

A resource of Christian Witness to Israel (N. America)
to challenge, assist and equip in local Jewish evangelism.

THE AC COURSE



Awakening
the
Conscience
of the
Christian
Church

CONTEMPORARY CONNECTIONS

1: THE CHALLENGES TO CONNECTING

1a THE SEPARATED AND THE ASSIMILATED

COMPLETE COURSE OUTLINE

The Biblical Burden for Jewish Mission The Hope throughout History for Jewish Redemption Contemporary Connections for Jewish Salvation

THE BIBLICAL BURDEN

<i>The MOTIVE</i>	<i>Psalm 67</i>	<i>The Praying patriarchs</i>
	<i>Romans 9-11</i>	<i>The Praying apostle</i>
<i>The METHODOLOGY</i>	<i>Isaiah 63</i>	<i>The Longing of the prophet</i>
	<i>Luke 4</i>	<i>The Liberation of The Prophet</i>
<i>The MISSIONOLOGY</i>	<i>2Cor 3&4</i>	<i>The Ministry that is glorious</i>
	<i>Acts 20-22</i>	<i>The Ministry that is blessed</i>
<i>The MANDATE</i>	<i>Psalm 150</i>	<i>The Holy hallelujahs</i>
	<i>Rev 4&5</i>	<i>The Cosmic chorus</i>

THE HOPE OF HISTORY

<i>PROTECTIVE PROVIDENCE</i>	- <i>Past, Present, Future</i>
<i>PIRATES OF PROVIDENCE</i>	- <i>Expulsion and Expansion</i>
<i>REPLACEMENT AND DEFACEMENT</i>	- <i>Forgotten and Forsaken</i>
<i>REFORMATION AND RE-EMBRACEMENT</i>	- <i>The Puritan Hope</i>
<i>The LIE OF THE LAND</i>	- <i>Too much love will kill you</i>
<i>REWRITING THE RAPTURE</i>	- <i>Confusion and correction</i>

CONTEMPORARY CONNECTIONS

<i>The CHALLENGES TO CONNECTING</i>	<i>The separated and the assimilated</i>
	<i>The atheist and the evangelical</i>
<i>The FRAGRANCE OF FRIENDSHIP</i>	<i>The aroma of Christ</i>
<i>The WISDOM OF WORDS</i>	<i>(Un)common language</i>
<i>RABBINIC REINTERPRETATIONS</i>	<i>Jewish objections</i>
	<i>Peter and Pentecost</i>

GENERAL GUIDELINES:

1. As you begin each study, pray for the Lord's grace and wisdom.
2. Discipline yourself to set aside one hour for each paper.
3. Keep a personal 'physical' notebook.
4. Begin with the questions and in your own notebook, answer each question in one sentence, prior to engaging in the study.
5. Read through the paper in one sitting, with note-taking.
6. Answer the questions again; this time, a paragraph each.

Feel free to send your answers to me, ask further questions, or simply make appropriate comments.

Stephen Atkinson: Director of Ministry, CWI (N America)
cwinamerica@gmail.com

CONTEMPORARY CONNECTIONS

1: THE CHALLENGES TO CONNECTING

1a THE SEPARATED AND THE ASSIMILATED

QUESTIONS:

1. How many Jewish people do you know? What is the nature of your 'connection' and how could you make it deeper?
2. What do you believe are necessary general principles for cross cultural, Jewish evangelism?
3. What is generally the greatest fear of a Jewish person?
4. What is generally the greatest desire of a Jewish person?
5. What is your greatest fear and greatest desire in 'connecting'?

Having been biblically burdened.... having seen something of the hope of history... now we consider intentionally making contemporary connections.

1. CHALLENGES TO CONNECTING

This 'AC course' is an upgrade and expansion on a smaller program we began in 2013 called '**Connecting with the Cohens**'. It is to the subject of 'connecting' we now turn. It is not enough to have a biblical mandate if we do not put such into our daily lives. It is not enough to have been thrilled by a historic optimism concerning God's yet unfulfilled purposes for His ancient people. We must bring Bible and History into the present, and my appeal therefore, (and our assistance by way of this resource), is: - Let us connect, in the real world of contemporary Jewish America.

It is clearly evident that since 6 million Jewish people in the USA live alongside 20-30 million(?) Bible believing Christians (of varying spiritual depths), there **MUST** be interaction. (As we have considered providential history, this statistic of Christian/Jewish population is unique historically and geographically - never and nowhere, has it been like this!)

Perhaps you have had a life long relationship with your Jewish doctor, Chaim Wertz, or the family dentist Dr Rosenstein; maybe you've had a long-time friendship since High School with Becky Tallman, or your go-to lawyer is Viktor Reuben, or your beloved music teacher, the noted Mr Shmuel Bernstein. Whatever the nature of your existing relationship with Jewish people, we want to help you make sensitive and trusting connections for long haul evangelism.

A Jewish believer, who has recently gone to glory, emailed me (Aug 8th, 2018) concerning that manner of our sensitive outreach:

I remember the years in college leading up to my conversion to Christianity. The Christians would tell me that if I did not believe in Jesus I would be damned by God forever. Well they put it a bit more crudely. This was quite offensive. At the time the entire concept of Jesus was very foreign. It took years for me to put it all together. Now looking back, the Christians may have been correct, but their approach was terrible. That is why there needs to be good educational material for the uneducated Jewish person that is not offensive yet stimulates thinking even if they initially disagree. Tender logic is what I call it. (N Bloomberg)

Similarly, my CWI colleague and Jewish believer Mitch Tepper remembers how he was first approached by a Christian missionary with the scare tactic of the immanence of death. 'You might die tonight!' Strangely that rather insensitive approach did actually make Mitch search for the truth! Truth is, there is no cookie cutter method and all our instructive advice is to be put into the matrix of your own personality, your friend's personality, and thus our connections and interactions will come forth not as a standardized formula, but with sanctified sensitivity, yes, 'tender logic'.

Furthermore there are so many different viewpoints in the Jewish population, that it is impossible in our brief course to cover all the possible conversations that might ensue in your 'connecting'. It is too often said, that if you get two Jewish people together you will get three opinions. Truth is, you might get 57 varieties of opinion!

So our coverage of different views will have to be selective. Initially we are going at two main groupings within the overall spectrum of belief in modern Jewishness, which we have entitled for this study: 'The Separated and the Assimilated'. They approximate to the (Ultra) Orthodox and the Observant. Then in our next study we will consider our connections with the Agnostic and Atheist.

1a THE SEPARATED AND THE ASSIMILATED

INTRODUCTION – General Principles

(i) Tender Logic

All too often Gentile Christianity has approached the matter of Jewish unbelief with arrogance and false assumptions. 'Why can't they see it? What's wrong with you people? It's obvious, it's Jesus! And why are they all liberal?!'

The problem with this approach is that it is arrogant, and it assumes there is nothing more to solving the Jewish problem than logically convincing them that Jesus is their Messiah.

Tender logic is something which engages in love, gains a trust, and develops the conversation, yes, logically. As we shall see in this 'connecting' studies, we must enter into a relationship, a friendship before we are permitted to go further with people into that 'private' realm of spirituality, religion, and relationship to God. Particularly so with our Jewish friends, religion is deemed a very private thing. A tender approach, with a process of (future logical) development in your mind, is the best way forward.

(ii) Empathetic Understanding

As with all evangelism, you must love the person, rather than simply hate their unbelief. Indeed, their unbelief is what is literally killing them, and your love is to draw them into belief, not simply win to 'your side', but to save them. In order to do that, there must be empathy.

Well, what exactly do we mean by empathy? It is a

understanding of 'where they are' - hence the importance of our studies. The apostle Paul would speak of *'to the Jews I became as a Jew; to those outside of the law I became as one outside...'* But Paul, you're Jewish! How can you 'become as a Jew'? Well, the answer is: empathy. He not only understood their Jewishness, he entered into their world, in order to draw them into a greater world – the world of the New Covenant with the house of Israel. But he did not fire comments or condemnations from outside; he entered in.

We might even go further and speak of our Lord's empathy with fallen humanity. *'He made himself nothing...'* (Phil 2:7) These are examples to us in our 'connecting', that tenderness, and empathy are sine qua non, non negotiables of Jewish mission. In order to be empathetic, there is need for a greater understanding; hence the importance of our studies. But also the need for our next point -

(iii) Conversational Clarification

We have already seen in our historical studies that the Jewish people in America have come from a variety of backgrounds, each bringing with them certain distinctives. For some, the dislike of 'mother Russia' (because of persecution) had led to a distinct separation. For others the love for Germany, meant a new love for all things American. So you have the separated and the assimilated! When you get two Jewish people, you get three opinions, indeed!

Therefore it is absolutely necessary in our tenderness, and empathy, to engage in conversational clarification! What I mean is, that we need to assume very little, and ask lots of questions. Asking questions of our Jewish friends is a sure way to get an answer! It is also a non-threatening way of interaction and conversation. If we would but assume nothing but our own ignorance, that is a good start!

THE SEPARATED

Both from the imperatives of rabbinic Judaism, and the necessities of survival, one of the more distinct groupings of Jewish people in America are the Orthodox & Ultra Orthodox. They also have a number of further delineations. But for our purposes in this section we want to take a look at those who have literally 'separated' themselves. Again I admit that in this brief overview, my comments are all too sweeping.

If we are privileged enough to actually gain a connection with the Orthodox, then our tenderness, empathy, and understanding will in the first instance cause us to ask the question – why? Why the separation? And you may get some or all of the following as answers:

Piety and the Parash

Parash means 'to separate / be distinct'. The Pharisees – the parashim – were the initial exclusive ones within Judasim. While we often read of the Pharisees in a bad light, we must note that initially in their history it was a separation for piety purposes. They wished to be separate unto the Lord; but of course we know, it degenerated into a separation unto their own legalism.

It is an oversimplification, but one necessary for us at this point, to say that the modern Orthodox and Ultra Orthodox have separated out of a mistaken understanding of piety. Rabbinic Judaism's piety is an intensely structured works religion. The endless study of Talmud is for the purpose of fulfilling the exactitudes of the Torah **as defined by the rabbis**. It is as if I spent all my days studying the 22 volumes of Calvin's commentaries I have on my shelf, and never opened the Bible. If my Jewishness, and ultimately my eternal destiny rests on my 'doing enough', then I need to 'know'

what is enough. So I need to strive to learn what the rabbis tell me, and strive to live according to their interpretations.

The Apostle Paul (himself formerly a legalistic 'parush'), clearly stated the inadequacy of such to bring personal righteousness before God. (Romans 10:1-4, Galatians 3:10-14) If your connection with the Orthodox continues into tender logic conversations, then ultimately you will need to bring them to that Jewish lawyer Saul (Paul the Apostle). There they will find what real 'piety' is, and what being 'separate unto the Lord' truly means.

Fear and Mistrust

Fred Wright (in his book, 'Father forgive us') – *'Out of the dust and ashes of Auschwitz, God has now issued a 614th commandment, that of survival. The Jewish people are forbidden to give Hitler a posthumous victory.'*

There is a real fear that if Christians get their way and Jewish people come to Jesus, the Church will do what Hitler failed to do. He tried to kill their bodies, but the Church will kill their Jewish souls. There is a mistrust of the Gentile world – the world of the non-Jew in America, is (in their eyes) mostly 'Christian'. So 'separation' is the solution.

Phrases like, 'I know a Jewish man that got converted and became a Christian', may sound ok to an unthinking Gentile Christian, but to the Jewish ear it sounds like: 'I know someone who left his Jewishness, turned to the dark side, and became a Gentile'. We need to recognize that a great deal of the 'separation' comes from a fear of losing their Jewishness. The reason (among other things) that the Orthodox have large families, is literal survival. They see the assimilation; they see the loss of Jewish identity in modern America, and they desire to retain separateness; to pursue

life, liberty and (rabbinic) Jewishness.

In our empathetic understanding, we need to see this as a legitimate fear. Throughout their history they have fought for liberties, and even from the 1600s as we saw in an earlier study, Jewish communities in the new world were set up to 'care for their own', since no-one else would! So the way we must approach this evident 'fear' is to say, our desires are not to ethnically cleanse you, but to sin-cleanse you. In fact we truly believe that the most Jewish thing a Jewish person can do is come to know their Jewish Messiah! 'And we want to show you the many Jewish people in the New Covenant/ Testament Scriptures who remained thoroughly Jewish!

Torah and Telos

As your tender logic and empathy continues to gain trust and traction, you will enter into some deeper conversations. In a course like this we can only touch the surface of some of those things, though we will look at some other theological matters in a later study. For now, as we 'enter in'; as we endeavor to 'become like a Jew'; we need to have some understanding of the totality of the Torah, an awareness of the detailed rule-book of the Talmud, and an answer to the 'telos' or 'end-purpose' of well, everything!

It is difficult to second guess the conversations you might have, but you may wish to ask – 'Why were the Jewish people chosen?' You may wish to ask, 'Who or what was promised in Genesis as the one who would crush the serpent?' When Moses said another would come who would be like him, who was he talking of? When Isaiah spoke of a suffering servant who would die as a substitute sacrifice, who is this man?

All the while you must remember that a well taught Orthodox Jewish person will either have answers, or will ask

the rabbi, and he will have an opinion – that it's not Jesus!

But it is important to pose the question! And by our arguments (with tender logic) to knock down the strongholds of rabbinic reinterpretation. Indeed, our Gentile arguments for Jesus are actually Jewish arguments, from the pen of Jewish authors of the New Testament!

THE ASSIMILATED

If the beliefs of the Orthodox and Ultra Orthodox are varied, as we move down the spectrum to increasing looseness, the variety increases exponentially. Yet again we will endeavor to categorize to some degree. Largely the overarching term for this group is 'Reform Judaism'.

As we have already commented, the reason for assimilation may be a love for the 'home country', or even a desire for survival (in an inverted way to that chosen by the Orthodox). If we are going to survive, we must adjust.

Failure and Solution

The failure of Orthodox Judaism to come to terms with the modern world led to a reconstruction of Judaism, and particularly American Judaism. In a sense there was a least a recognition of failure, and an attempt at a solution.

With an 'assimilated' Jewish person here is a point of connection. Without trashing rabbinic Judaism, we may at least draw forth the conversation to show forth the inadequacy of 'orthodoxy'. Here we must let the Jewish person lead the way. Gentiles must be very careful not to engage in Jew-bashing, but rather enable our Jewish friend to see the failure, and seek for a solution.

Assimilated Judaism has largely moved away from following

a set of laws as rabbinically defined, to following a 'brother's keeper' principle – laudable in itself. We shall deal with this next time, but in this 'Assimilated' group there will be agnostics and even atheists, who no longer see the vertical relationship as having any importance; only the horizontal. Thus the mitzvot or 'deed' of great importance for the assimilated is 'Tikun Olam', or 'repairing the world'. The solution, and even life purpose, is to make the world a better place – and particularly a better place for Jewish people!

But as a friend in Jewish mission, Jim Melnick, stated (in his book, 'Jewish Giftedness and World Redemption'),

'Tikun Olam does not have a biblical origin. Instead the Bible makes clear that we are the broken ones, that we have to be the ones who get fixed first before we can fix the world.'

So while the Christian's longing is for greater holiness, the assimilated Jewish person's longing is for a greater world.

Hopefully, your trusted empathetic engagement, may lead to conversations on failure – even the failure of rabbinic Judaism. That may open doors of testimony to the Solution.

Belief or Belonging?

For the assimilated Jewish person, there will nonetheless be a desire to retain Jewishness. Here also is an area that Gentiles need a better understanding. While Christianity is a lot about believing, Jewishness is a lot about belonging. (You might remember even the nature of the conversos testimony in Spain; as they outwardly 'credally' declared themselves Christians, but inwardly, and in the home, lived Jewish lives. The inner identity was more important than the spoken creed.

The matter for the Christian is how can I live to please and

glorify God. The matter for the assimilated Jewish person, is 'I was born a Jew, and I'll die a Jew, no matter what my belief or even to some degree my life. But I would like my world to be better'. We can see this in Jewish politicians – liberal, and libertarian, yet deeply interested in repairing the world.

This also has a bearing on our understanding of community life. The Christian's life is wrapped up in church and church activities. The assimilated Jewish person is 'attached' to a synagogue, and may attend regularly or semi-regularly, but it is more a belonging matter than belief. They are not thinking of some 'evangelical' moment in my life when I get saved and belong to this church with all the belief that goes with that. Instead they are thinking, 'No, I'm OK, I'm Jewish. But I would like to be a better Jew. I need to be a better Jew, and this is how I should be doing it.'

Conclusion:

Let's wrap this up by returning to our first principles. If you have a connection, treasure it. If you have a connection, develop it. With tenderness, empathy, and clarifying conversations, deepen the questions, both in order to pull down false hopes in rabbinic works religion, and draw forth an interest in finding the Jewish solution to the world's problem. The problem is sin, and the solution is a Savior.

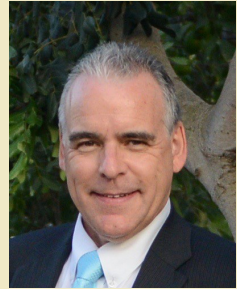
And please know that whatever progress you make in your 'challenging connections', faithfulness more than success is what is demanded of you. (Jesus didn't say we will be welcomed into heaven with '*Well done good and successful servant!*' Rather, the term was faithful servant!

So, simply sow the seed, and there will be watering, and ultimate reaping, in the perfect providence and sovereign will of Almighty God.

WHO ARE WE? WHAT DO WE DO?

DIRECTOR: STEPHEN ATKINSON

As **Director of Ministry** and 35 years of preaching experience, Stephen has been engaging with churches on behalf of CWI since 2004. With a Biblical mandate, historical reasoning, and present day missionary urgency, Stephen makes the case that every Church must have Jewish mission on its agenda!



MISSIONARY: MITCH TEPPER

As a **Jewish believer** Mitch has the apostle's burden for his own 'kindred after the flesh'. A graduate of Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary, his Scriptural knowledge and personal passion drive him in his street evangelism, one on one relationships, and household bible studies, with the singular purpose of 'Telling Jewish people about Jesus'.



International Mission to Jewish People

Internationally we have been sharing Jesus with Jewish people for almost 180 years. Today we have missionaries in the USA, UK, Israel, France, Holland, Hungary, Australia, all faithfully witnessing to Jewish communities across the world.



CHRISTIAN WITNESS TO ISRAEL (N America)

6401 S. 50th St, Rogers AR 72758 USA

www.cwina.org www.facebook.com/cwina cwinamerica@gmail.com

CWI (N America) is a registered 501c3 non profit. All donations are tax deductible.