

What is the Real Issue between Jews and Christians?

Perhaps today, in this predominately secular society with so many in-name-only Jews and Christians, this may not seem to be a particularly pressing question, at least not one for which a Biblically orientated answer would be valued. Furthermore, most people on either side of the issue, if they have strong feelings on the matter, feel that they already know all that they need to know, and that there is nothing that could possibly be add to their knowledge or change their minds. I too shared that view for most of my life, having acquired it, as most have, from what you might call tradition and passed down hearsay. It always bothered me that this sad condition existed, and I felt that it was evident, that because each side was certain of its own righteousness, and of the other's wrongness, that truce without reconciliation was the best that could be expected.

At the time I wrote the first iteration I was a three and a half year old born-again Christian. During these three and half years I embraced my faith with great passion and an unquenchable thirst to know and understand its roots, its meaning, its purpose, and the manner of earthly life it requires. In this pursuit, I read the entire Bible several times as well as the works of a number of both Christian and Jewish Scholars, along with secular historians of biblical times. Throughout this long labor of love I have remained alert to, and taken particular notice of, any and all information, which might shed the loving light of the Lord on this sad situation. Although I had no direct association with Orthodox, that is really religious Jews, nevertheless I believe that my faith and my studies may have given me insight and knowledge, which could be of interest to some on either side of this issue. I also pray that this latest reexamination of the issue will add a new dimension of understanding and thus some measure of healing of this painful wound, because of which both Jews and Christians have suffered so long.

Today, at age 89, I've only been a true believer for about 20 years. Of my 4 children, both of my sons married Jews, as did my oldest daughter. Each are Jews by blood and tradition, absent any evidence of a faith. Thus it is evident that I have more than a

general interest in addressing this subject. With that said, I will proceed. With a topic as provocative as this, I'm sure to have something which will offend everyone. I just pray that there will also be that which is edifying, and more importantly, heart softening and ameliorating.

Before one can address the issues which aggrieve both the Jews and the Christians, one must first agree as to what or who is a Jew or a Christian. Webster says that 1.) A Jew is a member of people now living in many countries of the world who trace their decent from the Israelites of the Bible, or from postexilic adherents of Judaism and 2.) A person whose religion is Judaism. He defines a Christian as a person professing belief in Jesus as the Christ, or a religion based on the teachings of Jesus. From this it is evident that both the label Jew, as well as Christian, can be used to identify a very large cross section of peoples having many variations and depths of beliefs as well as those who have no real affiliation or spiritual connection with either faith.

For the purpose of this paper, I will limit this discussion to a particular group of Jews and Christians. I would like to call these Orthodox Jews and unadulterated Evangelical Christians, however I understand that there are various sects of Orthodox Jews and I know that the term "Evangelical" no longer necessarily means what I would prefer it to mean. Therefore, at the risk of creating a near mythical category, I will impose my writer's privilege and provide my own definition. I will define a Jew as one who believes that the Tenach, what Christians call the Old Testament, is the inspired inerrant Word of God, and with adherence thereto being the only path to eternal life, along with this they also accept many of the writings of the prophets. The one by exception is whatever pertains to the One Messiah and Jesus being He. This definition assumes that there is nothing in any other believed writings or practices, which are inconsistent with this Scripture. I define the Christian, as one who believes that both the Old and New Testament combined, is the single integrated inerrant Word of God and with adherence thereto being the only path to salvation. Again, this definition assumes that there is nothing in any other believed writings or practices, which are inconsistent with the Scriptures.

Now it seems appropriate to list and describe some of the major Truths, which I understand that the two groups share:

1. *Same Bible*

Of course common belief in the Old Testament is the fundamental factor from which all else originates. It is what links us together in the so-called Judeo-Christian heritage. There is also nothing in the New Testament that disagrees, or is inconsistent with the Old Testament, at least in the biblically literate Christian mind, because we know with absolute certainty that they are one integrated message authored by God Himself. The former is simply a continuation, clarification and corroboration of the latter. Now I should stop and make what is an obvious but necessary observation, and that is, that as a born-again Christian (consistent with my earlier definition) I am writing this from a Christian perspective while trying my best to also provide the Jewish perspective, but, of course, only to the extent which I understand it from my study of the Old Testament and a limited amount of other information. However, given the likelihood that most Jews have never read the New Testament, while every serious committed Christian must read and study the Old Testament, it seems likely that my perspective of the issue might be more inclusive and balanced, and, therefore, more edifying in some respects than if written by the “average” Jew.

2. *Same God*

The Jew and Christian both believe in the same God, the one and only God, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God who wrote the Book. This may seem too obvious to be worthy of comment, yet I believe that there are some subtleties here, which are very important. When I refer to the Book, I mean either or both the Old and New Testament, for as a great teacher has noted, the New Testament is in the Old Testament concealed, while the Old Testament is in the New

Testament revealed. A careful study and comparison of the two, from the Christian perspective, shows this to be true. The Jews, however, not accepting the belief that the New Testament is also the Word of God because of the claim it makes regarding the identity of its principal character, may have serious reservations regarding this same-God premise.

As a Christian, I assure you that it is the same God who simply reveals, in the New Testament additional information about Himself and His nature. He does so, for the most part, by using the Torah and the words of the Prophets to authenticate what is written about Him. As previously noted, both Jews and Christians, as I have defined them, believe that the Scriptures, with both, seeing God as the Author. Notwithstanding the above issue, I believe that our belief in this, the only God, the Judeo/Christian God, sets us apart from all others who claim to believe in the single one and only God.

The Muslim faiths claim Abraham as their father through his son Ishmael. Although they claim to believe in the same God, theirs is the moon god of ancient Babylon. They call him unknowable and capricious, which is contrary to the character of our God. They also seem to believe in some kind of “specialness” of Jesus. Beyond that they have picked and chosen various biblical truths and reject others in their writing of the Koran. This “picking and choosing” also seems to be the way of many who call themselves Jews as well as who call themselves Christians. I understand that some Hindu faiths also claim belief in a single one and only God. However, others see Jesus as simply one of many deities, and believe that people reincarnate over and over again, sometimes in animal form.

One cannot pick and choose from the Scriptures, accept what seems to fit one’s preferences, and reject what doesn’t. To do this is to preempt God, to believe one’s choices to be superior to His whole revelation. Eventually, this can only lead to a degeneration of any faith, except faith in one’s self as God. A result of this is relativism, the elimination of absolutes except the “absolute” acceptance of

that which says “my right is as good as your right and there is no right or wrong except as I feel it to be at any particular time”. This cannot help but at least partially account for the total moral breakdown, and decadence that now prevails over much of the world. At this point, in this study, unless you are one of the believing Jews or Christians, this probably has offended you. However, please stay with me for a while longer, because I’m sure to have something even more offensive, even for Jews and probably some Christians.

3. Salvation by Faith

The Bible teaches both Jews and Christians that we are redeemed by faith and faith alone, and that they shall be restored to eternal life. This is crystal clear to the Christians, and along with the Gospel, is a fundamental tenant of the faith. It is perhaps less clear in the Old Testament, but it is, nevertheless, well documented, as the following examples indicate:

- a. In Habakkuk 2:4 the Prophet tells us “ *..the just shall live by faith.*” What he is saying is that those who are justified in the Lord, that is, given eternal life, are so blessed because of their faith. It so happens that this was the one phrase in the entire Scriptures that most affected Martin Luther and was the key to his efforts, which caused the Protestant reformation. His efforts merely “stirred things up” rather than providing people with the true way to eternal life.
- b. Check out Abraham. What saved him to eternal life? Faith! He was an idol-worshiping gentile whom God removed, along with his father out of the city of Ur in the Chaldeas at the age of 75, 24 years before he became the first Jew. {Genesis 17} He was justified and thus saved by faith, not because of any good works or deeds, but by faith alone, his unyielding belief in the Lord, as this

portion of his life is described in Genesis. The most profound evidence of his faith was his willingness to sacrifice Isaac as a burnt offering as the Lord commanded. As the story is related, it seems evident that both he and Isaac here proved their faiths. Isaac, by then was 33 years old, yet he allowed his 133 years old father to bind him, after which he lay down on the firewood-covered altar. Then before lighting the fire, Abraham raised his knife to kill him. At that moment his trust and faith having been proven, the Lord stopped the action. Abraham's faith here came partially from the fact that the Lord told him that through Isaac he would father a great nation. Because Isaac yet had no children, Abraham knew, through faith in the Word of the Lord, that the Lord would have to either somehow spare Isaac or else resurrect him in order to keep His word. Careful reading of these passages also suggests, at least from the Christian perspective, that they knew they were acting out a prophecy. At that same location, on Mt Moriah, another Father did sacrifice His Son 2000 years later. This sacrifice is the foundation of the Christian faith.

- c. David is a great example of faith. Regardless of his lying, conniving, murdering, adulterous behavior, he also expressed a love and faith in the Lord, unequalled anywhere in Scripture. A most telling event clearly illustrating his saving faith and the expectation of eternal life is in Samuel 12. This was when his infant son by Bethsheba was very ill. David prayed day and night and would not eat or sleep for seven days until the boy died. The servants, fearing that David would further damage himself when he heard of the death, delayed telling him. However, when he did find out, he got up, cleaned up, ate a hearty meal, and proceeded to conduct his normal business. While the child lived there was hope

that prayer, fasting and supplication might save him. Once dead, however, David knew that the child was with God and that he would later be reunited with him. His absolute faith, and through it, his belief in eternal life is clearly evident.

- d. Consider Job. He apparently lived a very virtuous life, had a fine family, great wealth and power, and believed in the Lord. These seemed to somewhat arbitrarily having been taken away and replaced with a long period of affliction, pain, suffering and ridicule. Yet throughout, he never lost faith as the dialogue with his “friends” indicates. He also verified his belief in a future life when in chapter 19 he speaks of his flesh eaten away after death, yet he knows that he will thereafter see the Lord with his own eyes.
- e. There are many other references and documentations regarding faith and eternal life to be found in the books of Prophets. There are a few other places in the Old Testament where similar evidence to be found. They occur in the Psalms, such as 21-4, 61-7, 116-4-6 as well as in Proverbs 10:2-12:23, 14:32 and 14:20.

4. *The reality of Satan*

Both Jews and Christians know, or should know, with certainty, of the existence, the origin, and the power of Satan, because both the Old and New Testament are very explicit on the matter. There are also good as well as bad angels. The bad angels are those who revolted against God, and chose Satan to be their leader. In the hierarchy of angels, Satan, or Lucifer as he was then called, was the chief and the most powerful, intelligent and beautiful of all of the angelic beings. We read of him in Isaiah 14 and in Ezekiel 28. While the human soul/spirit is immortal, the flesh, which is influenced by time and space, because of sin, is mortal, and

must die. Angels as spirits, are immortal. However, they are also transcendent in that they exist outside of time and space but also have the ability to enter and leave time and space. Here they can appear in human, fleshy form. The physical appearances of the archangels Michael and Gabriel are recorded a number of times in both Scriptures. Through the prophet Daniel, we know that Satan is the power and authority behind world governments and institutions. This is all very evident in both the Old and New Testament. Satan's rebellion and activities against the Lord are well recorded and continue to this day. They will continue to the end of time as referenced in the Old Testament and very specifically detailed in the New Testament Book of Revelation. That point in time is very close. One only needs to look around in a truly awakened state to know this.

In Genesis 3 Satan is referred to as the serpent in the Garden of Eden who convinced Eve to sin. Certainly this seems to be a human-like being that talked to Eve, not a slithering snake, or an allegorical, or abstract image. Such a derogatory epithet is often used to identify Satan. This becomes clear in Ezekiel 28 where we learn a great deal about him. The first ten verses of Ezekiel 28 refer to the king of Tyrus (Tyre).

Then verse 11 begins with an address directly to the source of power behind the throne when the Lord says to Ezekiel, *"Moreover the Word of the Lord came to me saying, son of man take of lamentations upon the king of Tyrus and say to him thus sayest the Lord God: Thou sealest up the sum full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the Garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering the sardius, topaz and the diamond..."* In Verse 14, *"Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth, and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God: thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire."* Verse 15 *"Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created till iniquity was found in thee."* Also, in verse 17 it says, *"Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty; thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness..."*

While the name Satan or Lucifer does not appear in these passages, it is clear, nevertheless, that it is he being addressed as the influence behind the throne of Tyrus. Who else was in the Garden of Eden? Here he is described as “the anointed cherub that covereth” that is, the chief Cherub as well as the chief authority over all angels. In Job 1, we see Satan “walking” (not slithering) along the earth; in Psalm 109 Satan stands at the right of a wicked overseer (ruler) and in Chronicles 21:1 we see David provoked by Satan. In Isaiah 14:12 we learn *“how art thou fallen from heaven O Lucifer, son of the morning how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nation...”* He goes on to describe Lucifer’s goal to exceed God, and then how he will cause much destruction and be, in the last days, brought down, ridiculed and ruined. Much more is revealed in the New Testament regarding the fact of Satan and his activities. However, the Old Testament, as here indicated, provides sufficient evidence to establish without a doubt his physical and transcendent existence.

Regardless of the strong Scriptural evidence, many who call themselves Jews and Christians deny the existence of Satan as the real, living, powerful, dominating, being that he really is. However, these are not the Jews or Christians by my definition. Much of the rest of the world denies his existence also, except those, considerable and growing number who actually worship him. Most people, even if they read the Scriptures, believe that references to Satan are merely allegorical, a mythical representation of evil, but in no way a real, live, transcendent being with major supernatural powers, as the Bible identifies him. He is described as the great deceiver. Surely he is that. So great is his ability to deceive, that he has been able to convince most of the world that he doesn’t even exist! One might ask, why does the omnipotent God allow him to exist and to continue his crusade of corruption, his evil activities, and his warring against his Creator? It’s difficult to know because we don’t have the mind of God. We only know that he does exist, he does epitomize evil and he does exercise great power over the activities of man and of nations. I also know that he is immortal, and that he will, receive his due punishment in the end of the end times. Thus while this is a controversial

issue in many circles, the knowledge of Satan's existence, His nature, and his activities, I believe is common to both Bible believing Jews and Christians.

5. Circumcision

Many would view this issue, at first glance, to be better located on a list of items that Jews and Christians do not have in common. Seen from the following perspective, however, it can fit well into this list of issues that we do have in common. The first mention of circumcisions in the Scriptures occurs around 1890 BC, when the Lord in Genesis 17:11 directs Abraham to circumcise "*as a token of covenant betwext me and you.*" This token has remained to this day as an essential and almost unique aspect of both Judaism and Islam, because Abraham was the patriarch of both religions through his sons Isaac and Ishmael. Although references to circumcision in the Old Testament are usually in the context of its original meaning, Scripture tells us that the Lord intended a broader meaning, and that it was so viewed by the ancients. Jeremiah uses it in its broader spiritual meaning twice. In 4:4 the Lord through Jeremiah speaks to spiritual backsliders and says "*...circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the foreskins of your heart, ye man of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem lest My fury come forth like fire and burn that none can quench it because of the evil of your doings.*" In 9:26 "*...And all the house of Israel are uncircumcised in the heart*" Clearly the Lord meant this token to be of spiritual significance not only as a physical demonstration of allegiance but also as symbolic of a greater and higher allegiance related to faith, love and worship of the Lord.

It is in this last context, on which the New Testament relies heavily in its discussion relating to born-again Jews, and in structuring spiritual idioms. While the New Testament frees the believer from the necessity of physical circumcision, it make extensive use of the term in its other spiritual meaning which, from a Christians perspective, confirm what the Lord had in mind.

6. *Waiting for the Messiah*

Both Jews and Christians sincerely expect the Messiah to come any time. They both know from the Scriptures that He will come to rule directly over all mankind. This will be an earthly reign on an earthly throne, the throne of David in Jerusalem. There is some divergence of belief here however, regarding the timing, the number of times, the nature and the purpose of the Messiah's coming. The prophet Daniel predicted to the very day when the Messiah would first come. Jesus proclaimed Himself King on that exact prophesied day some 570 years later. The religious leaders of that time did not recognize this prophetic fulfillment even though the evidence was very clear.

Around 7 AD the Romans, in their tightening control of the Jews, stripped them of the authority over capital punishment. This was considered the prime element of authority. The removal of this "Scepter" was not supposed to occur until the Messiah came. The fact that this removal of authority occurred, meant that either the Messiah had arrived, or that God had broken His word. They rent their clothes, put on sackcloth and ashes and mourned greatly over what they believed was Gods broken promise, because they did not see any evidence of the Coming. What they didn't know, but should have known, was that at that moment, there was a seven-year old boy growing up in Nazareth who was the fulfillment of that promise. Perhaps it was this shaken faith that contributed to their later refusal to recognize Him when he finally did reveal and proclaim Himself 23 years later.

As noted, the Jews expected, and the prophecies were clear, that the Messiah would come and physically rule the world from the throne of David. Christians believe this also, and it will happen, at his Second Coming. Preceding this, however, the Messiah did come as also prophesied, as a humble servant, a teacher, a healer, a Rabbi, and the Savior. The Jews did not perceive this manner and purpose for His first coming, but instead expected, and still rightly expect, the earthly King, which He will be in the end of time.

So both the Jews and the Christians are still waiting for this successor to David who, when He comes, has promised to reveal all things. Therefore, there is a grand and happy finale to this, what should be a friendly debate among friendly people, who in truth, I believe, may not be as far apart spiritually as many believe them to be.

7. *Cleansing Sin Through Shedding of Innocent Blood*

The Torah is very clear on this point. The only way sins could be forgiven, that is washed away, was through the shedding of innocent blood. That this was “innocent” blood is implicit in the fact that animals could hardly be considered to be sinful, One could say that this is the foundation and principal function of the whole Levitical priesthood as laid out in minute detail in Leviticus, Book 3 of the Torah. The worship of God, as God Himself directed, was through animal sacrifice. That process, that aspect of worship and atonement for sins however, started much, much earlier than Leviticus. One could say it started in the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve, after the first sin, were no longer clothed in the light of Gods glory. Thus they discovered their own nakedness.

They tried to cover themselves with fig leaves. However God instead gave them clothes of animal skins. This was the first shedding of innocent blood to cover sin. If one believes that this may be reaching, consider the issue of Cain and Able. In Genesis 4 we are told that *Able* “...brought of the firstlings of his flock...” and *Cain* brought “...the fruit of the ground...” for sacrifice to the Lord. Abel was righteous in his delivery and Cain was not. Both evidently knew the rules and requirement of innocent blood to be sacrificed, but Cain chose to set his own rule, to offer the product of his own work. Of course, God praised one and rebuked the other.

We know Noah was also well informed and mightily obedient to God’s will in this matter. We remember that God had him put two of every species on the ark.

He also had him to bring seven of every “clean” beast. These were to be used for sacrifice, which was the very first thing Noah did as soon as he got out of the ark. He built an altar and sacrificed an animal in order to provide, innocent blood as the Lord required. As noted earlier, Abraham was very well versed in the need for blood sacrifice, again well before Leviticus. Thus we see those ancient peoples, ancestors of all mankind, were aware of, and practiced the shedding of innocent blood to honor their various gods. The Hebrews, whom God chose as the vehicle through which to convey His word, continued this practice with varying degrees of piety throughout the course of time as recorded in the Old Testament.

The New Testament, the main Christian focus, does not refute or rescind this original practice as a means of covering sin. Instead, its contents stand as a living crescendo and grand finale forever memorializing this ancient rite. As noted before, the New Testament is in the Old Testament concealed, while the Old Testament is in the New Testament revealed. While this is verifiably true, I suggest that here one could also say very surely that the New Testament explains many aspects of the Old Testament not heretofore revealed, or revealed with such subtlety as to be rarely understood.

The coming of Jesus as the Messiah, the details and location of His birth, ministry, death, resurrection and ascension were clearly predicted in the Old Testament. During His brief sojourn here, he fulfilled over 300 prophecies recorded in the Old Testament. However, many of these would have been difficult to recognize in advance, but become quite evident from the vantagepoint of the after-the-fact New Testament period. Many, however, could have, and should have been recognized by, at least, the learned priest, because they would have been quite clear had faith been into their hearts and if they were truly worshipping the God of the Temple instead of the Temple of God. This crescendo and grand finale noted above was God’s personal intervention through Jesus Christ, the lamb of God, whose primary purpose here on earth was to provide the

way to salvation, to be the once and for all time spotless sacrificial lamb whose blood on the cross would cleanse the sins from all who believe in Him. Just as circumcision was originally a token of the covenant, so also had been the animal sacrifices in the past.

Just as the circumcision token was meant to be manifested spiritually and for all time in the circumcision of the heart, so also was the sacrificial shedding of animal blood to be viewed as a token, a preparatory symbol, a temporary substitute for the immaculate final sacrifice of God Himself on the cross. When viewed strictly from the before-the-fact reading of the Torah and the Prophets, the validity of this prophetic fulfillment is understandably difficult to deduce. However, through the continued inspired words of the Lord contained in the New Testament, the truth of this is very evident throughout the Torah and the teaching of the prophets, and literally screams to be recognized and revealed. As a final note on this, the New Testament tells us, that while animal sacrifice “covered” sins, it was the sacrifice of the “suffering servant,” Jesus, as graphically detailed in Isaiah 53, which actually removed those covered sins and thereby opened the gates of heaven to all saved souls. This of course could only have been after the resurrection as recorded by John the Baptist.

Thus the Jews and the Christians have at least seven major aspects of faith in common. These last two, however, are quite tricky and probably from the Jewish perspective fundamentally flawed in terms of the final declarations presented above. Therefore, they also serve as an introduction to the one overriding difference between Jews and Christians. Simply put, the big, and in my view, only substantial difference between Jews and Christians involves the identity of Jesus. The long and tortured history of man since Jesus was here, grimly attested not to this difference in belief, but to the exploitation of that difference by Satan and his agents. I’m not saying this difference in beliefs is not of prime importance, but by itself it is not the cause of the centuries of grief, which it seems to represent.

Murders and other unspeakable atrocities have, over the ages, been perpetrated toward true Christians as well as Jews, all in the name of Christianity. Knowing only half of the atrocity stories as well as who, how and why they occurred, it is of little wonder that Jews fear, hate, and distrust anyone who calls himself a Christian. For a variety of other reasons the same may be said of Christians regarding some who call themselves Jews.

It is well documented, though rarely spoken of, that Catholic Popes actually had millions of faithful Christians tortured and killed because they chose the Bible instead of Papal authority. A large part of Southern France, for instance, was totally depopulated when in 1209 Pope Innocent III declared a crusade to wipe out all “heretics” whose crime was reading or owning a Bible instead of relying only on the official church dogma. Over 60,000 men, women and children, the entire population of the City Beziers was wiped out during this “crusade.” Pope Innocent III murdered more Christians in one afternoon than any Roman emperor ever did during his entire reign.

Of course, the Inquisition resulted in the torture and murder of millions more in the name of Christianity. The book “A Woman Rides the Beast,” by Dave Hunt (Harvest House Publishers), documents the whole history of these particular centuries-long travesties committed in the name of Christianity on both Christians and Jews. Speaking of crusades, the more commonly known ones, also in the name of Christianity as instigated by the self proclaimed “Vickers of Christ,” found great moral fulfillment in killing all of the Jews and Arabs they could find. The “knights” found great sport in contests that involved seeing who could string the greatest number of Jewish babies on his sword, all in the name of Christianity. Some of these valiant knights, the Knights Templar, as one group was called, affiliated themselves with an Arab satanic cult called the Assassins. Through this alliance they amassed incredible wealth, and became a powerful occult force after their return to Europe.

By now it is evident why I chose to start this tirade by involving Satan. Who else could possibly manage such a well organized on-going manifestation of hate, evil, deceit, blasphemy and atrocities, and at the same time inculcate in the minds of the perpetrators,

the perverted belief that they were acting on behalf of a higher cause, and in the name of Christianity? Nothing has changed. Hitler was just one more manifestation of this perpetual evil. Today similar ethnic and religious “cleanings” are taking place, a little more subtly perhaps, and with less publicity, but with the same brutality and purpose. This is happening to Christians today throughout Africa, China, and other eastern countries while the official press chooses to ignore it.

True Christians who understand Scripture do not hate or discriminate against Jews, and true Jews who know the real meaning of true Christianity, do not hate or fear Christians. The original seed of dissention that was sown among early Christians, primarily as the Christian body evolved into a formalized church, was the recognition that the Jews killed Jesus. This by itself was ample justification for hatred. While there is some early text by the Apostles that may be construed the matter this way, the early Christians knew the truth as can anyone today who studies the Scriptures. His coming, His death by crucifixion, His resurrection and the purpose for it were all foretold from the very beginning in the Torah and especially in the words of the Prophets. While less than evident as specific, detailed, and clearly identified predictions when viewed prior to the event, they are nevertheless unmistakably clear in retrospect as studied after the fact, especially with the explaining and collaborating benefit of the New Testament.

The true Christian knows from the Scriptures that only a few, probably no more than a dozen Jewish political and religious leaders were instigators of the crucifixion. The multitudes certainly were not, for He had healed many thousands and His fame and the adoration toward Him had spread throughout the region. This, of course, is what presented a threat to the leadership, and was the cause of the conspiracy against Him. True Christians know that this was the carnal cause of the crucifixion. He came for a purpose as prophesied, to be the final and forever sin-cleansing sacrificial lamb for all who believed in Him. Were it not for my sins and all of the past, present and future sins of all believers, He would not have had to do this, that He would not have to come first as a Savior. Therefore, if blame is to be levied, it is against me, and all other saved sinners who caused His suffering and mortal death, not the Jews of His day. Earlier, Jesus called

that leadership group, those who chose ritual rather than worship, who paid homage to the Temple of God rather than the God of the Temple, as being of the synagogue of Satan. Certainly it is the church of Satan in whatever of the many forms it has taken throughout the centuries which has brought evil to new heights in the name of Christianity.

While writing this, I received a letter from an organization I had never heard of before called Jews for Jesus. It fit so well with my mission here that I suspect the Lord had a hand in my getting on their mailing list at this very time. They have a beautiful and, I believe, sincere mission as Jews to witness to other Jews about Jesus. Here are a few excerpts from the letter, which I feel I must share:

“We have heard of the Gentile God Jesus, but the true meaning of the Gospel has rarely been communicated. We are a closed community because Jewish teachers, having no understanding of Christianity, misinform us of its meaning. Furthermore, too many good Christians don’t speak of Jesus to us because they fear they will offend us. Believe me; being offended is better than being condemned for eternity.”

“So very few of us realize that Jesus died for our sins as well as the sins of the whole world; that he rose again to bring new life to Jews as well as gentiles. Nor do most Jews know that Jesus calls His followers to love our people. Our social conditioning prevents us from seeing that faith in Jesus empowers and motivates people to love one another.”

“We (Jews for Jesus) need to tell them that because of Jesus, there are non-Jews who love our people; that believing in Jesus in a biblical way causes people to love, not hate.”

“But most Jews figure it is someone else’s party and we are not invited. Well God did invite the Jewish people. He never said, “You have to discard your Jewishness to be saved.” Jews who believe in Jesus feel more Jewish than ever because we’ve been reunited with God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and renewed through Jesus the Messiah. Believing in Him enables us to fulfill our Jewish destiny.

One last comment. There is a book called “America’s Real War “ by Rabbi Daniel Lappin (Mullnomah, publishers, copyright 1999), that I pray everyone who values his family, his community and his country would read. I don’t believe that anything of this importance regarding the preservation of these endangered institutions has been written in the past 30 years or longer. Rabbi Lappin’s sincerity, humbleness, love and incredibly astute perceptions reverberate from every page. He expresses deep and sincere love and respect for Christians, yet departs not one jot or tittle from his strict Orthodox beliefs. He simply recognizes fully what true Christianity is, and how in this morally crumbling and ever more dangerous world, the true Christian is and has been the Jew’s best friend, as his perspective of American History clearly illustrates. I could not possibly do this phenomenally elegant book justice by trying to summarize it or to even express its major theme. Suffice it to say that no real Christian or Jew could read it without feeling spiritually edified and grateful for his work, and for our Judeo/Christian heritage, regardless if it’s past and even present pains. As far as Jews for Jesus is concerned, I have one big criticism of their organization. True believers should not choose to be a separate group of believers as they have chosen to be. Christians are the Body of Christ. They are one body. Choosing to be separate is not scriptural, nor does it truly honor Jesus.

Post Script:

What you have just read, I first wrote over 16 years ago. At that time, about the year 2000, I felt that it was inadequate in addressing the title question, and so I just put it away for another day. Having now reviewed it, my impression is that it’s too lengthy and yet still inadequate for the purpose I hoped it would serve. Nevertheless, I’ve chosen to leave it alone and simply add this postscript which 16 years of additional observation and concerns has brought me. Surely one major flaw lies in the fact that it is relevant to only a very small segment of the Jewish and Christian population, those who take seriously and believe in the inerrant Word of God. It is my observation, that most of the “Christian” world whether it be Catholic, Orthodox, or Reformed, find the Bible somewhat flawed, full of “scientifically proven” errors, and at the very best, an

interesting, but wholly unreliable result of man's tampering of what may have at one time been a compiling of God's messages to the ancients. Similarly, but with far less evidence, I suspect that the vast majority of Jews today take very limited, if any stock in the Tenach as the true and accurate recording of God's Word.

On this basis, few if any are likely to be benefitted by this effort. This is because only a tiny portion on "either side" can even understand, let alone appreciate, the facts that could remove many of the fears and animosities. Most of humanity is comfortable with, and prefer to hold on to its hates, and prejudices rather than admit error. Nevertheless, I believe its time to toss this out in a few directions and see what happens. If only one heart is softened and one mind is favorably influenced, it will be a great blessing.