

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

THE HOPE OF HISTORY
REPLACEMENT AND DEFACEMENT
2a Forgotten and Forsaken

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

THE HOPE OF HISTORY

REPLACEMENT AND DEFACEMENT

2a Forgotten and Forsaken

QUESTIONS:

1. When theologians speak much of the disobedience and unbelief of the Jewish people, is there a similar denouncement of Gentile Church unbelief and idolatry in Church History?
2. Are we responsible for the words of the 'church fathers' on the Jewish people? Of course not, but should we at least know what they said? What quotes do you know?
3. Why did Bernard of Clairvaux complain about the appointment of Pope Anacletus II - and why was the complaint ludicrous?
4. What do you know of Luther's words on the Jewish people?

REPLACEMENT AND DEFACEMENT

Introduction

The subheading (and perhaps simpler summary) of our study is **'Forgotten and Forsaken'**. The Jewish people in most of church history were forgotten and indeed worse, forsaken. In this paper we are going to once again move all too swiftly, this time through a thousand years of history! In our sweeping coverage we will endeavor to display a very sad picture of the Gentile Church's approach to the ancient people.

Again, in summary, we find that as the church increasingly became Gentile / Greek / Roman, it increasingly became anti-semitic. The Roman Catholic Church clearly deemed itself the Replacement Israel and its anti-semitism leaves an unforgettable blot of European Church History, which we have already seen to some degree in earlier papers.

Next time we will look more at the happier history post Reformation, when there was increasingly a re-embrace of the Jewish people due to a reformed and reformational theology. But for now we must cover some not so pleasant reading. Present day Jewish mission carries with it the baggage of (largely negative) church history, and we who seek to awaken the conscience and from that reach out to our Jewish neighbors must know our history (however unpleasant it is)..

In our historical survey we began by looking at the stunning providences of God in the protecting and preserving ethnic Israel, and ultimately bringing them to these shores in the USA. We must acknowledge the Divine hand in all of this for a divine purpose, the hope of history – the salvific hope for the ancient people; the hope of the Apostle in Romans 9-11. But for the most part, there was little 'hope of history'

in the institutional church's dealings with the Jewish people. For a thousand years we can only confess the great failure of the Gentile Church to bring the gospel back to those who brought it to us (despite the mandate of Romans 11:31). We did not heed the (prophetic) warning of the apostle that the 'unnatural' Gentile branches should not become arrogant against the natural ones. (Romans 11:18) But that is exactly what happened, no, it was worse.

Alexander McCaul, was a missionary of the London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews (*- the Anglican Society started with the help of Charles Simeon and the Clapham Sect*).

'We ask Jewish people to forsake Jewish error and embrace Jewish truth.'

(And in our 'Contemporary Connections' section of this course we have been thinking through some of those rabbinic errors.)

While McCaul's quote is a good one, the point I want to make is this. I want Gentiles to abandon Gentile errors about Israel, and embrace biblical truths about Israel: a biblical mandate, historical reformed missiology, and a present evangelistic practice.

From the earliest days, the mandate of Romans 1:16 '*to the Jew first*' was carried out by the apostle Paul. This was evident through all his missionary journeys '*as was his custom*' he went to the synagogue first (Acts 17:2).

When did the early Church drift from its mission mandate for Jewish evangelism? How was this mission mandate lost and how it was restored? What was the reason for the replacement and what was the content of the defacement? Shall we now give ourselves to reformational re-embracement? – i.e. forsaking Gentile errors about Israel, and embracing biblical truth about Israel.

1. RESPONSIBILITY TO REMEMBER

Pre-Reformation it was not simply the case that the institutional church was corrupt, blasphemous, presenting a false gospel, which is no gospel, and a ton of other aberrations which Luther under God would nail! – quite literally! But having ‘lost’ the gospel, so also the institutional Roman church had lost the plot concerning the administration of that gospel to a lost world.

We could go down a number of paths here, but obviously from the perspective of Jewish mission, I want to stress this as an area that was ‘lost’. A dozen papers on their own would be needed to detail how this came about, as the early church became more Gentile, and even more anti-semitic. In a nutshell, the more ‘Roman’ it became, the less it respected its Hebrew roots. The split between the church and synagogue is complicated, with fault on both sides, but by the time of Nicea, Constantine was making it clear that Christians should have nothing to do with ‘the odious practices of the Jews’.

Fast forward a thousand years and the institutional church, with its own priestcraft had fully ‘replaced’ Israel, believing itself the true Israel of God. The Church’s Crusaders slaughtered Jewish people in its path. That was not the biblical pattern of Acts 17:2. We need to reject those Gentile errors.

As we have briefly seen in our previous historical papers, the Spanish Inquisition made that clear to all European Jews that they had three options: convert, be expelled from ‘Christian’ Europe, or die. We might immediately say, ‘Well I can’t be responsible for that!’ True, but Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel made an important point: ‘While no man is responsible for what his ancestors have done, he is responsible for what he does with that memory’.

The Jewish people have a long collective memory. It is a

Biblical principle for them to teach their children their history. They teach their children about what has happened to them in the name of Jesus. They remember things that the Church Fathers said in those early centuries. They remember the Crusades, the Inquisitions, the Pogroms and the Holocaust.

Jakob Jocz (*pronounced Yotch*) writes this in 'The Jewish people and Jesus Christ'. (p92)

'It is no exaggeration to say that the empirical Church, i.e. the Church of history, has shown herself the greatest enemy of the Jewish people. The Church has, therefore, been the first and foremost stumbling block in the Jewish appreciation of Jesus.'

Is that a justifiable statement? – *the Church is the first and foremost stumbling block in the appreciation of Jesus?* How can he say that? How dare he say that? Well, increasingly as history is being rewritten and the true historical narrative is largely unknown, ignored or forgotten, we need to do a rewind and take a look ourselves at this history of replacement and defacement. It does not make for pleasant reading. But we must '**remember and admit**'.

2 ADMISSION AND CONFESSION

What things exactly must we remember, admit, and even disown? Let's consider some quotes from the 'fathers':

Ignatius (36-108AD) said that Jesus suffered at the hands of the 'Christ-killing Jews'

(It may be convenient to say the Jews killed Jesus, but the problem is it is not entirely true. The Scriptures speak of the Jewish leaders being responsible for the deadly act with the help of wicked men - i.e. Gentiles. In fact they had no authority for the death penalty. Truth is, it was the Italians who killed Jesus; those nasty Roman authorities!

Justin Martyr (100-165AD) was the first Christian writer to explicitly identify the church as 'Israel'.

'We who have been quarried out of the bowels of Christ are the true Israelite race.'

Irenaeus (c.120-200AD) believed the Jews had been disinherited from the grace of God. (This does not square with our earlier studies in Romans 9-11.)

The Epistle of Barnabas (written around 70-130AD) stated that the New Covenant was never intended for Israel.

(And yet it was given to Jeremiah, and declared to be a *'New Covenant with the people of Israel and the people of Judah'*. (Jeremiah 31:31-34)

Tertullian (160-225AD) allegorically interpreted Genesis 25:21-23 concerning *'the older will serve the younger'* as evidence that ethnic Israel would be subservient to the Church.

Origen (185-254AD) *'We say with confidence that they will never be restored to their former condition, for they have committed a crime of the most unhallowed kind...'*

Cyprian (200-258AD) believed the Jews had been replaced by the Christians... and should be expelled from the diocese at the point of a sword.

Council of Nicea (325AD) Eighteen members of the Council had come from Palestine. Every one of those was a Gentile and not a single Jewish bishop attended. So on the disputed dating of Easter, Nicea proclaimed its *'replacement and defacement'*, loud and clear, *'... it is unbecoming beyond measure that on this holiest of festivals we should follow the customs of the Jews. Henceforth let us have nothing in common with this odious people.'*

Jerome (340-420AD) maintained that God gave the Jews the Law to deliberately deceive and lead to their destruction.

Ambrose (340-397AD) declared that burning a Jewish synagogue is not a crime.

(Of course Ambrose's wisdom would later be considered the norm in 1930s/40s Germany)

John Chrysostom (349-407AD) wrote a series of six homilies or sermons against the Jews. We ought to recognize a historical context to all such historical quotations, while nonetheless not excusing the vitriol, nor the future fall-out of such slander. (It is interesting that his name means 'golden mouth'!)

'Why are the Jews degenerate? Because of their odious assassination of Christ... for this decide there is no expiation possible, no indulgence, no pardon... Christians may never cease to seek vengeance on the Jews and they must live in servitude forever. God has always hated the Jews and who ever has dealings with the Jews will be rejected on Judgment Day.'

(Seriously, can any Bible believing person concur with the statement, God has always hated the Jews'?)

'The synagogue is not only a whorehouse and a theatre it is also a den of thieves and a haunt of wild animals... As for me, I hate the synagogue... I hate the Jews.'

(I wonder how the golden-mouth preacher would square with the Jewish apostle Paul who declared under the inspiration of God, that *'they are loved on account of the patriarchs.'*)

'You the Jews, did slay Christ. You did lift up violent hands against the Master. You did spill precious blood. That is why you have no chance of atonement.'

(No chance? Seriously, no chance? How diametrically opposed is this to the heart-broken longing of Paul – *'My heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved.'* And Paul's later clear optimism, *'God is able to graft them in again.'* No chance? Is anything too hard for the Lord, John Chrysostom? Is the partial hardening (Rom. 11:25) total?

Augustine (354-430) *'The Jews live under God's curse because they rejected Christ; as a result of this crime they are condemned to a life of abasement and humiliation; living in a state of misery alongside Christians, they will be a perpetual reminder of the results of rebellion against Christ... Let them survive but not thrive.'*

(What a wonderful way to provoke to envy, as is our duty, according to Romans 11.)

The Council of Toledo (694AD) defined the Jews as 'serfs of the Prince'.

Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153AD) complained at the election of an ethnic Jew as Pope Anacletus II. He said this: *'To the shame of Christ a man of Jewish origin has come to occupy the chair of St Peter.'*

(Did he realize that by his understanding of ecclesiastical order, the first Pope, St Peter, was Jewish? This biblical illiteracy by the 'fathers' is getting ridiculous!)

By the 7th century Jews were denied privileges of citizenship and forced to live in social ghettos. By the 13th century they were forced to wear distinctive dress. Sounds familiar to the 20th?

So it was that the Holy Roman Empire developed its power over the masses with a 'Replacement' Christian priestcraft, which dispensed God's forgiveness. Roman Catholicism had its own form of Pharisaism with its priests who alone had the knowledge of God's will. Roman Catholicism had its own High Priest, even Christian King, who had declared himself infallible. There was no need for the Jewish people; no need for Jesus even! They and He had been fully replaced!

Can we see here the nature of the stumbling block to the Jewish people, of the Church and Church History? Can we remember, admit and confess?

Replacement (and Defacement) Theology has been embedded into church history at the earliest and deepest level. But is that the biblical mandate and model? Well, in a sense, we have two options regarding the 'Israel' question: replace or embrace. Roman Gentile Christianity largely chose the former, while reformed Reformational Christianity largely chose the latter, but not without a pivot, and not without further slippage and error.

One of the *Gentile errors* we need to forsake is Luther's later views on the Jewish people. It is to that 'pivot' we turn to in our final point in this paper and it will act as the turning point in our consideration of Reformational Christianity's different approach next time.

3 REPLACE OR EMBRACE

The gradual progress of the Reformation led to a gradual, but prevalent and persistent re-embrace. I use the term re-embrace as the embrace was already there in the first century. It was also there in the 16th, at least initially. But Luther's embrace soon turned diabolically cold and his legacy is more in the category of defacement particularly in his writing: *'On the Jews and their Lies'*. So let us tell that story briefly.

In 1523 Luther published *'That Jesus Christ was born a Jew'*. In this early work he was full of praise for the Jewish people. He made many positive statements such as, *'I hope that if one deals in a kindly way with the Jews and instructs them carefully from the Holy Scripture, many of them will become genuine Christians and turn again to the faith of their fathers, the prophets and the patriarchs.'* (Wow! More of the same please Martin!)

Written against the backdrop of his Catholic antagonists claiming that Luther had denied the virgin birth, he insisted on Jesus' Abrahamic birth-line. According to Luther the

Catholic perversion of the gospel had ruined evangelization of the Jews and compounded it with the way they treated them. So he would write highly critical of Catholic persecution – *‘They have dealt with the Jews as if they were dogs rather than human beings... they show them nothing of Christian doctrine or life, but only subject them to popishness and monkery.’*

Initially post-Theses nailing, Luther stood against the prevailing European treatment of the Jewish people, and states, *‘If the apostles, who also were Jews, had dealt with us Gentiles as we Gentiles deal with the Jews, there would never have been a Christian among the Gentiles.’* He further writes so warmly of Jewish lineage: *‘We are aliens and in-laws, they are blood relatives, cousins and brothers of our Lord.’*

However, his somewhat sensitive evangelization of his day met with a stubborn response from the Jewish people. He then later believed their sin was incurable. And while we might say Jesus wept over their unbelief... Luther cursed. The 1500 years of bad church history could not be forgotten easily and Luther’s attempts at making ‘contemporary connections’ then mostly fell on deaf ears. Thus it was that in 1543 as an old man, (some might even say a sick old man) he wrote, *Von den Jüden und Ihren Lügen* (On the Jews and their lies) a 65,000 word anti-Semitic treatise.

Within that later document he said, *‘set fire to their synagogues and schools, raze their houses, destroy their prayer books and Talmudic writings in which such idolatry lies cursing and blasphemy are taught. Forbid the Rabbis to teach on pain of loss of life or limb. Abolish safe conduct on the highways for Jews... these poisonous envenomed worms should be made to earn their bread by the sweat of their noses.’*

There is no excuse for such words. But we do need to recognize Luther is historically located in a certain time. Today many will judge Luther in the light of the Holocaust

and the absolute doctrines of 21st century 'tolerance'. Instead, without excusing some of the vitriol that Hitler would later use to justify his death-camps, it is important for us always to understand statements in their historic setting and then make judgment. Always note the context!

Von den Juden und Ihren Lügen was written in 1543. Just a few months earlier in September 1542 his beloved daughter died in his arms and Luther was devastated. Did his anger at such a heavy providence come forth in writing against a stiff-necked people? How is your theology when you are grief-stricken? Please do not misunderstand what I am saying here. This does not mitigate or excuse, but it may give us some contextual understanding.

Also, for a fuller understanding of all the quotes we often take out of context we need to think of the situation in Europe; of the situation in Germany. We must note that Luther's audience is largely German Gentile Christians. He is seeking to strengthen Christian faith in the face of Roman heresy and Jewish unbelief.

Dr Mark Thompson writes the best summary I have read on this complex issue: *'Luther saw himself in the midst of the final battle for the gospel on earth. He believed the end was near. The rise of the papacy as the power of antichrist confirmed it... His opposition to the Jews was never racially motivated; nor was it simply an echo of the anti-semitism that had plagued Europe for centuries. His was a very specific concern... upholding the gospel against all enemies in the confusion of the last days.'* (The Gospel and Israel, ed. Paul Morris, p57)

However... the Jewish people today, don't know that and a little knowledge is dangerous. So without excusing, it is important to have this contextual understanding, if we ever enter into this difficult debate with Jewish people concerning Church history and specifically Martin Luther.

CONCLUSION

Doug Kittredge (God's Plan for Peace in the Middle East, p37), rightly states:

'Hitler did not create such hatred but simply built on the foundation of prejudice entrenched within the church as well as European society... the missionaries of Christianity had said in effect, "You have no right to live among us as Jews"' The secular rulers who followed had proclaimed, "You have no right to live among us". The German Nazis at last decreed, "You have no right to live".'

It is not pleasant to read or consider the 'replace and deface' part of church history. But next time we are moving onto to more pleasant themes.

In this quote from Francis Schaefer we find a little foretaste of a better theology, and is a good alternate to the bad theology we have been quoting though this paper.

'We are Christians indeed in that we who have been saved through faith in Christ should love his ancient people. Above all things in this regard we should keep constantly in our minds that our Lord himself was a Jew. He was born a Jew, lived a Jew and died a Jew.'

Returning to that Jewish believer with whom we began, Jakob Jocz (The Jewish people and Jesus Christ - p95), said this:

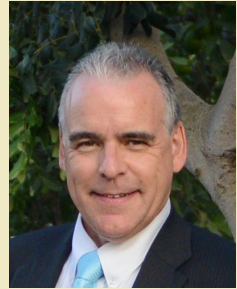
(the) 'Church has forgotten not only the words, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do", but the vast extent of her indebtedness to Israel... it is equally true that the Jews have forgotten to distinguish between historic Christianity and Jesus Christ. But the Jewish mistake is easier to explain.'

Jewish errors, Gentile errors... all are disobedient! But God is gracious and graces Church History with reviving reforms. So next time, **The Reformation and Re-Embracement.**

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'.



CWI International

Christian Witness to Israel has 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

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