



One New Man Study: Lesson One

The Theology of Separation Between the Church and The Jews

When it comes to the relationship of Jew and Gentile, the major thrust of all traditional church theology is separation. (It is also the thrust of all traditional rabbinic theology). God's major thrust, on the other hand, is reconciliation - to take two and form there into one new creation.

Eph. 2:13-16 - But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. [14] For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; [15] Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; [16] And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:

As in the marriage of a man and a woman, so in the biblical joining of Jew and Gentile, God's purpose is neither overthrow nor the obliteration of the individual, but rather mutual strengthening, service, and fruitfulness.

Eph. 5:22-25 - Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. [23] For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the savior of the body. [24] Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. [25] Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

Theology that sets "the Church in opposition to the "Jews" is "Anti-Judaic" theology. Anti-Judaic theology arose as a response to the "chosen ness" of the Jewish people. This is the purpose of this study course. To open our eyes to the need, especially in these last days prior to the coming of the Lord, for the Gentile and Jew to come together in true Biblical unity. True Biblical unity does not destroy either's heritage or identity, yet as the husband and wife enhances each other – so will the union of the Jew and Gentile. The One New Man is not a movement – it's a person – YESHUAH MESSIAH. Our Messiah is Jewish, yet through His death, the Gentiles are grafted into the Jewish covenant and olive tree. Sadly, there has been a wall of separation that has been built between the two groups. Our goal and prayer through this study is to be a bridge builder and a voice to encourage the Body of Christ to tear down that wall and see the glory of the Lord in these final days prior to judgment and harvest.

I. The Council Of Nicea

The tendency of the institutionalized church's hatred toward the Jewish people began really early. Paul addressed this in Romans. I visited a Messianic fellowship recently. The leader of the fellowship said that Jewish believers in Messiah have actually been pushed out twice. Prior to the Church Council of Nicea in A.D.32, the Rabbinical order of the synagogues met about 100 years earlier to alienate Jewish believers in Jesus from those whose faith was placed in orthodox or Rabbinical Judaism. Then as to add injury to insult, the Gentiles said, "we don't want you either," at a meeting held by the Roman Emperor Constantine that divided the church even further and cut off of her the very life source of our existence – our roots. The roots of the church are JEWISH in nature but everything promoted and agreed on in Nicea started a downward spiral for the church we have never recovered from. AT LEAST NOT UNTIL NOW!

The Council was a distinct turning point in the history of the church. Up until that time, all church theology had been built upon a Judaic foundation. Everything since was built upon an ANTI-JUDAIC foundation. The theological changes embraced a Nicea made it impossible for the church to be faithful to its God-given mission. These institutionalized changes were foundational and monumental. They were seven-fold:

- ***The rejection of the literal meaning of Scripture in its content***
- ***The subjugation of Scripture to the authority of a Church hierarchy***
- ***The determination that Church doctrine and practice would be in opposition to the Jews.***
- ***The establishment of compulsory conformity in practice***
- ***The acceptance of the State and the sword as the means of maintaining purity in the Church. (The cross was transformed from a means of victory over sin for the individual to a means of victory over sinners for society)***
- ***The acceptance of the sword of the State - instead of the Sword of the Spirit, the blood of the Lamb and the blood of the believers - as the means of triumph in the world***
- ***The acceptance of State support of the Church in exchange for the Church support of the State. (The church surrendered its own prophetic message toward the State)***¹

These are not insignificant alterations. They are major adulterations. The Church became the Church of Constantine. The theological shift that took place was basically this: ***The Church became identified as the "new Israel" replacing the Jews.*** Today, we call it **Replacement Theology**. As the "new Israel," the Church itself was equated with the kingdom of God, since it was the kingdom of Israel that God promised to restore. Because God had entrusted the

¹ Dan Gruber, *The Church And The Jews*, Destiny Publishing, 1999

sword to the kingdom/nation of Israel, the "new Israel" also picked up the sword. Early church documents are rare to support all of this BUT there is ample evidence in the documents that are to give a basic understanding of the issues that resulted in these changes.²

II. The First And The Last: Gentiles At First, Jews At Last

In the first century, the most heated, controversial, doctrinal issue of all that the Church faced was: "**How do the Gentiles fit into all this?**" It was a very important issue. Identity, purpose, and destiny depended upon it. It nearly split the early Church. (Read Acts 15) We are nearly 2,000 years removed from that time, that culture, and the life of the early Church. So it is very difficult for us to fully appreciate the reasons for the controversy and its intensity, but it is very important that we do so.

Today, the most heated controversial doctrinal issue that we as the Church face is: "How do the Jews fit into all this?" The Biblical answer is crucial to a proper understanding of the entire Bible. Why? BECAUSE ALL OF OUR THEOLOGY AND MANNER OF BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION FLOWS FROM OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE CHURCH AND THE JEWS. I heard this several years ago: "*a faulty view of God will always lead to a faulty view of your fellow man. And a faulty view of your fellow man will always lead you to persecute your fellow man.*" Our behavior shows our faith.

So our view of Israel's relationship to the Church determines our view of the past, present, future, our relationship with God, our prayers, our evangelism, our worship, our view of modern Israel, the nations, and the Church itself. We cannot fulfill our destiny as the Church without a proper understanding of this relationship. The Bible does not condemn tradition, nor does it teach us to reject the wisdom of the past ages. It does, however, make it clear that God is not pleased with the teachings and traditions of men that place others in contrary to His Word. The natural condition of man, even religious man, has not changed since the days of the Pharisees and Sadducees.³

III. The Question of the Two Testaments

Certain accepted terms that have been passed down throughout church history concern the canon of scriptures. They communicate something that is not true, and lead to incorrect doctrine. The Biblical usage must be adopted instead. The terms "Old Testament" and "New Testament" are traditionally used to refer to the two major parts of the Bible that was written before the life of Jesus on the earth. The "New Testament" is taken to be what was written afterwards. From the historical evidence available it seems that "Irenaeus was the first to apply the term N.T. (New Testament) to sacred scriptures and that after his times the

² Gruber

³ Ibid.

description of them as the "New Testament" 'came into vogue.'" It seems that Melito or Sardis is to be credited "for the first use of the term Old Covenant or Old Testament to refer to the Bible..." Irenaeus and Melito wrote between 160-190 A.D. 1800 years ago, but more than a century removed from the gospel events.⁴

Though the traditional use of these terms is very old, it is incorrect. "Old Testament" and "New Testament" actually refer to the two major covenants that the Lord made with Israel - the "old" covenant of the Law and the "new" covenant in the blood of Jesus. The proper Biblical terms are "Old Covenant" and "New Covenant." These covenants are particular agreements, not designations for the two major parts of the Bible. When Paul speaks of the Old Covenant fading away, he is speaking of the Covenant of the Law, not of the scriptures themselves. The scriptures, and the Law of God, which they contain, are eternal. It is only the covenant that has faded away.

Traditional teaching has always held the Old Testament was for the Jews and the New Testament was for the Church. This type labeling has led many to interpret the Old Testament differently from the New Testament. It leads to an erroneous belief that the God of the Old Testament is a God of wrath, and the God of the New Testament is a God of mercy. This error compounded by ignoring both God's love for Israel and God's promises of judgment in the Church, and His wrath and judgment in the world. These are fundamental errors. God is one. He and His purpose are unchanging. He presents the gospel as the fulfillment of what He planned and promised from the beginning. The plan, the promise and the fulfillment are inseparable. This has just increased the gap between the church and the Jews.

In addition to this, English translations of the Bible and of the early Church tend to use the word "heathen" or "nations" for the Gentiles. This is unfortunate because it makes it very difficult for readers to understand the nature and intensity of the conflict in the early Church (cf. Acts 15) over the manner in which the Gentiles could be saved. It makes it difficult to appreciate what a radically new thing God was doing. It makes it difficult to appreciate both the nature of the Great Commission and the full measure of God's grace. Some who deal with the Church in different cultures use "people-groups" to more accurately convey the Bible meaning and the differences between the Gentile and Jew. Though God promises to make Israel a holy nation, He makes it clear Israel is a unique people, not to be "reckoned among the goyim, or Gentiles." (Numbers 23:9).

The starting point for examining the Biblical relationship of the Church and the Jews need to be God Himself. Traditional Church theology begins with the Church. That is why most of the Church, throughout most of its history, has improperly understood the Biblical relationship between the Church and the Jews. God did not begin with the Church. As one noted Bible scholar once said: *"There are assumptions peculiar to time in history which are accepted as true*

⁴ Ibid

and require no proof. To question them appears almost blasphemous. It is easy to proclaim those ideas at those times, however absurd they may seem to those who live at other times and under a different spirit. Such is power of prejudice and the spirit of the age. Tradition indeed makes the word of God of NO effect."

IV. Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History

The *Ecclesiastical History* of Eusebius Pamphilus is the acknowledged history of the Church from the end of the Book of Acts to the Council of Nicea in 325 A.D. In many circles it is the most important work and source for the history of the Church in those centuries. It is a source that is recognized to contain some serious untruths. **It planted the seeds in the mind of Church fathers that later gave Hitler his plank to murder 6 million Jews.** The pamphlet was written during the reign of the Roman Emperor CONSTANTINE. Constantine is known as the First Christian emperor. The church had endured centuries of persecution. Constantine decreed an end to it, although it briefly reappeared later, and began to exalt the Church. It was he who convened the Council of Nicea.

Along with the political shift, came a tremendous theological shift too. Eusebius' outlook was conditioned by the new political settlement between the Empire and the Church as well as his theological upbringing and allegiance to certain views that he inherited from a man named Origen. In his philosophy, the Emperor was the image of God and the representative of the Almighty. The Emperor also acted as the interpreter of the Logos. He imitated the philanthropy of the Son of God. In the gathering of the bishops with Constantine on the day of this 30th anniversary of his reign, Eusebius supposedly saw the image of the Messianic banquet.

The church and the empire merged together in his mind. The structure of the Empire's earthly government was according to the pattern of the divine original. The divine original the empire was to reflect and pivotal issue theologically was the nature of the fulfilled kingdom of God. If the kingdom of God was to be fulfilled through a personal earthly reign of Jesus the Messiah from Jerusalem, then the Jews were inescapably part of that Kingdom, which would follow the repentance of Israel as a nation. In that case, God's faithfulness to the Jews had not expired. The kingdom was still future.

On the other hand, if Constantine, the emerging Holy Roman Empire, and the State-exalted Church were the kingdom, then there was no need for the Jews. The fullness of the kingdom was in the present. Moreover, if the Jews had no special significance for the fulfilled kingdom of God, then God had no need or plan for them. In that case, the rejection and replacement of the Jews was the means of fulfilling the kingdom. Instead of being natural citizens of the kingdom, whether loyal or disloyal, the Jews became the enemies of the kingdom. If that were the case, then the Church needed to recognize and proclaim it. Eusebius firmly believed this. He and Constantine believed in the fourth century that the

Church was the "New Israel," replacing the Jews. He firmly believed that there was no distinct future for the Jews in the plan of God. The belief in the restoration of Israel and the Jewish people in the millennial kingdom was established doctrine by the early church. Eusebius totally refuted these claims.⁵

V. Origen's System of Interpretation

One of Eusebius's main teachers was Origen. His work is dated around the beginning of the third century. He is credited with being the father of the allegorical method of interpretation. In his mind the only way to truly understand scripture was through allegories. He often denied the ordinary sense of the text, and replaced it with allegories that he made up. These allegories then became the real meaning of the text. There was no way to challenge the allegories on the basis of the text, since what the text actually said was no longer what it meant.

In this allegorical system, when the text said, "Israel," it meant "the Church" and not the Jews, so long as the promise or comment was good. If the promise or comment was not good, then "Israel" still meant the "Jews," and not "the Church." Even though Origen was a brilliant man and a scholar his reasoning about the Jews was deluded. To many he was a heretic. Despite this, many of the original church fathers embraced what he was writing as divinely inspired concerning the Jews. It was this system and spirit that produced the original anti-Judaic "New Israel" theology where the Church replaces the Jews in the plans and purposes of God. The attitude of the churches in the Roman province of "Palestine" accepted Origen's teachings. Almost all the Jews in Judea and Samaria had either died in the Bar Kokhba Rebellion of 132-135 A.D. or, had been carried off into slavery by the victorious Romans. **Before the gospel was preached to the Gentiles, there were Jewish churches "throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria." (Acts 9:31)⁶**

Acts 9:31 - Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.

From the end of the Bar Kokhba Rebellion on, all Jews were forbidden to even enter the precincts of Jerusalem. The city itself had been destroyed and renamed Aelia, in honor of the divine nature of Aelia Hadrianus, i.e. the Emperor Hadrian (who destroyed Jerusalem) as the Roman god Jupiter. Up until that time, the bishops in Jerusalem had all been Jewish. If there were any bishops in Caesarea before that time, they would have almost certainly been Jewish too. The Roman Empire had destroyed or removed the Jewish bishops and churches. They were replaced with Gentiles ones. The Gentile bishops and churches naturally began to think of themselves as having replaced the Jews. Another

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

church "father" Justin wrote in his *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew* he expressed the belief that the destruction of Jerusalem and all the suffering that attended the unsuccessful Bar Kokhba Rebellion was a judgment of God for the failure of the Jews to believe in Jesus. A large theological step was then taken from the view to the teaching that God had cast off the Jews, and had replaced them with the Gentile Church. There are obvious natural reasons why such a teaching would appeal to the Gentile bishops and churches in "Palestine." Origen chose to ignore or alter reality to make it fit with his beliefs. In his theological battle against those in the Church who held to the plain meaning of the text, Origen decided to portray them as disgraceful "Jews" who were rejecting the Lord. Though Origen knew God had given the New Covenant Scriptures to the world through JEWISH men, he wrote that it is the "people of the Gentiles, that will elevate what Moses wrote and establish its understanding on a high level." Since he didn't think the Jews fit into the plan of God, he just dismissed this reality to fit his theology and system. The church at large still embraces that system today.

Anyone who did not accept this system was labeled as nothing "more than a Jew" and really did not belong to the Church, Origen maintained:

"If anyone wishes to hear and understand these words literally he ought to gather with the Jews rather than with the Christians. But if he wants to be a Christian and a disciple of Paul, let him hear Paul saying that the 'Law is spiritual' and declaring these words are 'allegorical' when the Law speaks of Abraham and his wife and sons."

Allegorists such as Origen reject the literal interpretation of scripture. Even the Jewish genealogies in Matthew and Luke which establish the legal right of Jesus to the throne of David and His descent from David was essential to God's plan of redemption for the world. Origen's teachings arise from, and demand, an anti-Judaic outlook. He disinherited the Jews and set the Church in their place. Those scriptures that promised judgment on Israel (or the Jews, or Jacob, etc.) were still to be understood in their literal sense. But those scriptures that promised blessing on Israel were henceforth only to be understood as referring to the Church.

That made the churches in "Palestine" the sole geographical heirs of the gospel, worthy of special reverence. Sadly, instead of being the source of light, the churches embraced Origen's delusion and this anti-Semitic theme spread from there. Eusebius and Constantine gave Origen's teachings their greatest triumph in 325 A.D. at the Council at Nicea.

Related Scripture Texts:

Acts 15

John 17

Psalms 133:1-3

Lesson One-Study Guide And Questions

A. Fill In The Blanks

1. The system of interpretation called “allegorical teaching” was first instituted by _____.
2. The One New Man is Messiah Jesus made up of the _____ and the _____ believer.
3. The _____ in A.D.32 created a wall of separation between the Jews and the Church
4. The Emperor _____ convened the Council declaring the _____ as the final authority on Scripture.
5. The genealogies of the books of _____ and _____ tie the lineage of Jesus to the throne of David and the city of Jerusalem.
6. The *Ecclesiastical History* written by _____ is the acknowledged history of the church from the book of Acts to the Council of Nicea. His teacher was Origen.
7. One of the most divisive doctrines used by these men was the thought the _____ was the “new Israel.”
8. The institutionalized church’s hatred toward the _____ began very early in its history.
9. The question at the First Council in Acts 15 was whether to allow the _____ into the church that was originally a _____ church. The question we face in these last days will be whether we as _____ come into the unity of the faith with the _____.
10. Paul was a _____ citizen and a _____ by birth. He came from the tribe of Benjamin.

B. True Or False

1. Constantine was the first emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. _____
2. The Council at Nicea brought unity between Jews and Gentiles. _____
3. The Council in Acts 15 gladly received Gentiles into the faith. They only required the Gentiles to abstain from idols, fornication and obedience to the commands of the Lord Jesus. They did not require the Gentiles to disown their heritage and be circumcised like the Jewish believers were required. _____
4. The church is NOT the “new Israel.” _____
5. Psalm 133 promises a special blessing to us if we remain divided in the faith. _____
6. Ephesians says that Jesus has torn down the wall of partition between the Jew and the Gentile. _____
7. Matthew says Jesus was the son of David and the son of Abraham. _____
8. Jesus was Jewish. _____
9. The first church was mainly made up of Gentile believers. _____
10. We will have God’s total blessing on the church if we continue our hatred and division with our fellow Jewish believers. _____