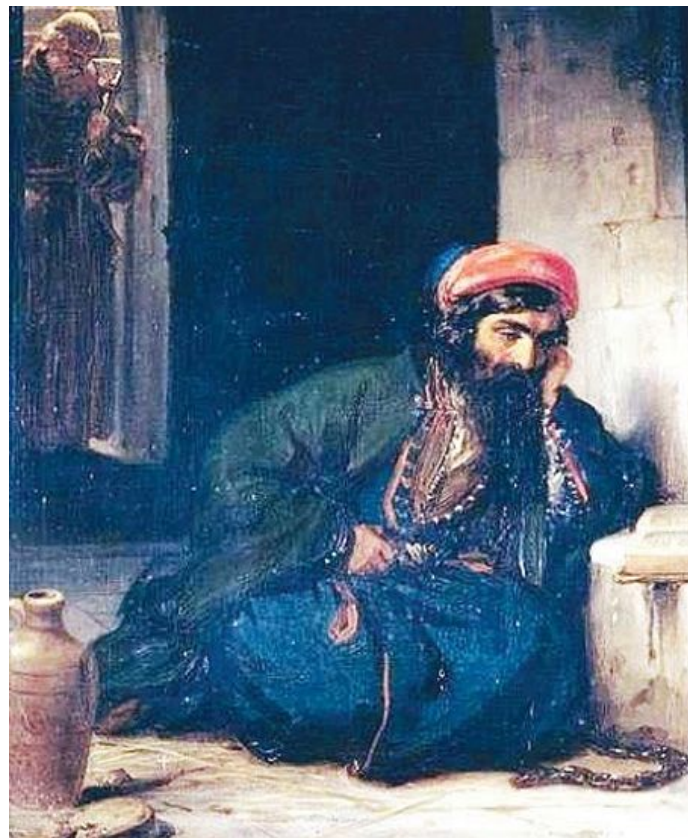
Ashkenazic Jews were few in America until a persecution in **Bavaria** in the 1830s resulted in many thousands immigrating.

The **Jewish population** in America grew from a **tenth of one percent** to nearly **2 percent**.



President Martin Van Buren sent a letter to the **Muslim Ottoman Turks** requesting that they stop killing Jews in **Syria** during the **Damascus Affair**:

"on behalf of an **oppressed and persecuted race**, among whose kindred are found **some of the most worthy and patriotic of American citizens.**"





David Yulee, "Father of Florida Railroads," was the **first Jew** elected to the **U.S. Senate** in 1845.

He was joined in 1853 by **Senator Judah P. Benjamin** from Louisiana.

Governor David Emanuel of

Georgia was the **first Jewish Governor** of any **U.S. State**.

In 1818, **Solomon Jacobs** was the "**acting**" **Mayor of Richmond, Virginia**.

In 1832, Pittsburgh's 7th mayor was **Samuel Pettigrew**, the **first full-time Jewish Mayor in America**.

Uriah P. Levy was the **first Jewish Commodore** in the U.S. Navy, fighting in the War of 1812 and commanding the Mediterranean squadron.

He was responsible for **ending the practice of flogging** in the Navy. A chapel at Annapolis and a WWII destroyer were named after him.

When **Jefferson's Monticello home** was decaying, **Levy** bought it in 1836, repaired it and opened it to the public. **He commissioned the statute of Jefferson** which is in the **U.S. Capitol rotunda**.



Photo # NH 48113 Commo. Uriah P. Levy, USN



Samuel Mayer Isaacs, editor of the *Jewish Messenger*, wrote of the United States, December 28, 1860:

"This Republic was the first to recognize our claims to absolute equality, with men of whatever religious denomination.

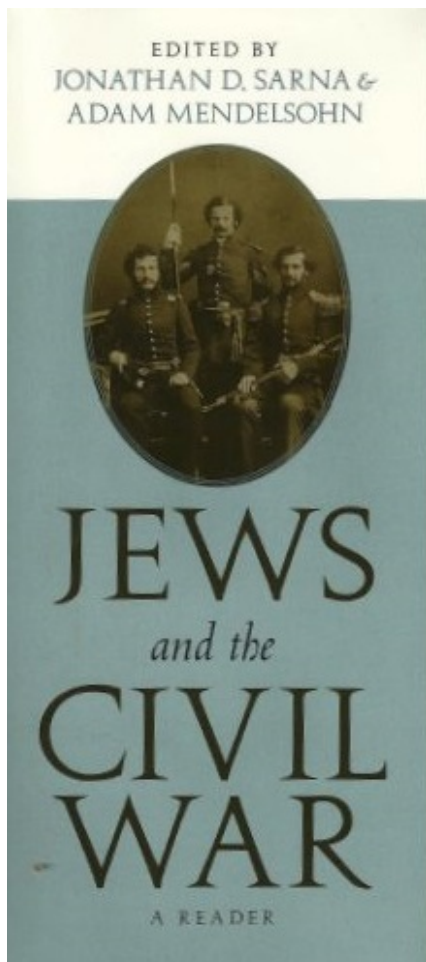
Here we can **sit each under his**

vine and fig tree, with none to make him afraid." (Micah

4:4)

In 1862, the *London Jewish Chronicle* reported:

"We now have a few words of the **Jews of the United States** in general ... **The Constitution** having established perfect religious liberty, **Jews were free in America** ... They ... in a comparatively short time, **prospered** and throve there **in a degree unexampled in Europe.**"



At the time of the **Civil War**, the population of the United States was 31 million, including around **150,000 to 200,000 Jews.**

An estimated 7,000 **Jews** fought for the **Union** and 3,000 fought for the **Confederacy**, with around 600 **Jewish** soldiers dying in battle.

Jewish Union Generals were: **Leopold Blumenberg; Frederick**

Knefler; Edward S. Salomon; and Frederick C. Salomon.

Jewish Confederate
officers included:

- **Judah P. Benjamin**,
Secretary of War;
- **Colonel Abraham Charles Myers**,
Quartermaster General;
- **Dr. David Camden DeLeon**, Surgeon
General;
- **Surgeon Dr. Simon Baruch** served on General
Robert E. Lee's personal staff.
- **Major Raphael J. Moses** was Commissary Officer of
Georgia, and after the war began Georgia's peach
industry.



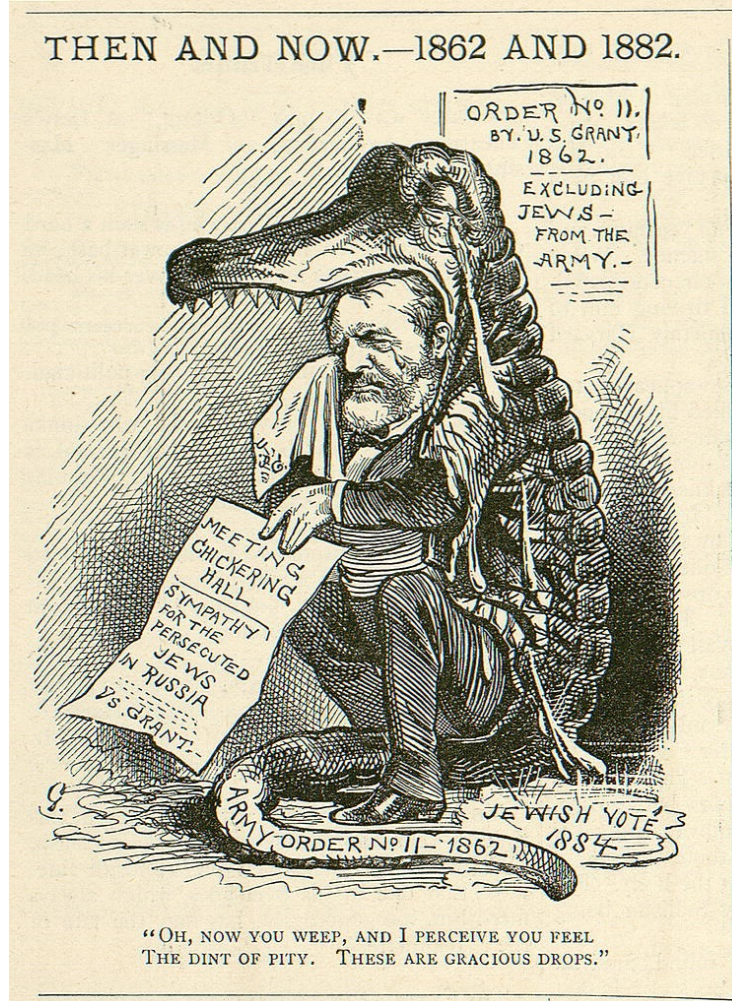
During the Siege
of Vicksburg,
General Grant
issued his
notorious **General**
Order 11
expelling Jews
from the military,
which **Lincoln**
immediately
cancelled.

Later as President,
Grant appointed

more Jews to high offices than any of his predecessors, including Governor of the Washington Territory, Edward S. Solomon.

Grant openly condemn the persecution of Jews, specifically the anti-Jewish pogroms in Romania.

He even sent a Jewish consul-general from America to Bucharest to "work for the benefit of the people who are laboring under severe oppression."



Just as the first Catholic U.S. Army chaplain was appointed during the Mexican-American War, the first Jewish chaplain was appointed by Abraham Lincoln during the Civil War.

His name was Rev. Jacob Frankel of Philadelphia's

Congregation Rodeph Shalom.

On March 1, 1881, **Tsar Alexander II** of **Russia** was assassinated and a pogrom began against **Jews**, leading to over 2 million fleeing to America.



This was memorialized in the play ***Fiddler on the Roof***.

Booker T. Washington wrote:

"I never had much patience with the multitudes of people who are always ready to explain why one cannot succeed ...

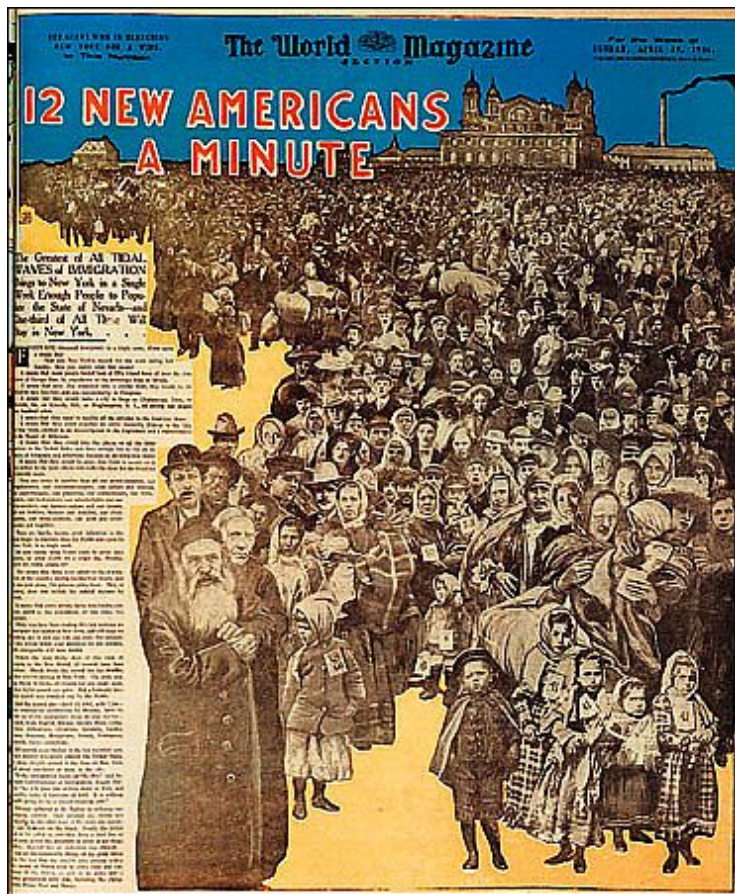


Success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as **by the obstacles which he has overcome while trying to succeed."**

He added in *The Future of the American Negro* (1899):

"We have a bright and striking example in the **history of the Jews** in this and other countries. There is, perhaps, **no race that has suffered so much**, not so much in America as in some of the countries in Europe. But **these people have clung together** ... had a certain amount of unity, pride, and love of race; and, as the years go on, **they will be more and more influential in this country**, where they were once despised, and looked upon with scorn and derision.

It is largely because the **Jewish race** has had faith in itself. Unless the **Negro** learns more and more to **imitate the Jew** in these matters, to have faith in himself, he cannot expect to have any high **degree of success.**"



By 1916, the United States population was 100 million, of which **3 million were Jews.**

During World War I, President **Woodrow Wilson** wrote:

"Whereas in countries engaged in war there are **9**

million Jews, the majority of whom are destitute of food, shelter, and clothing; driven from their homes without warning ... causing starvation, disease and untold suffering ..."



Wilson added:

"The people of the U.S. have learned with sorrow of this **terrible plight** ... I proclaim JANUARY 27, 1916, a day to make contributions for the **aid of the stricken Jewish people** to the American Red Cross."

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