

SHADOWS OF THE TRIBULATION PERIOD

We are living in possibly the most dangerous time in the history of our nation. Nuclear capability has been acquired by rogue nations and sought after by terrorist groups. These groups are threatening to use these weapons of mass destruction against Israel and the United States. Where are we headed? Two biblically based messages will examine some of these developing events and how they may fit in with biblical prophecy. There will be a Q & A session after the last message.



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September 13, 2008

Cleveland, OH

October 4, 2008

Glenville, GA

October 18, 2008

Orlando/Clermont, FL

November 8, 2008

Wilmington, NC

February, 2009

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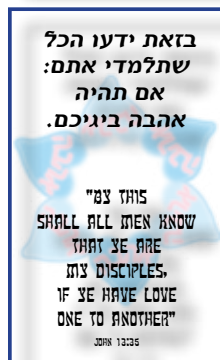


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by Mark Robinson



A higher standard.
A higher purpose.

Cover Depicts the on-going battle Satan has against Messiah. The "fruit" depicts some of the different things Satan has used to try to destroy the Jewish people. The smaller, developing fruit is symbolic of future outbreaks of anti-semitic acts.



From the Director's Desk

Dear friends,

Israel is under pressure and attack from many different entities. Thankfully, terrorist attacks in Israel are way down in numbers because of Israel's security diligence. The last two attacks were by Islamic Jihadists using bulldozers to destroy and kill in Jerusalem. Although tragic in their results, they were not as damaging as some of the bombers that were successful in past years. These two attacks show how desperate the terrorists are to inflict destruction on Israel.

There is also pressure and attacks arising from an unexpected venue. More and more evangelicals are embracing the false teaching of "replacement theology." The embrace of this erroneous teaching is producing the rotten fruit it has always produced. Israel is being vilified by some of these "replacement theology" evangelicals, and the Palestinians and their cause is being championed with a complete disregard to the historical facts of the situation and the present desire of the Palestinian community, which is the destruction of Israel as a Jewish state.

This issue of Israel's Messenger focuses on anti-Semitism and Replacement Theology. Stan Rosenthal addresses the "Root of anti-Semitism." There have been many articles and books written through the years trying to understand the cause of anti-Semitism. Most miss the mark because they don't have a biblical Christian worldview. Stan clearly identifies the root cause of anti-Semitism in his article.

I want to publically commend our graphic designer, Dolores Testerman. I asked her to prepare the cover using a tree and the "root" that causes anti-Semitism. The fruit on the tree is some of the ways anti-Semitism is manifest. She has done a superb job. If you haven't examined the cover closer, please do. You will see some of the anti-Semitic fruit produced by the number one enemy of Israel and Jewish people.

Moshe Gold's article explores the question "Is the Church the new Israel?" The answer is unequivocally no. Moshe's article does an excellent job of examining this subject.

I have written an article titled "The Church and anti-Semitism." There have been many tragic acts in the name of Christianity against Jewish people. How can anyone claiming to be a Christian commit anti-Semitic acts? The answer is the embracing of replacement theology leads to anti-Semitism. Yes, there are individual exceptions but history teaches us that this theology inevitably leads to anti-Semitism. Check out my article on this subject.

The two books we are offering this issue (see the back cover) delve into the issue of Replacement Theology in detail. "Future Jerusalem: Why Christian Anti-Judaism must be Challenged" is a recently published book written by a man from within the camp of those who usually hold to a Replacement Theology view. This makes the arguments of the author very powerful. He challenges his evangelical brethren who hold to Replacement Theology to reexamine their position in light of the Scripture and admit their error. It is a powerful book and challenge.

The second book, "Israel and the Church: The Origin and Effects of Replacement Theology" is an older but extremely helpful book on this subject. I highly recommend both books for your study.

We have our usual columns that I trust will be a blessing to you. In "Sowing the Seed... Reaping the Harvest," Jeff and Arlene Berg report on a very successful "Thank God for Israel" day in their church. This was in recognition of Israel's recent 60th anniversary. The purpose of this event is to tactfully open the door to our belief that Jesus is the Messiah. This was done in the message and the visiting afterward. If your church would like to host one of these days we can help you.

Arlene Berg shares about Rosh HaShanah and a recipe for apple noodle pudding. Try the recipe. It sounds delicious. Perhaps in the future we will produce a Jewish Awareness

Ministries cookbook from all the different recipes.

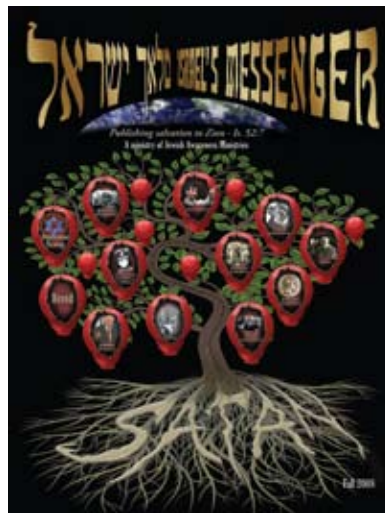
Moshe and Shoshona Gold share their final installment on God's provision for the people of Israel through His geographic provisions in this issue's "Apples of Gold" column. These columns certainly have reminded me of God's provision for His people. I hope they have encouraged you also.

By the time most of you receive this we will have closed on our new office condo in Holly Springs, NC. Many of our readers have helped make it possible to purchase this much needed facility. Thank you for your help. If you are ever in the Raleigh, NC area it would be a joy to have you, our readers, stop for a visit. The address is in the Table of Contents page. Please stop by for a cup of coffee and a visit.

Keep looking for Messiah! He is coming! And it may be sooner than most of us think!

Shalom, Shalom,

Mark Robinson



The Root of Anti-Semitism

by Stan Rosenthal

The very instant that we made reference to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, it invoked a cry from the deepest recesses of their inner-being... “where was God during our worst nightmare?”... the systematic expunging of the Jewish people and the depth of the atrocities delivered at the hands of Hitler and his minions.

Strolling through the mainly Jewish shopping areas in Toulouse, France, I and some church members to whom I was ministering spent many precious hours seeking to lovingly share Yeshua Mashiach (Jesus Christ) with what was mostly elderly shop keepers. For the most part, they bore a series of numbers engraved on their forearms. If one did not recognize from whence these Jews came, it did not take long to hear it from their agonizing hearts... they were Holocaust victims.

While this was the worst atrocity that has thus far befallen the children of the biblical Patriarchs, it does not stand as an isolated incident. In reality, this anti-Semitic behavior has been evident throughout most of the history of this uniquely chosen lot. There was hardly a time when one nation or another was not seeking to destroy Jehovah’s people and confiscate their land. And the regretful fact, according to Scripture is, it will continue right up to and through the well documented seven year Tribulation that lies ahead for the Jewish people.

Source

For one group of people to be set aside and identified for such inconceivable and inhumane treatment, lasting nearly 4000 years, it begs for an explanation. It stands to reason that there must be an underlying motive.

There are two termini points which began and will end a clash of the two most potent beings ever to exist. This conflict has been responsible for the anguish planet earth and its residents have experienced, and more to the point for this article, the root cause for anti-Semitism. This collision, which is to blame for our world being turned upside down and inside out, can be traced back to pre-creation, before the events described in Genesis chapters one and two.

Self Delusion

Somewhere and sometime prior to God’s almighty handiwork in bringing into existence the universe and all that is in it, a whole host of angels were created. Despite the fact that these marvelous incorporeal creatures share many attributes, qualities, and characteristics in common, Scripture reveals that there is an order and a hierarchy to this spirit world (Ephesians 1:21; 6:12; Colossians 1:16). One individual angel in particular was crafted by God to be superior to all the rest.

Resident within all the angels was the ability to exercise free will.

They had the capacity to choose once and only once for all eternity, whether or not to comply with the one who fashioned them. This was no different for the one who stood head over heels above the other angels. The Bible reveals that he was self deluded. His arrogance, conceit, and self-importance got the best of him. His sin of pride eroded his ability to discern the difference between the Creator and the created. He was driven to the act of mutiny against the Almighty (Isaiah 14:12-14; Ezekiel 28: 12-18). His choice was sealed along with one third of all the angels he was able to persuade to follow him (Revelation 12:4). His name was “Lucifer”, but he has been called by other recognizable names such as the serpent, the dragon, the Devil, and of course, Satan.



Satan descending to Earth by Gustave Dore

Change of Venue

With Satan cast out of heaven and forced to roam the earth, everything began to change

(Revelation 12:3-4). His appetite for power and authority was far from being satisfied with just an army of demonic angels. His desires grew as his taste for supremacy increased. He could not be out done by the Almighty if he was to reach his goal of sitting upon the throne of God.

With the advent of earth and in particular, the marvelous creation of humanity, Satan’s jealousy was getting the best of him. He now had his target. It did not take him long to form a strategy. He knew only too well that the Creator was increasing His domain by establishing a “Theocratic Kingdom” on earth. Now, not only did God have His heavenly angelic kingdom, but a new type of creature fashioned after the very image and likeness of the Godhead

was brought forth (Genesis 1:26-27; 2:7, 21-23). God immediately began communion with Adam and Eve, and they all enjoyed a mutual benefit from this relationship.

Satanocracy

Like the angels, humanity was created with free will. Latent within humanity's oldest ancestors was the ability to choose for themselves to whom they would yield their allegiance (Genesis 2:16-17; 3:6-7). Satan vaulted at this opportunity to make inroads in his battle against his nemesis, the Almighty One. Essentially, his plan was to turn mankind against their creator... in essence, begin the process of their walking to the beat of his drum (Genesis 3: 1-5; Ephesians 2:2). Satan's desire was and still is to establish his own kingdom in contrast to God's. Earth's first couple fell prey to his scheme of lying and enticement with the end result of his leading them to voluntarily become disobedient to God.

Satan's Enlightenment

Lucifer's first skirmish with God resulted in his change of residence. This time, his deceptive and manipulative input into God's direct relationship with mankind brought about a much more severe outcome... the pronouncement of his ultimate demise!

And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. (Genesis 3:15)

This became a wake up call for Satan. It was not a vague, ambiguous threat. God's judgment upon Satan was clear... a death blow to be delivered by an individual from within humanity lay in store for him. Combined with and at the very core of this event, was the first prophecy of mankind's redemption, "... and thou shalt bruise his heel".

Now armed with this knowledge, Satan began to fight back still seeking to fulfill his prideful desires. All he would have to do is beat the seed of the woman to the punch by doing away with him before he could bring to fruition God's prophecy concerning his destruction and the redemption of mankind.

Target in Sight

This accounts for Adam and Eve's first child Cain killing his brother Abel. It seemed obvious to Satan that Abel was the righteous brother and hence his future destroyer (Genesis 4:8; 1 John 3:12). Jesus had this in mind when he stated that the Devil was a murderer from the beginning (John 8:44).

Recognizing he was mistaken once Abram entered the picture, Satan reset his sights to squash the promise made to Abram: "...and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." (Genesis 12:3b), "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; ..." (Genesis 22:18a).

God was very precise in his oath made to Abraham. He stated that His pledge would not be fulfilled through Ishmael, but rather miraculously through Isaac, the promised son to Abraham and Sarah, not Abraham and Hagar (Genesis 17:16-19). This covenant then, in actuality, was passed on to Isaac (Genesis 26:3-4). Then Esau, one of Isaac's twin sons, was bypassed even though he was the older of the two. Instead, Jacob was God's sovereign choice of lineage for the promised seed.

(Genesis 28:13-14; 35:11-12). Jacob, who had his name changed by God to Israel, produced the twelve sons who ultimately became the foundation of the nation of Israel (Genesis 49:1-28).

There was no doubt by now that the sons of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the nation of Israel stood in the way of Satan's fantasy. They became his target. Destroy them and he would thrive and achieve his goal of rising above the Almighty. After all, if God could not fulfill His own prophecies due to Satan's interference, then obviously that would allow Satan to claim victory over the Almighty God.

Victory or Defeat

The death blow was delivered to Satan at the crucifixion of the Messiah in accordance with the first recorded biblical prophecy (Genesis 3:15). All of Satan's aggressive actions to keep Jesus, the promised seed, from going to the cross were totally ineffective (Matthew 2:1-4, 16; 4:1-11). Even though Satan was judged and found guilty at the cross, the carrying out of his sentence was delayed until a future time.

At Messiah's first appearance, He came as the "sacrificial lamb", judging Lucifer and providing redemption for mankind (Isaiah 53:4-8; Zechariah 9:9; 1 Corinthians 5:7). When He gloriously appears the second time, He will bind Satan and cast him into the bottomless pit for 1,000 years. And as promised, He will also establish the Millennial Kingdom for Israel and the nations (Revelation 19:11-20:3; Isaiah 9:6-7; Zechariah 14; Matthew 24-25).

The final nails in Satan's coffin take place at the end of the Millennium. He is once and for all thrust into the "eternal lake of fire" (Revelation 20:7-10). He has no power or authority over God!

Interlude

In the meantime, during the period between the two advents of Jesus, Satan is very much alive and kicking (Ephesians. 2:2; 6:11, 16; 1 Peter 5:8). Somehow, as unbelievable as it seems, he still is hallucinating. He believes that as long as there is "breath" remaining in him, he has a fighting chance to defeat the Almighty (Revelation 12:13-17).

He knows that God's final solution for him is directly tied to the Jewish people, the return of Christ and the reclaiming of His earthly Kingdom as King of kings and LORD of lords, and Jesus' heirship to the throne of David in Jerusalem.

If Satan can rid the world of the Jews, then there would be no nation of Israel, no capital city of Jerusalem, no throne of David, and no need for a Kingdom Age promised to the Jewish people. This would in turn thwart Jesus' return and would establish Satan as victor. Here lies the biblical explanation for the hatred against the Jews, since the time of the cross.

Thoughts to Ponder

Is it any wonder why God promised blessings or curses to those who bless or curse the seed of Abraham? Or why God refers to the Jewish people as the apple of His eye? Or why He commands us to pray for the peace of Jerusalem? Or why at the second coming of Christ, He will judge the nations based on how they treated or mistreated His brethren, the Jewish people? (Genesis 12:3; Zechariah 2:8; Psalm 122:6; Matthew 25:31-46)

The final thought to ponder? Where do you stand in your attitudes and actions toward the Jewish people and Israel? ☞

The Church and Anti-Semitism

by Mark Robinson

The arrival of the first day of Passover in the year 1096 was eagerly anticipated. The Jews of Trier had celebrated the night before in their homes with a Seder. Trier was a city on the Moselle River in Germany. What had been a joyous event in the Jewish community soon took on dark overtones of discouragement, fear, and mourning.

Peter the prelate, a priest from France, led thousands of crusaders on their journey to Jerusalem, through Trier. In his hand was a letter from the Jews of France instructing all Jewish communities to provide provisions for his journey and all would be okay.

The Jews of Trier paid the tribute, but it didn't matter. The crusaders attacked, broke into their houses, destroyed their Torah scrolls, and turned the Jewish community upside down.

In panic for their lives the Jews fled to the bishop's palace, a short distance from where they lived. Initially, the bishop provided protection from the thousands with mayhem in their hearts, hatred on their lips, and sharp swords in their hands.

It wasn't long before the bishop's military officers and ministers entered the palace and said to the Jews, "Thus said our lord the bishop: Convert or leave his palace." This demand was unacceptable to the Jewish residents of Trier. The subsequent unfolding of events took place over the next days and weeks, but eventually the bishop's military abandoned the palace, and it was overrun by the Crusaders.

The Crusaders took two of the leaders of the Jews and forced them to bow before an "image," the cross. The Jewish leaders mocked the cross and were killed. An attractive young Jewish girl ran from the palace and threw herself in the Moselle River and drowned instead of submitting to the Crusaders. There were some forced baptisms, but the great majority of the Jewish community was resolute in their faith and resisted. In time, the Crusaders lost interest and moved on.¹

The above incident might not sound like much in light of some of the horrific acts done against the Jewish people throughout history, but it is important because it marked an important turning point in the relationship between the "church" and the "synagogue." Although the Church² had denied Jewish people and communities some basic religious and civil rights in previous centuries, the actions at Trier opened the door to violent persecutions against the Jewish people in the name of Christianity.

Beginning of Christian Anti-Semitism

How does one justify any act of anti-Semitism, let alone violent

anti-Semitism, by those professing to follow the teachings of Jesus? Did He not tell His followers: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:35); "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you" (John 14:12); and "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you... (Matthew 5:44)."

One of the things the history of Christian anti-Semitism teaches us is theology does matter. What we believe will affect how we act. It was the development of an aberrant theology of Israel and the church in the

second through the fifth century that paved the way for the later violent acts perpetrated against the Jewish people in the name of Christianity. The door of violent anti-Semitism in the name of Christianity may have been opened at Trier, but earlier teachings by church leaders espousing a "replacement theology" undoubtedly paved the way for the actions at Trier and in later years.

The individual probably most responsible for laying the ground work for Christian anti-Semitism is one of the Church fathers, Origen. Born in Alexandria, Egypt, he lived from A.D. 185 - ca. 254. Expelled from Alexandria in A.D. 232, he moved to the area of Caesarea, capital of the Roman province of Palestine, where he would die. Nicholas De Lange states, "Origen was the founder of the science of hermeneutics in the Church. His work became the basis for subsequent Greek Christian exegesis and... its impact was felt in the Latin West as well."³

Hermeneutics, the science of interpreting the Bible, is extremely important in understanding the Bible. Differ-

ent hermeneutics explain why, for example, a Baptist can look at a passage of Scripture and come to a completely different understanding of what that passage says than a Presbyterian. Two born again, evangelical believers can hold opposite understandings of a biblical subject because of differing hermeneutics. It is primarily in the area of prophecy that differing hermeneutics bring about different conclusions. Origen introduced a Christian hermeneutic that left the basic foundational understanding of biblical interpretation of the Jewish authors of Scripture. He established a hermeneutic that would be anything but biblical in the area of prophetic understanding.

Origen's Hermeneutic

Origen's hermeneutics can be summarized in the word allegorical. Allegory is symbolic representation. The text is only symbolic of the real meaning. It should be obvious that when this type of interpretive scheme is used, the understanding of many Scripture passages is at the complete whim of the interpreter.

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Lange's book gives us some helpful insights on Origen and his biblical approach and thinking.

"It is no exaggeration to say that, for Origen, the whole of the debate between the Church and the Synagogue can be reduced to the one question of interpretation of scripture... The difference between Judaism and Christianity is that Christians perceive the mysteries which are only hinted at in the Bible, whereas Jews are only capable of a strictly literal reading of the text."⁴

"It is characteristic of Christianity to interpret the law spiritually, it is in this that the originality of the Christian message consists, and anyone, Jew or Christian, who persists in literalism fails to guard against the "leaven of the Pharisees."⁵

One can see from these quotes that Origen rejected what we would refer to as the natural or the literal interpretation of Scripture. One of the places this hermeneutic became very pronounced was in the understanding of Israel. Origen would see in almost any story passage, such as Jacob and Esau, the symbolic meaning that Israel is rejected by God and the Church has replaced her in God's blessing and providence. Again, consider some thoughts from Lange.

"The figure of Jacob is thus completely reidentified, with dramatic consequences for the traditional biblical exegesis... Since Jacob now stands for the Church, Esau, the older brother, will represent the Jews."⁶

"Thus, using a technique derived ultimately from the commentators on Homer and from Jewish allegorists such as Philo, Origen sets out to demonstrate that the Old Testament belongs not to the Jews but to the Church, that it is, in fact, when properly understood, a text-book of Christianity, and that it is essentially at one with the New Testament and the whole of Christian teaching. The arguments based on the non-literal interpretation can be used against the unbelief of the Jews, but they are also useful in replying to attacks on the Old Testament from various sources, and in silencing those within the Church who favour a literal interpretation."⁷

Origen's interpretive style would make him no friend of the Jews. He, more than likely, neither anticipated, nor would have condoned, what developed over the next 1,800 years in the Churches treatment of the Jews. Nevertheless, as Lange summarized, "He [Origen] lost no opportunity, in his sermons, to attack Jewish literalism, and his powerful invective no doubt made its contribution to the later tragic persecution of Jews by Christians."⁸

Allegorical fruit

The result of the introduction of allegorical interpretation would result in some rotten fruit. Statements were made by some of the Church fathers that have no basis in sound biblical exegesis or biblical love.

Justin Martyr wrote in the second century, "For the

prophetical gifts remain with us, even to the present time. And hence you ought to understand that [the gifts] formerly among your nation have been transferred to us."⁹

The Epistle of Barnabas, which circulated around the beginning of the second century, stated that Christians, not Jews, were actually the heirs of God's Covenant with Abraham. To those who believed the Jewish people still had a future through the Covenant, the epistle harshly stated, "Take heed now to yourselves, and not to be like some adding largely to your sins," and saying, "The covenant is both theirs and ours. But they [the Jews] thus finally lost it."¹⁰

The belief that the Church had replaced Israel became common among the professing Church. Through the centuries the polemic against Jews became more and more strident. One of the renowned orators of the early church, Chrysostom, patriarch of Constantinople, preached seven invective filled sermons against the Jews in Antioch in A.D. 387. Here are a couple of excerpts.

"The Jews are the most worthless of all men. They are perfidious murderers of Christ. They worship the devil, their religion is a sickness. The Jews are the odious assassin of Christ and for killing God there is no expiation possible, no indulgence or pardon. Christians may never cease vengeance, and the Jew must live in servitude forever. God always hated the Jews. It is incumbent upon all Christians to hate the Jews."¹¹

"Chrysostom in his seventh sermon began, "Have you had enough of the fight against the Jews? Or do you wish me to take up the same topic today? Even if I have already had much to say on it, I still think you want to hear the same thing again. The man who does not have enough of loving Christ will never have enough of fighting those who hate Christ [the Jews]."¹²

Martin Luther in 1543 wrote a treatise titled "*On the Jews and their lies*." Here is some excerpts.

"What shall we Christians do with this rejected and condemned people, the Jews?... I shall give you my sincere advice. First, to set fire to their synagogues or schools and to bury and cover with dirt whatever will not burn, so that no man will ever again see a stone or cinder of them. This is to be done in honor of our Lord and of Christendom... Second, I advise that their houses also be razed and destroyed... Third, I advise that all their prayer books and Talmudic writings, in which such idolatry, lies, cursing, and blasphemy are taught, be taken from them. Fourth, I advise that their rabbis be forbidden to teach henceforth on pain of loss of life and limb... Fifth, I advise that safe-conduct on the highways be abolished completely for the Jews. For they have no business in the country-side since they are not lords, officials, tradesmen or the like. Let them stay at home... Sixth, I advise that usury be prohibited to them, and that all cash and treasure of silver and gold be taken from them and put aside for safe-keeping... Seventh, I recommend putting a flail, an ax, a hoe, a spade, a distaff, or a spindle into the hands of young, strong Jews and Jewesses and letting them earn their bread in the sweat of their brow."¹³

Quote after quote could be marshaled to show how the Church



If we want to have an effective audience with Jewish people about Jesus being their Messiah and Savior, we first must make certain we have a biblical love and position on Israel and Jewish people.

Is the Church the New Israel?

by Moshe Gold

When we have guests visiting Israel, we take them to a store in Jerusalem owned by two Orthodox Jewish men who have become authoritative spokesmen in Jewish apologetics and welcome conversation regarding the Jewish perception of Christianity. Most of our guests are staggered to discover that Judaism views Christianity as hostile to it; believing that it has replaced Israel as the blessed Nation of God.

This perception is not new and is not limited to those who do not follow Jesus. David Baron was a Judeo-Christian Bible teacher, expositor, author, and missionary to his people. He lived in the latter half of the 19th into the 20th Century. In one of his essays, he wrote that Christians, "when reading in the Scriptures about exceeding great and precious promises which God made to Israel, say... now Israel means no longer Israel but the Church which has entered into their inheritance."¹

My wife, Shoshona, and I have encountered similar statements from modern Christians that substantiate this view that the Church considers itself to be the new Israel; a spiritual Israel, the perfected Israel that God has always envisioned.

Who is Israel?

Those who follow this course claim to represent the historic position. Indeed, this has been the majority opinion of Christendom for most of its almost 2000 years on earth. They base their view on the allegoric or spiritual method of interpretation which they apply to the Scriptures. In this way the literal meaning is the least important while a deeper, hidden, and spiritual meaning is sought.

Those espousing this belief state that Israel has rejected God, which resulted in Him having divorced them. In their place He married the Church, which is non-Jewish and was always present, prefigured in and represented by the faithful of Israel until the time it was fully revealed. The chief failing of Israel that led to her being cast aside was her attempt to perfect the flesh, which is impossible, while the Church having crucified the flesh is perfected in the spirit.

Foundational to this position is the conviction that the physical realm is lower in order while the spiritual realm is the highest. So, the people of Israel, a physical ethnicity, are lower in rank than the Church, which is a spiritual body. Another factor is the belief that as more revelation is given, the newer becomes the interpreter of the older.

Furthermore, it is understood that the relationship between these two, Israel and the Church, is explained as the deeper spiritual meaning of Jacob and Esau of

*That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro,
and carried about with every wind of doctrine,
by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness,
whereby they lie in wait to deceive;
But speaking the truth in love,...
that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk,
in the vanity of their mind, Having the understanding darkened,
being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance
that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:*

Ephesians 4:14-18



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whom it is stated, the older would serve the younger (Genesis 25:23-26). Bible history notes Jacob, who is Israel, as the younger and the son of blessing. However, in this case, Israel which is older than the Church is equated with Esau, the elder brother, and the Church with Jacob. Israel, as Esau, is to serve the younger, the Church, which is spiritual. It is the Church that continues in the place of Jacob and inherits all the blessings of the Father, while Israel becomes the enemy of the Church and of God.

Accordingly, Israel's rejection of God resulted in a perpetual state of denunciation and chastisement in which they are under the control of the Devil and in league with him against God and the Church. Some, claiming the words of Jesus (John 8:44), say that this has always been the case with Jewish people who were not part of the faithful remnant, the Church. Although some of this belief system has been adapted to best fit acceptable modern world thinking, there still remains a strong rhetoric that espouses God's curses upon the Jewish people, whom many still consider as the earthly children of the Devil.

Moreover, as a spiritual body higher in rank than carnal Israel, Jewish people are relegated to perpetual subservience to Christians. Some do not believe that Jewish people can enter the redemption; others believe that this debilitating physical condition can be escaped only when Jewish people are transformed into the Israel of God, the Church. Among the latter are those who with compassion seek to convert Jewish people to Christianity and also those who do not believe in reaching the Jewish people at this time with the Gospel, citing a future mass conversion of Israel to Christianity at the beginning of the Kingdom of God, a Christian Kingdom.

A minority of Christians dispute this claim and volumes have been passionately written by both sides applying Scripture to prove their point. The issue cannot be resolved by force of debate but by examining the foundations on which these claims are based. If the foundation is solid then what is built upon it will stand; if not then it must be discarded as faulty and as leading people astray.

What was the foundation of interpretation used by the Apostles?

According to the Apostles, the Bible was revealed over time as God chose a number of different men to pen His composition (Hebrews 1:1) under the inspiration and oversight of the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21). It was written in a known human language conveying thoughts, concepts, and emotions. The words that make up sentences and books are to be understood in their

normal grammatical manner as they capture and express the intent of God, whether it is in words of prophecy, history, or poetry.

In order to insure our proper understanding of the words of the Bible, we are instructed not to take a verse out of context (2 Peter 1:20). Nor are we to take a word or a phrase on its own, but rather in conjunction with the same and consistent usage of that word or phrase throughout the chapter, book, other books penned by the same human author, and then the entire Bible (1 Corinthians 2:13).

As a work of progressive revelation, any newer disclosure supplements older revelation (where older revelation on a subject exists); giving more information about it and giving us fuller understanding (Hebrews 1:1). The newer revelation does not replace the older revelation by its virtue of being the latest or newest. Just as the historical books of the Bible (including the Law) are factual, the nature of prophetic revelation is literal, since exactly fulfilled revelation is contained in the historical books as well as the Prophets and in almost all of the New Testament.

The overwhelming testimony of the New Testament writers, Jesus, and the Jewish Bible confirm that the plain understanding of the Scriptures is the correct approach.

Accordingly, the Church, which has no earthly homeland but looks for the New Jerusalem (Hebrews 12:22-24; Revelation 21:1-3), is taken from every people and linguistic group (1 Peter 2:9-10; Revelation 5:9) and composed of born again Jewish and non-Jewish individuals (Ephesians 2:19; Galatians 6:16). Israel is the physical ethnicity descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to whom God has given distinct promises that include perpetual custodianship of the Land of Israel and a future earthly Kingdom; the Kingdom for Israel.

The New Testament confirms the words of the Prophets concerning the glorious future for the Jewish people, their continued relationship with the Father, and His love for them, even in this present age (Romans 11:25-29). Israel is still the source of God blessing all nations of the Earth, and those among the various ethnicities who recognize the exalted position of Israel will in turn be exalted by God (Romans 11:11-15; cf. Genesis 12:1-3).

In very broad terms, Israel and the Church share time and space on earth, and even similarities in purpose. Both are called upon to be a light to the Nations; Israel as a witness of the reality of God (Isaiah 43:10) and the Church as a witness to the reality that the Messiah of God has appeared (Acts 1:8). Both have a glorious future; the Church as inheritor of eternal spiritual promises having physical ramifications, and Israel as the inheritor of physical promises that will yield eternal spiritual blessings. Although in the Scriptures there appear to be similarities in how the Father regards them, they are uniquely different.

Using the interpretive tools by which the Bible validates itself, we discover that the Church is not the new Israel, not a spiritual form of Israel, and has not taken the place of Israel.

When and how did the majority of Christianity determine it was Israel?

The Scriptures teach us to build on Christ (1 Corinthians 10:3-15) who confirms the witness of the Prophets and has given authority to the Apostles. (Ephesians 2:20-22). This is the true foundation. This foundation was undermined with the absence of authoritative and centralized Jewish leadership in the Church, especially



Continued from page 10

after the failed Second Jewish Revolt against Rome (A.D. 135). This interpretive and instructive void led to the rise of apologists not trained by the Apostolic Church nor understanding God's unconditional love for the Jewish people.

The authoritative center of instruction shifted to Alexandria,



**Wear your Bible glasses
when comparing scripture
with scripture.**


*If ye fulfil the royal law
according to the scripture,
Thou shalt love thy neighbour
as thyself, ye do well:*

James 2:8

Egypt, where, while attempting to reach the non-Jewish Hellenistic Gentile population with the Gospel, the New Testament message was synthesized through Greek philosophic thought. To a lesser extent, this had already been done by a Jewish commentator named Philo in an effort to express certain Judaic theological concepts in a Hellenistic manner. However, the difference now was the interpretation of the entire Bible according to the rules of neo-Platonism and Aristotle, rather than those followed by the Apostles. The basis for this interpretive technique was to assume the writing to be an allegory. By doing so, the Bible was interpreted exactly like Greco-Roman mythological writing.

One of the leaders of the Alexandrian school was Origen (A.D. 185-254). Although Hellenistic Christian writers before him already interpreted the Scriptures using this method, which resulted in the Church replacing Israel as the blessed people of God, he is credited with developing the rules for allegorical interpretation. He surmised that each passage has three meanings; the fleshly, psychic, and spiritual. He instructed to avoid the lowest meaning, the normal reading, and seek guidance and inspiration to discern the highest meaning, the allegorical, "the spiritual." His instruction validated the violation of every rule of interpretation used by the Apostles, Jesus, and the Prophets.

Highly acclaimed, he set the basis for others such as Augustine and John Chrysostom, whose anti-Judaic bias was given credibility as theology under this false method of interpretation. Later Church leaders including those of the Catholic, Lutheran, Calvinist, Protestant Churches, as well as some Baptist and Evangelical Churches would persist in this error. By doing so, they have helped to polarize Israel and Church, contributed to the proliferation of anti-Judaic rhetoric, and unwittingly become a stumbling block between Israel and the Gospel message.

Have you? 

Endnote:

1. David Baron, *Israel's Inalienable Possessions*, re-printed American Board of Missions to the Jews 1943

Continued from page 8

has viewed the Jew and spewed forth hate, instead of Christian love and compassion. From Origen, through Augustine, continuing with Martin Luther, and into today the venom of an allegorical based "replacement theology" has caused many in the name of Christ to despise Jewish people and at times embrace violent anti-Semitism.

Unfortunately, things are not a lot better today. Many in the Christian world still hold to the view of Origen. Their hermeneutic comes from Origen and is as flawed now as it was 1,800 years ago.

Final Considerations

Replacement theology influences each of us either directly or indirectly. Melanie Phillips, a Jewish columnist with the *London Daily Mail* reported on attending a discussion group of Jews and Christians in 2002 concerning the hostility of churches toward Israel. "...the Churches hostility had nothing to do with Israel's behavior towards the Palestinians. This was merely an excuse. The real reason for the growing antipathy, according to the Christians at that meeting, was the ancient hatred of Jews rooted deep in Christian theology and now on widespread display once again. A doctrine going back to the early Church fathers, suppressed after the Holocaust, had been revived under the influence of the Middle East conflict. This doctrine is called replacement theology. In essence, it says that the Jews have been replaced by the Christians in God's favor, and so all God's promises to the Jews, including the land of Israel, have been inherited by Christianity."¹⁴

There is a growing tide of animosity against Israel and ultimately, as history has shown, Jewish people by Christians who hold to a replacement theology view of Scripture. This is inexcusable for anyone who calls himself a Christian.

Jewish people have a difficult time embracing Jesus as their Messiah. There are many reasons for this, but in no small part, replacement theology has produced some rotten fruit that to Jewish people, as well as Christians who recognize God's love and promises to national Israel, stinks.

If we want to have an effective audience with Jewish people about Jesus being their Messiah and Savior, we first must make certain we have a biblical love and position on Israel and Jewish people. Replacement theology fails this initial requirement. Where does your belief system and church line up? Is it with the truth of the Scriptures or an allegorical understanding of the Church and Israel? If the answer is allegorical understanding, isn't it time for a change?



Endnotes:

1. Account adapted from James Carroll's, *Constantine's Sword*, Houghton Mifflin Company, pg. 246-247.
2. The use of church in this article does not refer to the biblical "ecclesia," erroneously translated church in our Bibles, but primarily to the Roman Catholic Church.
3. Nicholas De Lange, *Origen and the Jews*, Cambridge University Press, page 34
4. *Ibid.* Pg. 82-83
5. *Ibid.* Pg. 87
6. *Ibid.* Pg. 80
7. *Ibid.* Pg. 79
8. *Ibid.* Pg. 135
9. <http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/justinmartyr-dialoguetrypho.html>; CHAPTER LXXXII
10. <http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/barnabas-roberts.html>; Chapter IV
11. Paul E. Grosser & Edwin G. Halperin, *Anti-Semitism: The Causes and Effects of a Prejudice*, Citadel Press, pg. 78
12. <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/chrysostom-jews6.html>; Homily VII
13. Luther's Works, Volume 47: *The Christian in Society IV*, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971). pp 268-293
14. Melanie Phillips, "Christians Who Hate Jews," *The Spectator* (Feb. 16, 2002) quoted from Barry Horner's book, *Future Israel: Why Christian Anti-Judaism Must Be Challenged*, page 35-36.



Sowing the Seed . . . Reaping the Harvest

Thank God for Israel Night ✨ Celebrating Israel's 60 Years

Jeff and Arlene Berg

Sunday evening, June 29th, approximately 215 people, including 40 from the Jewish community (believers and non-believers) gathered together at Grace Baptist Church to celebrate Israel's 60th Anniversary as a modern nation.

A large Israeli flag greeted people outside the church entrance. There was also an Israeli flag in the sanctuary near the American flag. Large banners of famous sites in Israel were inside the church entrance. Attendees saw a beautiful bulletin board with a Jerusalem stone background. Against this background were Scripture verses printed on scrolls. These verses were written in Hebrew and in English, and they told of God's promises to Israel. A large map of Israel in Jerusalem stone was mounted in the center of these verses. Patty, a very faithful partner in the ministry, and her friend Marsha, a Jewish believer, designed this lovely display.

A PowerPoint of continuous pictures of Israel ran on the screen in the sanctuary until the program started. The program began with Grace Baptist Church Men's Quartet singing the American National Anthem and HaTikvah, the Israeli National Anthem. Everyone in the sanctuary continued to stand as they listened to the sound track of the UN vote in 1947 declaring Israel a nation. Suddenly, a thunderous applause erupted from the congregation!

The energy from the audience really moved Rabbi Shalom as he came up to the platform to pray for "The Welfare of the State of Israel." He also said from the heart, "We knew Jeff and Arlene Berg were unique, now we know there are a church full of people like Jeff and Arlene Berg."

Yitzhak, the Israeli representative in the area, gave a fine message on Israel's accomplishments over the past 60 years and what Israel faces today. He also challenged the people to pray for the release of the three captive Israeli soldiers being held from the war in 2006. He and his family were in awe of the overwhelming love they felt from the church.

Israeli music was interspersed throughout the program. Erika, a Gentile from an area church, sang very well. The Lord opened the door to bring Linda, a violinist with the metropolitan Symphony Orchestra, who is a Jewish believer. Linda also invited a modern Orthodox Jewish friend, Nancy, to sing with Erika. Our faithful church piano player, Marybeth, contributed to the group. The music really brought a taste of Israel into the program.

John Pisarek, a member of Grace Baptist Church and a Jewish believer, gave a very challenging message on "God's Commitment to Israel." John shared how his parents, who

were Holocaust survivors, eventually moved to Israel in 1946. He shared how a Christian in Israel shared Bible prophecy with them, and how they came to know the "God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." During John's message, Rabbi Shalom, who was sitting across from us, sat on the edge of his seat, intent on every word. A prominent Jewish doctor and his wife who also sat across from us also listened very intently! The Spirit of God certainly captivated the whole room. John Pisarek's message challenged the hearts of many Jewish people. His testimony sparked numerous witnessing opportunities during the refreshment time. We would like to highlight a couple of these.

Rabbi Shalom: Rabbi Shalom was very moved by the whole program. He was very interested in the spiritual backgrounds of John Pisarek's parents. He asked Janet, John's wife: "Was his father a Christian?" "Was his mother a Christian?" "Was his mother Jewish?" In Judaism, if the mother is Jewish, the child is considered Jewish, even if the father is not. Janet shared that both of his parents were Jewish. Then Rabbi Shalom wanted to know how John's father had become a Christian. Janet shared that he had read the prophecies concerning the Messiah in the Hebrew Scriptures and saw that Jesus fulfilled these. The rabbi listened intently to Janet's answers and thanked her.

Yitzhak and Zhava: Our pastor, Grant Abe, had a wonderful visit with Yitzhak and his wife, Zhava. The following are some of the highlights. Zhava asked him, "Why do Baptist churches love and support Israel? In Israel, they never told us that there are so many Christians that love Israel." Pastor Abe answered, "I am a Gentile, but I have Jewish roots." "You mean Jesus, don't you?" Yitzhak asked. "Yes," Pastor Abe continued. "I have access to God through Jesus." Yitzhak and Zhava seem very open to spiritual matters. Last March, Yitzhak had spoken in another Baptist church. He and Zhava could not get over the love that was shown them there also. After the service that morning, Zhava asked if she could buy a pew Bible. One was gladly given her, and she said to us, "We believe we should read the whole Bible."

Shmuel: After the program, we took Yitzhak, Zhava, and their three children to see our Jewish Roots Sunday School classroom. They were amazed and blessed! Suddenly, Shmuel, their 10 year old son, wrote the following in Hebrew on the blackboard: "Thank you very much.

With love,
the Alon family." ✨



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Apples of Gold

...the land, whither ye go to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven: A land which the LORD thy God careth for: the eyes of the LORD thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year. Deuteronomy 11:11-12



Moshe and Shoshona Gold

The land of Israel does not have the abundant supply of water found in Egypt along the Nile River. Israel relies on small rivers (more like streams), wells, and the heavy summer dew that is formed every night to meet its needs for water. Folks here realize that it is God who watches over this land to keep it watered and able to sustain life.

God, foreknowing that this tiny coastal region on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea would be home to His chosen ethnicity Israel, shaped the landscape in order to sustain life here in ways that would show His reality and blessing upon His people. In turn it would demonstrate their need to rely on Him and live in a way that would invite His continued blessing.


The topography of Israel is a near perfect gravity fed water system that is able to irrigate the land, while providing water for the Sea of Galilee and for the Dead Sea! The rain and snow that collects in the higher elevations of Mt. Hermon, the Anti-Lebanon mountains and the Upper Galilee creates rivers that form the source of the Jordan River. The Dan River is the major contributor together with the Banias, Sneer and many small streams flowing from the mountains into the Jordan Rift Valley. This valley runs from Lebanon to Eilat. The valley begins in the mountains, flows into the Hula and brings water to the Sea of Galilee, which is 700 feet below sea level. From there the Jordan River snakes its way south until it empties into the Dead Sea, 1300 feet below sea level. The mountains of the lower Galilee are rolling rather than stark and the run-off water from the rains settles in between them irrigating wide fields, making them productive.

The geology of the land was deposited at the earth's creation and when the topographic changes took place at the time of the flood, the mineral composition resulted in the formation of natural underground cisterns that save water and hidden channels leading it diverse places in need of water. Also shaped were fertile plains and valleys where the top soil in many places is 300 feet deep. Framed between the lower Galilee mountains to the north and the Central and Carmel mountain ranges to the south is the Valley of Jezreel, one of the recipients of this rich blessing of God.

The long coastal plain that runs from Tel Dor to Tel Aviv also has rich soil that is watered by rain and seasonal rivers. The soil composition holds moisture at a level of six feet deep. The sand dune formations along the shore keep the west wind from blowing the sand into the plain, clogging it and making it too salty for cultivation. In fact it is just perfect for citrus fruits and that is exactly what is grown in abundance there! During the summers, moist air blowing in from the Mediterranean Sea forms heavy dew each night that sustains other summer crops grown along this 50 mile long and 10 mile wide area.

In the Negev where little rain falls there are wells tapping the aquifer that originates in the north. These underground streams and cisterns provide the means by which the desert has flourished.

God superintending His land for the sake of His people is an awesome reality and a privilege to experience.

Editor's note: This is the concluding article dedicated to God providing a lush area amid the barren region of the Middle East in which to place His people Israel. 



KOSHER



by Arlene Berg

Jewish people will observe Rosh HaShanah, the Jewish New Year, sundown September 29 to sundown October 1. Rosh HaShanah is the biblical Feast of Trumpets in Leviticus 23:24-25. On this holiday, after reciting countless prayers for forgiveness, Jewish people hope to be inscribed in the “Book of Life” for the coming year. Ten days later (October 9) is Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, the holiest day in Judaism. After fasting and again reading many, many prayers for forgiveness, Jewish people hope to have their names sealed in that “Book of Life.” How sad this religious ritual is for many very sincere people. No amount of fasting, good deeds, or prayers will enable them to have their names sealed in God’s Book of Life. Psalm 143:2b states “...for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.” Speaking of Heaven, Revelation 21:27 states, “And there shall in no way enter into it anything that defileth, neither he that worketh abomination, or maketh a lie, but they who are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life.” Isaiah 53 is abundantly clear that the forgiveness of sins comes through Messiah. It is when we accept Messiah Jesus as our Messiah and Savior, our name is written in the Book of Life.

On Rosh HaShanah, apples are dipped in honey and eaten to symbolize a sweet, happy, prosperous New Year. Honey and apples are used in many Rosh HaShanah recipes, such as honey cakes and apple cakes.

The eating of apples has many meanings in Judaism. In mystical literature, many times an apple orchard is pictured as a symbol of the Divine Presence. This is evident in Song of Solomon 2:3 where it talks about the apple’s sweetness – a lovely picture of the sweetness of God’s presence! Proverbs 25:11 attests to the beauty of the apple. Again, this is symbolic of a hope for a sweet, happy New Year.

As you try the recipe for apple noodle pudding, please remember to pray for the Jewish people, especially during this time of year. How we long for them to have their sins forgiven and to sit down “under his shadow with great delight,

“He whose fruit is sweet to my taste.”
 (Song of Solomon 2:3b).

Apple Noodle Pudding

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| 1 lb. broad noodles | 4 baking apples, peeled, cored and diced |
| 6 eggs, separated | 4 T lemon juice |
| 1 C sugar | no-stick vegetable spray |
| 1 t amaretto | 6 T margarine, melted |
| 1 C raisins | |

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Prepare noodles according to package directions. Drain in colander. In large bowl, combine egg yolks, sugar, amaretto and lemon juice, beating until mixture thickens and appears creamy. Add noodles, apples and raisins, mixing gently. In another bowl, beat egg whites until stiff. Fold into noodle mixture. Coat a 10 x 15-inch oven-proof pan with vegetable spray. Pour noodle pudding into pan. Drizzle margarine over the top. Bake for one hour, until casserole bubbles and top browns lightly. Serve immediately.



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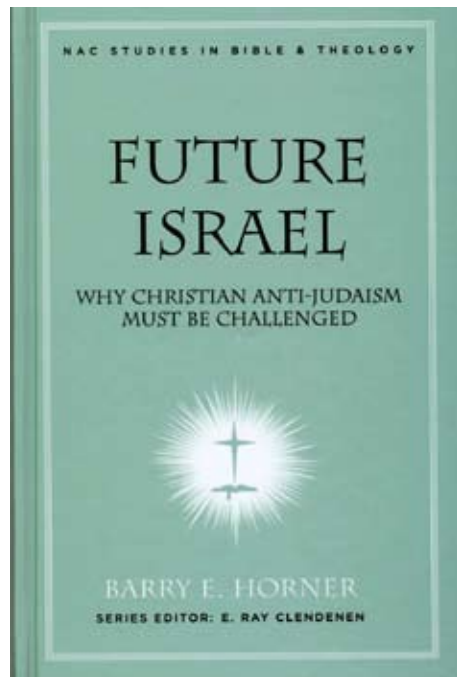
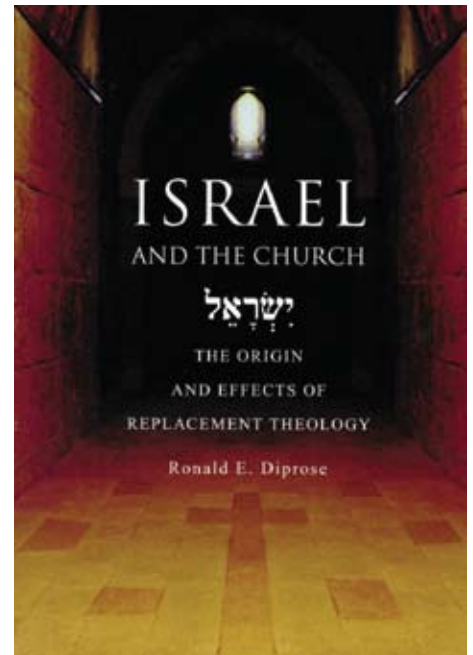
Israel and the Church: The Origin and Effects of Replacement Theology

by Ronald E. Diprose

Modern Israel and its relations with its Arab neighbors has been conspicuously in the daily news ever since World War II. Until that time, the concept of "Israel," and a continuing Jewish people, had been hovering in the distant background of Christian thought and doctrine across the post-apostolic era.

In this important work Dr. Diprose demonstrates the uniqueness of Israel and its special place in the divine plan. By carefully reviewing relevant New Testament and post-apostolic writings, the author traces the origin and development of "Replacement Theology" - the concept that the Church has completely and permanently replaced ethnic Israel in the outworking of God's plan throughout history - challenging its origin and role in the development of Christian thought on the future of ethnic Israel. If you want to understand the development of "Replacement Theology," its errors, and, most importantly, Israel's place in God's redemptive purpose, this 264 page soft cover book will be very helpful.

Price \$17.00 Shipping \$5.00 for first book and \$2.00 for each additional item.



Future Israel: Why Christian Anti-Judaism Must Be Challenged

by Barry E. Horner

Replacement theology, sometimes called "supersessionist theology," is the view that the church has replaced or superseded Israel in God's redemptive plan. Author Barry Horner shows the prevalence of anti-Judaic teaching from church leaders in the past and present, and argues that it is contrary to the Bible, especially the writings of Paul the apostle.

Dr. Horner also shows the negative impact anti-Judaism has on the church as well as on Jewish evangelism. He argues that the presence of Jewish believers in the church does not adequately fulfill the biblical promises. Rather, God's promise still stands of a regenerated nation of Israel in the land under its acknowledged Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. A unifying teaching of Scripture, he says, is a Judeo-centric eschatology. One reviewer says: "This is a tremendous book, well researched, thoroughly documented and dealing with a vital biblical principal, one that offers a death blow to Amillennialism and its treatment of the Jew, stealing all of Israel's promises and claiming them for the Church (but leaving the curses, of course, for the Jews)... If you fail to get this book you are going to miss a key publication in the early twenty-first century! And it is priced at a bargain for a hardbound book of nearly 400 pages."

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