

CHRIST AND THE JEW

By

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Are Jews God's chosen people? Are they all Semites? Is modern Israel the same as the ancient Israel of God? The answer to each of these questions is an emphatic no, as anyone would learn if he would study either the Bible or the history of the Jews.

The first Biblical reference to the word "Jew" is found in II Kings 16:6. At that time, about 750 BC, the nation of Israel had become divided, the ten northern tribes retaining the name of Israel, and the two southern tribes adopting the name of Judah. The term Jew was derived from Judah, and simply referred to the people of the kingdom of Judah. It had no reference to race, but to the people of a locale, the citizens of a particular county. These citizens had intermarried with the Canaanites. In fact, several of the sons of Jacob (whose name was changed to Israel) had married women of foreign extractions; hence, there was no such a thing as a pure racial stock in Israel or Judah. The northern ten tribes were conquered by Assyria, which in turn was conquered by Babylon. Babylon also captured the two southern tribes, and hence all twelve tribes became captive of Babylon. There never was any such thing as "ten lost tribes," as all of them were in Babylon at the same time.

Most of these people remained in Babylon, adopted Babylonian religions and customs, but after 70 years, a "remnant" from *all twelve tribes* returned to the land of Judah. They rebuilt the Temple, according to prophecy, and restored national Israel. However, they still were called "Jews," for their country was now named Judea. Jesus spoke of them as the "house of Israel" and Peter addressed his audience as "men of Israel" (Mt. 15:24, Acts 2:22). This shows that some from all 12 tribes lived in Judea at that time.

During the captivity of 70 years, the sect of the Pharisees had begun to develop. They had an oral tradition which was rooted in Babylonian paganism. At the time of Christ's ministry, the Pharisees had become the leading and ruling segment of religious and political life of the Jews. Jesus openly condemned them, saying, "You leave the commandments of God and hold fast the traditions of men...full well do you reject the commandment of God that you may keep your tradition" (Mark 7:7-8).

These oral traditions were later reduced to writing and today are well-known as the "Talmud," consisting of some 63 volumes. The Talmud is composed of two parts known as the *Mishna* and the *Gemara*: the Mishna being the text and the Gemara the commentary upon it. A celebrated Zionist educator says of the Mishna that it is a "collection of decisions and traditional laws, embracing all departments of legislation, civil and religious..." This code was the work of several generation of Rabbis. Many a Mishna (text) is accompanied by 50 or 60 pages of explanation. It is Jewish law and religion. You may look at any Jewish paper, such as *the B'nai B'rith Messenger*, which lists synagogue services, and note that the chief textbook of modern Jews is the *Talmud* and not the OT Bible. Judaism is NOT based upon Old Testament doctrine.

While the people of Israel who returned to Judea were all termed "Jews," Jesus made it clear that not all of them were considered to be the people of God. It was to Jews

that Jesus spoke these words: “If you were Abraham’s children, you would do the works of Abraham. But now you seek to kill me, a man that has told you the truth, which I heard from God; this did not Abraham. You do the works of your father...You are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father it is your will to do. He was a murderer from the beginning and stands not in truth, because there is no truth in him...”(John 8:39–44). [Note: Lest all beware of saying that this is “anti-Semitism;” these are the recorded words of Christ the Lord.]

Christ did not recognize the main body of Jews to be God’s people, but emphatically declared that they were in opposition to God. While the bulk of Jews had rejected God and His commandments, there will still some devout and faithful people of God among them, and they were identified as Jews along with all the other inhabitants of Judea.

From the foregoing we may summarize that the term Jew was used in three ways: (1) Nationally—citizens of the country of Judea; (2) God’s people—the true believers in God, no matter where they lived. Some of them were Semites (racially descendants of Shem) and some of them were proselytes (Gentiles who had been converted to faith in God); (3) Followers of the Talmud—those who claimed faith in God but had rejected the scriptural commandments and the prophets to follow the traditions of men. This latter also included people of many races and nations.

National Israel was abolished in 70 AD, according to the prophecy of Jesus Himself. Jerusalem, including the Temple, was totally destroyed, and the entire system of the priesthood and ceremonial sacrifice was REPLACED by Christ and the Church. This is clearly taught in the book of Hebrews, Romans and Galatians. Modern Jews have no Temple, no priesthood and no sacrifice, as all of this gave way to Christ, the High Priest, and final sacrifice. The new state of Israel is the product of political Zionism, and stands in opposition to the gospel of God.

The book of Acts explicitly shows that Christ broke down the “national” boundaries as far as God’s people is concerned, and all men enter into fellowship with God through faith in Christ, and by no other means.

Also, the second classification was abolished, for God’s people were no longer known as Jews, but as Christians. The term Jew had applied to those who were believers in God under the Old Covenant, but Christ established a New Covenant. “And if you be Christ’s, then are you Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the promise...for you are children of God by faith in Jesus Christ...there is therefore neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for you are all one man in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3:28–29).

“For they are not all Israel, that are of Israel; neither because they are Abraham’s seed are they all children...that is, it is not the children of the flesh that are children of God, but the children of the promise are reckoned for a seed” (Rom. 9:6–8). Jesus had said: “No man comes to the Father but by me” (John 14:6). When the Jews refused to believe Him, He said, “For if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me. But if you believe not his writings, how shall you believe my words?” He said, “He that honors not the Son, honors not the Father that sent Him” (John 5:23).

Many uninformed people think that the Gentile must approach God through Christ, but that Jews do not need Christ, that they are automatically God’s children. Even if one is a true descendant of Jacob (Israel), it is still absurd to suggest that he can be a child of

God while rejecting Jesus Christ, the only One who is sent by God to redeem man from sin, and make him fit for God's family.

According to the Bible, the Jew does NOT qualify as a child of God until he becomes a Christian. If one believes and honors God, then he will believe and honor the Son whom God sent. The apostle John declared, "Who is the liar but he that denies the Father and the Son. Whosoever denies the Son, the same has not the Father" (I John 2:22–23). Please read it yourself.

Modern Judaism includes people of all races, and nationalities. There are black Jews, white Jews, Chinese Jews, Indian Jews, Mexican Jews, etc. There is NO "race" of Jews. It is estimated by Benjamin H. Freedman of the Christian Education Association that about 90 percent of the Jews in some 42 countries originated in Eastern Europe. These originally were of the kingdom of the Khazars, a nation that once extended over what is now the southern portion of Russia. According to the Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. IV, these Khazars (also spelled Chazars) embraced the Jewish religion in the 7th century AD. They also adopted the Hebrew alphabet and applied it to their own language which came to be known as Yiddish. (Note: Yiddish and Hebrew are unrelated languages. They only use the same alphabet). The religious law of these self-styled Jews also emigrated into Western Europe and finally into the United States. You may see them daily on TV or do business with them at the store. A vast number of government officials are of Khazar extraction and are known as Jews. This explains why many people find it hard to understand why a person may be a Jew but not "look like a Jew". Judaism is not racial. One does not have to be a descendant of Abraham or of Shem to be a Jew.

Neither are all Semites Jews. Many of the Arabs embrace the Christian faith. These Arabs are true descendants of Shem, the son of Noah, and also descendants of Abraham through Ishmael. But they are children of God through Jesus Christ. Many thousands of them have been driven from their homes by the Israelis in their aggression against Jordan. We Christians who sympathize with these Christian Arabs cannot be honestly called anti-Semitic. This term, "anti-Semitic," is a smear-word, used to brand as a bigot and hate-monger anyone who brings criticism against a Jew.

Furthermore, to identify Judaism as an anti-Christian religion is not in the least bit unfair to Jews. The Jews themselves make it abundantly clear that they do not and will not recognize Jesus as the Christ. Jewish writers continually bring out novels and non-fiction work which accuses Christ of being an imposter, rejects the Bible as a revealed word from God and negates Christian doctrines. An example is the best-seller "The Passover Plot" by Dr. Hugh J. Schonfield. Jews do not hesitate to identify themselves as opposed to the gospel of Jesus Christ; therefore, it should not be considered anything but honest and Christian to identify Jews and Judaism as the opposite of Christianity. Judaism is NOT the mother of Christianity as some imply.

There are those who claim to be Christians, but who actually do not believe the gospel and do not obey Jesus. They make a false claim to Christian faith. The Bible also speaks of another false claim. John writes of "the blasphemy of them that say they are Jews and they are not, but are a synagogue of Satan" (Rev. 2:9). I leave it to the reader to figure out what this means.

Due to the lack of space here it is impossible to give more than a brief sketch bearing on the question of "Who is a Jew?" But I would challenge you to obtain some books written by Jews and search the matter! For example, there is Howard Morely

Sahar's "The Course of Modern Jewish History," in which he boasts of the concept of a Jewish world government through the Rothschild's', the international banking family of Jews, (page 129) and where he names and proves that the movie industry and the three major TV networks are controlled by Jews (Page 345). He also boasts of the major role of prominent Jews in the rise of Communism (Page 300, published by Dell Pub. Co., New York, 1958). Other informative books on the subject are: "The Other Side of the Coin" by David Lillienthal; "What is a Jew" by Rabbi Kerstner (who insists that Judaism is NOT racial); "Felix Frankfurter Reminisces" by Phillips (in which Frankfurter states that he got Jews into government at every opportunity); "Who is a Jew" by the Anti-Defamation League (which holds that the Talmud, not the Bible, is the governing rule of Jewish practices, page 10).

The effort to destroy faith in Christ, to denigrate Christian ethics and morals and to generally oppose Christians is not new. In reading the book of Acts we run across these passages: "the Jews took counsel together to kill him [Paul]" (Acts 9:23). "But the Jews urged on the devout women...and stirred up a persecution against Paul and Barnabas..." (Acts 13:50). "But the Jews, being moved with jealousy, took unto them certain vile fellows of the rabble, and gathering a crowd, set the city on an uproar [the forerunner of modern riots]" (Acts 17:5). "The Jews with one accord rose up against Paul..." (Acts 18:12). "And a plot was laid against him [Paul] by the Jews..." (Acts 20:3). Finally they laid a plot to kill Paul and only by the intervention of the authorities was he rescued (Acts 23:20-24).

After the resurrection Jesus appeared to the disciples "when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews" (John 20:19).

Today (1977) this same fear prevails. Teachers are afraid to read a New Testament scripture or utter a prayer in the name of Jesus. Leaders in government are afraid to oppose the illegal sale of Israeli war bonds (a thing forbidden by law and never permitted on behalf of any other country).

Christ desires that we know the truth, "and the truth shall make you free." At the core of Christian truth is this fact: That Christ is the only means of eternal salvation, and all who are Christ's and ONLY they who are Christ's are the people of God. One is either for Christ (a believer) or against Him (an unbeliever). There is One Faith, One Lord and One Baptism (Eph. 4:5). There is one way for all. Christ is the fulfillment of prophecy, the end of the law. He is "the only Potentate, King of kings and Lord of lords who only has immortality" (I Tim. 6:15-16). He is the judge of all, with no exception, not even for the Jew.

Let all Christians take a stand firmly on the faith He has given us, without compromise and without fear. Christ is the Victor and His church, composed of Christians of all races and nations, will ultimately be glorified as He is. Hallelujah — "Even so, come Lord Jesus."

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