

Who Are the People in Our Neighborhood?

#2 Christians

Timeline

First century CE Sectarianism (Sadducees, Pharisees, Essenes, etc), events of Jesus's life, beginning of Jewish Christians as well as Paul's mission to the Gentiles

70 CE Destruction of the Temple, rabbis decide to expel "minim"

2nd-3rd century: Christians are a persecuted minority

Early 4th century: Edict of Milan ending persecution of Christians, the Roman emperor Constantine converts to Christianity and founds the city of Constantinople: beginning of the Byzantine period

Empress Helena establishes major churches in the Land of Israel

636 Muslim conquest of the Land of Israel

1099 Crusader conquest of Jerusalem

1187 Saladin defeats Crusaders at Horns of Hattin

1191 King Richard the Lion Hearted returns with the Third Crusade and establishes the Kingdom of Jerusalem's capital in Akko

1291 Mamelukes conquer the Land of Israel completely from the Crusaders

Jews and Jewish Christians

All Israel have a portion in the world to come, for it says, "Your people, all of them righteous, shall possess the land for ever; They are the shoot that I planted, my handiwork in which I glory" ([Isaiah 60:21](#)). And these are the ones who have no portion in the world to come: (Mishnah Sanhedrin 10:1)

An objection was raised: 'No man should have any dealings with Minim, nor is it allowed to be healed by them even [in risking] an hour's life. It once happened to Ben Dama the son of R. Ishmael's sister that he was bitten by a serpent and Jacob, a native of Kefar Sekaniah, came to heal him but R. Ishmael did not let him; whereupon Ben Dama said, 'My brother R. Ishmael, let him, so that I may be healed by him: I will even cite a verse from the Torah that he is to be permitted'; but he did not manage to complete his saying, when his soul departed and he died. Whereupon R. Ishmael exclaimed, Happy art thou Ben Dama for thou wert pure in body and thy soul likewise left thee in purity; nor hast thou transgressed the words of thy colleagues, who said, (Kohelet 10) *He who breaketh through a fence, a serpent shall bite him?*" — It is different with the teaching of *Minim*, for it

draws, and one [having dealings with them] may be drawn after them: (Talmud Bavli Avodah Zarah 27b)

Encounters in the Zippori Market

Once Rabbi Eliezer was accused of heresy (*minut*) and was brought before the ruler to be judged . . . after he was released he was upset that he had been accused of heresy. His students came in to comfort him but he was not comforted. Rabbi Akiva entered and said to him: Rebbe, maybe one of the heretics said something to you and you enjoyed it? Rabbi Eliezer said, from the heavens you have reminded me! Once I was walking on the main street in Zippori and a man named Yaakov of Kfar Sakhnaya came and told me something in someone's name and I enjoyed it. (Kohelet Rabba)

Jerusalem Empty of Jews

Until today it has been forbidden for those poisonous hypocrites to enter Jerusalem because of their murder of the prophets, including the last one, the son of God. They may come only to cry, because then they are permitted to mourn the ruins of the city in exchange for payment. Just as they once bought the blood of the Messiah, now they buy their own tears and even mourning is not given them for free.

On the day that the Romans conquered and destroyed Jerusalem you can see the members of this nation, women wearing rags and old men carrying a burden of rags and years, gathering to mourn and proving by their bodies and their clothes the meaning of "the anger of the Lord." A collection of miserable rabble appears while the cross of the Lord shines and celebrates its resurrection and on the Mount of Olives is raised a cross. Meanwhile, this pathetic nation cries over its destroyed Temple and they are not worthy of pity. (Jerome (4th century CE), commentary to Zephaniah)

Byzantine Caesaria

"I am the Lord your God" Rabbi Abahu said: A king of flesh and blood may have a father, a brother, or a son to share in or dispute his sovereignty, but the Lord saith, 'I am the Lord thy God! I am the first; that is, I have no father, and I am the last; that is, I have no brother, and besides me there is no God; that is, I have no son' (Shemot Rabba 29)