

Aren't Christians and the New Testament Anti-Semitic?

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Because Jewish history is filled with persecution by many 'so-called Christians', I often hear questions that presume guilt---"Isn't the New Testament anti-Semitic? Doesn't it teach Christians to hate Jews? What about Christian anti-Semitism and the Holocaust?"

The New Testament is Jewish? It's a shock to many people when they discover just how Jewish the New Testament is! Jeremiah the prophet foretold that God

would give the New Testament (or New Covenant, Brit Chadasha) to our people: "Behold, the days are coming when I will make a New Covenant with the House of Israel and with the House of Judah. It is not like the covenant that I made with your fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, a covenant that they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the Lord . . . for I will forgive their iniquities and remember their sins no more" (Jeremiah 31:31-32, 34).

This New Covenant is what Messiah Yeshua (the Jewish way to say Jesus) initiated when He came to make atonement for sins. This was to establish the basis of the New Covenant relationship between God and His people: God's forgiveness of sins through Messiah's atonement for all who will believe.

As a young Jewish man growing up in New York, I thought the "New Testament" was a combination religious rulebook for Gentiles and an anti-Semitic instruction manual. I was surprised to find out the New Covenant is actually the Lord's love letters to those who seek Him.

The Jewish Messiah's Love: And as far as being a cause for anti-Semitism, this could only happen for those who have never read its pages. For in this Jewish book, Yeshua is presented as "the King of the Jews". Yeshua is shown crying over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41), fulfilling the Law and the prophets (Matthew 5:17) and in His daily activities, identifying only with the Jewish people (Matthew 10:5-6; 15:24). How could any so-called follower of Yeshua claim to have the King of the Jews in their hearts and also hate the Jewish people? Absurd! Rather, true Gentile followers of the Jewish Messiah love the Jewish people. The life and teachings of Yeshua give no justification for any kind of hatred, let alone hatred of His Jewish people. "For the love of Messiah controls" them (2 Cor. 5:14). It is rather to be said that anti-Semitism is proof of the ignorance of Messiah and His teachings.

True Followers of Jesus Love the Jewish People: The experience of the Holocaust of the 1930's and 40's, as well as other anti-Semitic persecutions, are often thought of as an

expression of “Christian” hatred toward the Jewish people. The *Holocaust was no such thing at all. Gentile governments have routinely used and abused the label of religion in a futile attempt to justify their pragmatic and evil (as at times like the Holocaust) national interests. In the Hebrew Scriptures as well, the same truth is revealed: anti-Semitism is anti-God (see Psalm 83:1-5).

True Gentile followers of Messiah were persecuted, imprisoned and murdered by the Nazis for helping the Jews in their areas. Jewish believers in Messiah were killed as quickly as the other Jews. There was nothing about the Holocaust that represented anything taught in the New Covenant or by any faithful follower of Messiah.

The Real Cause of Anti-Semitism: The New Covenant teaches us how the Jewish Messiah came to resolve a problem that is universal: the problem of sin. The sin that motivated and manifested itself in the Nazis is essentially the same problem all people have: rebellion against God. The sin problem ends when a person, any person, acknowledges their sin to God and places their trust in Messiah Yeshua.

I had the opportunity to speak at a Businessmen’s Breakfast, where I shared the message of Good News in the Messiah. I invited the people there to respond to God’s love and forgiveness in the Jewish Messiah. Of those who responded, I remember one businessman who burst into tears. Up to that point he had been an anti-Semite. But now he was convinced of his sinfulness and wanted to repent. After we prayed he mentioned that he was stunned to have heard the message of forgiveness and new life in the Jewish Messiah from a Jewish man! It became clear to him that his anti-Semitic feelings were just one symptom of his rebellion to God...affirming the scriptural truth that anti-Semitism is anti-God... and anti-Messiah.

As evil and offensive as anti-Semitism is, all sin is offensive to God. Though some sins are not nearly so blatant, God is aware of them all. All who sin need to repent in order to be forgiven and cleansed of their sins. The message of Good News is for all who will trust in Israel’s Messiah and the Savior of the world, Yeshua.