

## Interfaith past, present and future

### **Past: convenience/necessity**

- Shimon “HaTzaddik,” or Shimon the Pious, is identified in Pirkei Avot (1:2) as “among the last of the Great Assembly.”
  - a) Met Alexander the Great in 332BCE. Alex wanted to set up statue in the temple. Shimon named all boys born that year Alexander instead.
- Josephus Flavius
  - a) initially fought against the Romans during the First Jewish–Roman War as head of Jewish forces in Galilee, until surrendering in 67 CE to Roman forces led by Vespasian after the six-week siege of Jotapata.
  - b) Josephus claimed the Jewish Messianic prophecies that initiated the First Roman-Jewish War made reference to Vespasian becoming Emperor of Rome. In response Vespasian decided to keep Josephus as a slave and interpreter.
  - c) After Vespasian became Emperor in 69 CE, he granted Josephus his freedom, at which time Josephus assumed the emperor's family name of Flavius.<sup>[5.]</sup> Flavius Josephus fully defected to the Roman side and was granted Roman citizenship. He became an advisor and friend of Vespasian's son Titus, serving as his translator when Titus led the Siege of Jerusalem.
  - d) Advocated on behalf of 24 rabbis captured and secured their release.
- Bustenai
  - a) Reish Galuta/Exilarch descendant of King David.
  - b) Worked with 2 Caliphs: Omar and Ali.
  - c) Married sister of Ali’s wife making them brothers in law.
- Rambam
  - a) Born Cordoba 1135.

- b) Escaped Spain 1148 after Muslim Berbers abolished protected status of Jews.
  - c) Elected Nagid of Cairo 1171.
  - d) Served as court doctor to Grand Vizier Al Qadi al Fadil, then to Sultan Saladin, after whose death he remained a physician to the royal family.
- Henry VIII
    - a) Married Catherine of Aragon 1503.
    - b) Wanted divorce 1527.
      - i) Problem was Charles V Holy Roman Emperor Cousin of Catherine pressured the Pope to stop Henry.
    - c) Bought set of Talmud from Daniel Bomburg of Venice in order to prove that marriage was initially “unlawful in the eyes of God.”
    - d) needed Rabbis to teach it to his advisors but no Jews in England since 1290 expulsion.
    - e) 2 rabbis brought in from Venice but not allowed off the ship in Thames estuary.
      - i) Rabbis came willingly because Catherine was daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella who expelled Jews from Spain.
- Oliver Cromwell
    - a) Enlisted the help of Jewish Pirate Antonio Fernandez Carvajal to conquer Jamaica.
    - b) Carvajal given first English citizenship as reward in 1657.

## **Present: common factors**

- *Nostra aetate* (Latin: *In our Time*) is the **Declaration on the Relation of the Church with Non-Christian Religions** of the Second Vatican Council. Passed by a vote of 2,221 to 88 of the assembled bishops, this declaration was promulgated on 28 October 1965, by Pope Paul VI.<sup>[2]</sup>
  - i) Section 4 absolved Jews of collective responsibility for killing Jesus.
  - ii) Section 5 called on Christians to respect all mankind regardless of faith due to them being created in the image of God (Genesis 1).
- UK Shechita + Millah
  - i) Jews and Muslims work together to prevent the ban on significant areas of shared religious practice.
- Current fight with the coroner regarding delayed burials
  - i) Jews and Muslims working together to ensure burial practices can continue.
- Christian friends of Israel
  - i) Bible based advocacy.

## **Future: A brave new world**

Dan & Ryan.

Dan & Adam.

Not basing relationships on the false narrative that we are all the same.

Respecting the individual and personal traditions and preserving the fact that we are different.

Solidifying genuine relationship.

Shared experiences respecting the traditions of each group instead of homogenising.

Being confident in solid relationships to openly disagree on matters of theology and still remain friends.

Eliminate need to walk on eggshells.