

The Jewish Destiny Series

Part 1: Why Learn History?

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1. What is our purpose?

- a. הנה מה שהורונו חכמינו זכרונם לברכה הוא, שהאדם לא נברא אלא להתענג על ה' ולהנות מזיו שכינתו שזהו התענוג האמיתי והעידון הגדול מכל העידונים שיכולים להמצא
Behold, what our sages, of blessed memory, have taught us is that man was created solely to delight in G-d and to derive pleasure in the radiance of the Divine Presence for this is the true pleasure and greatest enjoyment from all the enjoyments that you can find. **R' Moshe Chaim Lazatto, Mesilas Yesharim 1:2**
- b. The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results. **Albert Einstein**
- c. Progress, far from consisting in change, depends on retentiveness. When change is absolute there remains no being to improve and no direction is set for possible improvement: and when experience is not retained, as among savages, infancy is perpetual. Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it. **George Santayana, The Life of Reason: The Phases of Human Progress**
- d. תנחומא לך לך אות ט' סימן נתן לו הקב"ה לאברהם שכל מה שאירע לו אירע לבניו
The almighty gave Avraham a sign that everything that happened to him will happen to his children. **Tanchuma Lech L'cha 9**

2. Where do we fit in?

- a. תנא דבי אליהו ששת אלפים שנה הוי עלמא שני אלפים תוהו שני אלפים תורה שני אלפים ימות המשיח ובעונותינו שרבו יצאו מהם מה שיצאו
The school of Eliyahu taught: Six thousand years is the duration of the world. Two thousand years of chaos; two thousand years of Torah, and two thousand years of the coming of the Messiah. Due to our sins, the time that has passed has passed **Sanhedrin 97a**

3. Know there is Hashem

- a. By the life of my soul! When I contemplated these wonders [of Jewish history], they appeared greater to me than all the miracles and wonders that HaShem Yisbarach performed for our forefathers in Egypt, and the wilderness, and the Land of Israel. ***Ya'akov Emden, Intro to the Siddur***
- b. Deuteronomy (28-30)
 - i. Destruction and Exile
 - ii. Unknown language
 - iii. Scattered throughout the world
 - iv. No organization
 - v. Survive
 - vi. Return
- c. 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, and is now what he always was, exhibiting no decadence, no infirmities of age, no weakening of his parts. . . . All things are mortal but the Jew; all other forces pass, but he remains. What is the secret of his immortality? **Mark Twain, *Concerning the Jews Harper's Magazine 1899***