

INTRODUCTION

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What if you grew up never knowing any grandparents, because they had died for unexplained or confusing reasons long before you were born? What if you grew up never having any uncles and aunts, but having a few great aunts and uncles on your mother's side who were secretive about your parents' family history and whose true identities are still questionable? What if you grew up in an evangelical Christian background and were told that as a believer you are grafted through a "wild olive shoot" into God's covenant with Abraham, as a spiritual branch of Abraham - a spiritual Jew?

For in *Galatians 3:14*, the scriptures state that Jesus will redeem the Gentiles through their faith, so they can receive the Covenant given to Abraham. In *Ephesians 2:11-22*, the scriptures state that Gentiles are born *excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the Covenant of the promise, without hope and without God in the world* but with Jesus they are *fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets*. What should be the covenantal relationship between God's people and the Gentiles, professing faith in Jesus? Do Christian churches really understand what it means when they proclaim to their congregation that all of God's promises are eternal? What should the eternal Covenant of Abraham with the Jewish people really mean to the Christian?

In *Joshua 2:9-13*, Rahab, the righteous Canaanite harlot said to the spies sent by Joshua into Jericho before the destruction of the city that *I know that the Lord has given this land to you . . . [for] . . . we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to Sihon and Og, the two kings of the Amorities east of the Jordan, whom you completely destroyed . . . for the Lord your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below . . . please swear to me by the Lord that you will show kindness to my family . . . and that you will save us from death*. Like Rehab who was "grafted" into the Jewish people and became the great-great grandmother of King David, the ancestress to eight prophets including Jeremiah and was in the lineage to Jesus [*Matthew 1:5*], Christians must open their eyes to God's eternal presence with the Jewish people by His Covenant with Abraham.

What if later in life after your father has died and when it is too late to talk to anyone you discover that you are a natural branch of Abraham? What if you discover that your father after his death was Jewish from an unknown distant cousin over the internet? What if you discover at *Yad Vashem* that you are connected with a proud German-Jewish family name to a chain of generations stretching back to Berlin, Germany and a family migrating over the centuries throughout Eastern Europe?

What do you do when you discover that you had distant family generations murdered at Auschwitz, sent to the Warsaw Ghetto and later murdered at Treblinka, sent to the Lodz Ghetto and die of starvation, and murdered in the streets and killing fields in Germany, Lithuania, Latvia, and Hungary? What do you do? First, you read to

try to understand why. To understand why did my family hide their Jewish identity? Why does the conflict between Judaism and Christianity exist?

The purpose of these writings are to present various insights gleaned from the readings of the well-known writers of historical events in Jewish history, of the conflict between Judaism and Christianity, of the Holocaust and of the restoration of Israel and Jerusalem to the Jewish people. The Holocaust has been considered a revelational event for both Judaism and Christianity.¹ Jewish history is also the history of anti-Semitism. Jewish history is unique for it is a history of suffering and persecution and a dialogue of God with man. God's covenantal promises are eternal and for a Christian to truly understand the Bible a Hebraic foundation is essential and an understanding of the Biblical connection of Israel and Jewish identity. What should be the relationship between Jews and Christians and the spiritual relationship between Judaism and Christianity?

For 2,000 years, the Christian church abandoned the Jewish people. Unlike *Ruth*, the church did not say: your people are my people and your God is my God. Instead, the church said your God is my God, but your people are not our people. Jesus followed the *Torah*, the first five books of the Christian Old Testament, spoke of Israel's prophets and presented the Jewish message of social justice and Divine compassion. Jesus was a practicing Jew who spoke out of and to the heart of Judaism, its rituals, beliefs and traditions. The traditional churches lost their direction over the centuries and need to return to their spiritual roots in Israel.

There needs to be theological dialogue between Christians and Jews based upon mutual respect and a hunger for interreligious understanding and not based upon the historic Christian goal of conversion. Hopefully, these writings will provide to Christian readers some understanding of the history of the Jewish people and their heartbreaking conflict with the Christian community, to Jewish readers a deeper understanding in the search for their *yiddishkeit* and to the world the Biblical significance of the restoration of Israel, the Third Commonwealth of Israel, and Jerusalem as its eternal and undivided capital.

For the Lord [God] has chosen Zion: He has desired it for His habitation. This is My resting place forever and ever, here I will dwell, for I have desired it. Psalms 132:13-14.

Today, there is a rising tsunami of anti-Semitism around the world against the right of Israel to exist and of the Jews to live in an intensity that has not been experienced since Hitler's Germany. After leaving behind the bloodiest century in human history, we seem to be plunging into a greater ocean of destruction with the delegitimization of Israel and of the Jewish people. *For, behold, darkness may cover the earth and a thick cloud [may cover] the kingdoms, but upon you the Lord will shine, and His glory will be seen upon you. Isaiah 60:1-2.* We need to remember that collective violence requires the repression of memory and misconstruing the past as being currently carried out by Islamic radicalism, the Arab Middle East and their Western sympathizers by denying the Holocaust, Jewish history and the history of Israel.

Professor David Patterson has written that, as during the period of Hitler's Reich, in this present post-Holocaust world "antisemitism has become respectable."² The new code word for anti-Semitism is anti-Zionism and anti-Israel. Leading universities and academics in the United States and Western Europe openly and without embarrassment demand the boycott of Israel and of Israeli scholars and universities. Under the joke of academic freedom, these institutions host openly anti-Semitic conferences with Jew-hating organizations. Likewise, the Holocaust was conceived and perpetrated by doctors, lawyers, academics, theologians and engineers from this same educated society of "enlightened" intellectuals.³

Professor Robert Wistrich has said that Hitlerism did not die in April 1945 nor was Auschwitz truly "liberated," but the Nazi poison invigorated the Czar's anti-Semitism in the former Soviet Union and this "culture of hatred" has been seriously cultivated into the Arab-Muslim world.⁴ Simon Wiesenthal observed the only difference between Hitler and Stalin "was that Hitler was telling the truth when he said he intended to destroy the Jews, but no one believed him; Stalin lied when he said he had nothing against the Jews, and everyone believed him."⁵ Hitler's last political testament was "Above all, I charge the leadership of the nation and their subjects with the meticulous observance of the race-laws and the merciless resistance to the universal poisoner of all peoples, international Jewry."⁶

The possibilities of Hitler's "Final Solution" to the Jewish question continue to exist in the Arab world and throughout the entire world. For what is the Jewish question? The Jewish question is the eternal annoyance that arose with the questions asked of God to Adam of *where are you* and to Cain *where is your brother* and *what have you done*.⁷

Professor Wistrich points out in his book, *A Lethal Obsession: Anti-Semitism from Antiquity to the Global Jihad*, that hard-core anti-Semitism "permeates books, magazines, newspapers, sermons, videocassettes, the Internet, television, and radio in the Middle East on a scale unprecedented since the heyday of Nazi Germany."⁸ Professor Wistrich further warns that:

*... Islamist apostles of jihad have in recent years turned Israel and Jewry into their great surrogate in the holy war against America and the corrupt modern world. Uncle Sam, so to speak, has coalesced with Shylock into a terrifying specter of globalization ("Americanization") threatening to swamp the world of Islam, much as late-nineteenth-century European anti-Semites liked to depict "international Jewry" as the satanic engine of finance capitalism and supranational cosmopolitanism.*⁹

Professor Patterson describes humanity as confronting a metaphysical crisis of evil, which he calls *Islamic Jihadism*.¹⁰ Radical Islam is not about the territorial or national issue of the Israeli-Palestine conflict, but about the mythical thinking in the spirit of Nazi ideology of destroying the secret Jewish global power and exterminating the Jews.¹¹ Islamic Jihadism proclaims that the eradication of Israel is a divine commandment from the will of their "god" and the prologue to the liberation of mankind.¹² Islamic Jihadism is more than just hatred toward Zionism and the Jewish

existence in Israel, but the Jewish existence in the world. “It happened, therefore it can happen again” are the words of warning from the writings of Primo Levi greeting visitors entering Germany’s Holocaust Memorial in Berlin.

Anti-Semitism is an assault on God, as well as on the Jewish people. Franklin Littell wrote that anti-Semitism is not just the sin of racism, but is blasphemy, the “sin against the Holy Spirit,” and Jesus in *Matthew 12:32* said *blasphemy . . . against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.*¹³ Anti-Semitism is a sin against the Holy Spirit for it denies the scriptural teachings on God’s covenantal relationship to the Jews.¹⁴

Anti-Semitism or anti-Judaism was and is deeply imbedded in Christian church doctrine and tradition based upon the chosen people being no longer “Israel” but the Church under “replacement theology,” “fulfillment theology,” or “dispensationalism” fulfilling the purpose of Israel. When pastors today preach about references to “my people” in the Old Testament, their sermons never mention the Jewish people for they have been replaced by the Christians. The Christian ministers convey to their members that “my people” has been redefined in the Bible. Professor Paul C. Merkley wrote that

*this residual anti-Judaism in Christian company is simply the great reluctance that Christian people have to accept that our faith is based upon the teachings of a Jewish man. It is, after all, just the most painful example of our hatred of the other in ourselves – the fear we all have that something that does not resemble ourselves is at the heart of what we claim about the biggest things that we believe to be true . . . The Christian looks into the heart of his faith and there he sees a Man who was a Jew.*¹⁵

According to Franklin Littell in *The Crucifixion of the Jews: The Failure of Christians to Understand the Jewish Experience*, the primary question for the Christian church is where does it stand on the survival of the Jewish people and Judaism?¹⁶ With Christian anti-Semitism based upon the superseding or displacement myth of the Jewish people, the restored Israel and the continued existence of the Jewish people are a substantial refutation of the traditional Christian myth about the eventual extinction or assimilation of the Jewish people and Judaism.

If Christians want to understand the very foundations of their religion, they need to consider what should be their relationship to and understanding of the Jewish people, God’s witnesses on earth. Christians need to recognize the significance of the current resurgence of Judaism, for God is writing on Jewish hearts the *Torah*, His Word. The *Torah*, the first five books of the Christian Bible, is not a history book, but it is the story of the development of God’s Chosen People. Christians need to recognize that their mission of preparing for the coming of the Kingdom of God is shared with the Jewish people and the Jewish people have their own fulfillment in faithfulness to the Eternal Covenant promised by God in *Genesis*.

These study materials describe the bond between the physical soil of Israel and the Divine soul of Israel. God began the entire first quarter of the *Torah* to provide the legal, moral and theological validation for Jewish possession of the Land of Israel. The Land of Israel and the laws of the *Torah* must be joined as one to express the true mission and message of the peoplehood of Israel.

Judea and Ruth Pearl in *I Am Jewish, Personal Reflections Inspired by the Last Words of Daniel Pearl* said that to be Jewish is to be part of a four-thousand year old community of memory that recognizes what we owe to those who have come before us.¹⁷ The Jewish people are the only people in the world today who still inhabit the same land, embrace the same religion, study the same *Torah*, speak the same aboriginal language, Hebrew, and hear the same name, Israel, as they did 3,500 years ago.¹⁸

Where are the Hittites, the Canaanites, the Amalekites, the Amorites, the Jebusites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, the Philistines, the Assyrians, the Babylonians and the ancient Egyptians that held the Jews in bondage? For all nations eventually leave the stage of world history, but the most powerless people on earth have nevertheless survived the persecutions of Egypt, Persia, Greece, Rome, the Ottoman Empire, the Catholic Church and Nazi Germany. They are indeed God's witnesses on earth, entrusted with the mission of proclaiming the true God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and with His message of love, compassion and morality to the world.

Behold ! it is a nation that will dwell in solitude and not be reckoned among the nations. Numbers 23:9. [For Israel's mission is to remain separate and distinct from the nations; otherwise, assimilation with nations will leave the Jewish people with neither religion nor renown. Midrash HaGadol]

How do you explain the survival into the 21st century of this small tribe of the ancient world? To the people who say show me proof that God exists, I say look to God's witnesses on earth, look at the history of the Jewish people after more than two thousand years of persecution and the Holocaust, and you will see proof that God exists. *You are My witnesses . . . and My servant whom I have chosen, so that you will know and believe in Me, and understand that I am He; before Me nothing was created by a god nor will there be after Me! . . . You are my witnesses . . . and I am God. Isaiah 43:10, 12.*

How goodly are your tents, O Jacob, your dwelling places, O Israel . . . It is God Who brought him out of Egypt according to the power of His loftiness. He will consume the nations that oppress him and crush their bones, and his arrows shall pierce them . . . Those who bless you are blessed and those who curse you are accursed. Numbers 24:5, 8-9.

The Christian community does not realize that instead of choosing to assimilate at all costs because of anti-Semitism, Jewish people worldwide continue to renew and intensify their Jewish life and to raise Jewish children. Knowing of the fate to which

these decisions may threaten their family and of how the world hates the true God and His Word, such decisions can only come from faith and trust in God.

Many evangelical churches who claim to support Israel still preach a modified form of replacement theology, in which they claim that the world is now in the time of the Church and God has set aside the Jews. If there is another Holocaust with the State of Israel, then it is to be. They see no purpose in Christian dialogue with the Jewish people, unless the Jews want to accept the Christian message of salvation, which usually centers on traditional de-Judaized Church dogma with a non-Jewish vision of Jesus.

In *The German Church Struggle and the Holocaust*, Franklin H. Littell has questioned whether the United States is in the preliminary stages of a church struggle similar to Germany in the early part of the 1900s:

The problem of liberal anti-Semitism [in the form of anti-Israel and anti-Zionism] is today far more dangerous in America, for we have here the last major sector of Christendom which still lives relatively undisturbed in the balmy days of nineteenth-century culture-religion. The lessons to be learned from the Church Struggle [in Nazi Germany in 1933 and in prior years] and the Holocaust have hardly penetrated our Protestant seminaries, our liberal Protestant press, our church literature, the thinking and writing of even our ablest older theologians.¹⁹

A leading theologian of Christian-Jewish dialogue, Paul M. van Buren, has stated that if the Christian church is faithful to God and His covenant with His people, the proper mission of the Christian church to the Jewish people would be to help Israel to be what it is in the covenant by God's election and to help it perform its mission.²⁰ Israel has a divinely ordained mission to bring knowledge of the true God and the Word of God, the *Torah*, to the nations of the world.

God chose not by merit, but by His grace for "You shall be holy for Me, for I the Lord am holy; and I have separated you from the peoples to be Mine." *Leviticus 20: 26*. Van Buren has remarked that the Jews are the chosen people and chosen as a people and not individually chosen persons. Rabbi Ignaz Maybaum has related that chosen means to have no choice and God chooses by His grace and the Jewish people were chosen to be not like the gentiles. For under the mystery of election, God chooses whom He chooses for His purposes.

Van Buren has said that God's election of Israel is the foundation for everything that Israel has to tell the world and for its continuing existence as His witness. Israel speaks of God by telling its own history with God. The Jewish people understand their bond to God and so are witnesses to their eternal covenant with God.

The Jews have a dual destiny to be both a nation that dwells alone and a light to the nations. To achieve this dual destiny, God bestowed on the Jews the Law (*Torah*) of Israel, the Nation of Israel (Jewish nationhood) and the Land of Israel. The return to the Land of Israel is the precursor to the redemption for the Jewish people and, through

it, for the world. The rebirth of the Land of Israel is evidence of the sovereignty of the God of History.

Today, Judaism is flourishing in Israel as never before in the past 2,000 years. The Jewish people rose up from the ashes of the Holocaust to build a Jewish state whose population is more learned in Jewish scriptures than any Jewish community has ever been with even non-observant Jews living Jewish lives in Israel. Of course, the Muslims will forever reject Jewish nationhood and the existence of the Land of Israel.

Israel's mission to the world and Christianity's guiding mission to the world should be the same based upon the two virtues that are the basis for Abraham's initial election by God. I have known, loved and appointed Abraham in order that he commands his children and household after him to observe the way of the Lord, which is to do compassionate righteousness [*tzedaka*] and moral justice [*mishpat*], the Abrahamic mission and destiny. This is why God promised to make of Abraham a great and powerful nation through whom all the nations of the earth would be blessed. *Genesis 18:18-19.*

As the natural and spiritual children of Abraham, we must through our actions radiate this compassionate righteousness and moral justice by which we are pursuing Israel's mission to the world. By pursuing Israel's mission to bring knowledge of the true God and the Word of God, the *Torah*, to the nations of the world, Israel and the world will be blessed. If Jews and Christians can become equal partners after 2,000 years of theological persecution and murder, then that partnership would be the greatest witness to God's presence in the world and to the covenantal responsibility to carry God's blessing to the world and to the coming of the Messiah as described in *Micah 4:2-5.*

The glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all flesh together will see that the mouth of the Lord has spoken. Isaiah 40:5

In a dream, I heard "pick up My Cross and follow Me." Is that the Cross of Jewish crucifixion? Do I hear a call by God for dissimilation leading me back to Jerusalem and to embrace the Jewishness of the scriptures and my Jewish family today and past generations who would have prayed by faith "Next year in Jerusalem?" The Word of God proclaims that Jerusalem shall be the city that brings forth salvation to mankind and redemption for all nations and the name *Israel* means *one who strives with God*. My soul is linked to an unbroken chain of generations that gave me a destiny to fulfill and a witness to bear that Jews and Christians are to be fellow travelers to the End of Days.

Note: All citations to the Bible are from the Stone Edition of *The Tanach, the Torah/Prophets/Writings: the Twenty-Four Books of the Bible*. Brooklyn: Mesorah Publications, Ltd. for the "Old Testament." All Bible commentary is from *The Torah: with Rashi's Commentary Translated, Annotated and Elucidated, Vol. 1 – Bereishis/Genesis., Vol. 2 – Shemos/Exodus, Vol. 3 – Vayikra/Leviticus, Vol. 4 – Bamidbar/Numbers, Vol. 5 – Devarim/ Deuteronomy*. (The Sapirstein Edition). Brooklyn: Mesorah Publications, Ltd. and the Stone Edition of *The Chumash, With Complete Sabbath Prayers*, (Ashkenaz), Brooklyn: Mesorah Publications, Ltd. All citations to the "New Testament" are from the New International Version.

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- ¹ Irving Greenberg, *For the Sake of Heaven and Earth: The New Encounter between Judaism and Christianity*, (1st ed. 2004), p. 15.
- ² Alan L. Berger and David Patterson, *Jewish Christian Dialogue: Drawing Honey From the Rock*, (1st ed. 2008), p. 21.
- ³ *Ibid.*, p. 22.
- ⁴ Robert S. Wistrich, *A Lethal Obsession: Anti-Semitism from Antiquity to the Global Jihad*, (1st ed. 2010), p. 3.
- ⁵ Tom Segev, *Simon Wiesenthal: The Life and Legends*, (1st ed. 2010), p. 42.
- ⁶ David Patterson, *A Genealogy of Evil: Anti-Semitism from Nazism to Islamic Jihad*, (1st ed. 2011), p. 238.
- ⁷ Berger and Patterson, p. 120.
- ⁸ Wistrich, pp. 3-4.
- ⁹ *Ibid.* p. 4.
- ¹⁰ Patterson, p. xi.
- ¹¹ Wistrich, pp. 5-6.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, p. 6.
- ¹³ Berger and Patterson, p. 23.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 31.
- ¹⁵ Paul C. Merkley, *Those That Bless You, I Will Bless: Christian Zionism in Historical Perspective*, Brantford Ontario: Mantua Books (1st ed. 2011), p. 241.
- ¹⁶ Franklin H. Littell, *The Crucifixion of the Jews: The Failure of Christians to Understand the Jewish Experience*, (Rose Edition 2005), p. vi.
- ¹⁷ Judea Pearl and Ruth Pearl, *I Am Jewish, Personal Reflections Inspired by the Last Words of Daniel Pearl*, (1st ed. 2004), p. 195.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 13.
- ¹⁹ Franklin H. Littell and Hubert G. Locke, editors, *The German Church Struggle and the Holocaust*, (1st ed. 1974), pp. 22-23.
- ²⁰ Paul M. van Buren, *A Theology of the Jewish-Christian Reality, Part 2, A Christian Theology of the People Israel*, (1st ed. 1987), p. 333.