

## **A Spotlight On My Bigotry**

One half of the focus of my graduate studies at The Center For Jewish Studies (at The Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, CA) was on Holocaust Studies. (The other half was on The 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple Era.)

As a result I've had the privilege of teaching The History of the Holocaust on the college level at a state university.

In order to open the door for the whole discussion I created the following survey on issues of bigotry and prejudice. Though it may seem a bit specific, I actually feel there's value beyond the topic of Holocaust to answer these questions. (At the end I'll show you why.)

Please rate the following statements on a scale of 1-10 for what you to believe to be true.      1= An absolute truth                      10= A total lie

The Holocaust never occurred.

Too much has been made of the Holocaust.

Censorship serves a legitimate purpose for society.

Jews "use" The Holocaust for personal or cultural benefits.

The Holocaust represents the greatest cruelty endured by any race.

There have been many other events as horrendous as The Holocaust.

The Holocaust could never have occurred in "peace" time.

I never could have been a Nazi.

Most Germans supported The Holocaust

I am a racist.

Jews just let The Holocaust happen to them.

I would have been a "rescuer."

Jews have always been victims.

The Holocaust is a natural result of the failure of Jews to keep the covenant.

Nazis were evil personified.

For a lot of reasons, The Holocaust was inevitable.

At times, for the good of society, undesirable elements must be weeded out.

Hitler caused The Holocaust.

I would never be a barbaric persecutor.

I would go to jail or risk my life for someone being persecuted.

I'm not prejudiced in any way.

Please circle the group that you assume you'd risk yourself for...

Jews	Catholics	Non-Christians	Blacks
Hispanics	Orientals	AIDS/HIV+	Handicapped
Moslems	Whites	Drug Abusers	Communists
Haitians	Women	Gang Members	Neo-Nazis
Homosexuals	Bible Thumpers	Mentally Retarded	Felons

Please write your first response to the following two questions... be honest!

You're in a dingy second story motel room in a dirty part of a big city. At 2:00 a.m. you hear shouts and screaming down on the sidewalk... apparently there's some violence... You cautiously approach the window to peek down on the street... there's angry voices and a commotion... suddenly someone falls down by the curb... somebody is running away...

Who fell in the street?

Who is running away?

**CLOSEOUT THOUGHTS:** There are no ultimate answers to most of these questions. But, the final scenario is really the significant indicator of where you stand in these matters.

What's the lesson? If you, in any way, put any image to those two questions you have revealed your prejudices.

If you thought that the person who has fallen in the street was an old person or a woman or... There you find your prejudice.

If you assumed the perpetrator of violence was a young man or a member of any ethnicity or... There you find your prejudice.