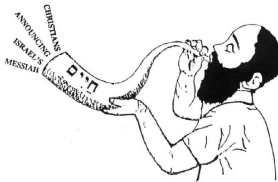


CHAIM TIMES

The Newsletter of CHAIM, "Christians Announcing Israel's Messiah"

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The Anguish of the Jews

I highly recommend: *The Anguish of the Jews* by Edward H. Flannery, a Roman Catholic priest. He carefully chronicles the history of antisemitism in a scholarly and objective manner. He includes pagan antisemitism, "Christian" antisemitism, Muslim antisemitism, Communist antisemitism, etc.. I have assigned this book to seminary students who usually know nothing about this.

Of course, for disciples of Jesus the Messiah, "Christian" antisemitism is the most troubling. Some will claim "Christian" antisemitism does not exist because no true Christian can be antisemitic. However, this is patently untrue. Jerome (342-420), translator of the Bible into Latin, wrote that the Jews are the image of

Judas and haters of all men. Chrysostom (347-407) wrote that God hates the Jews and has always hated the Jews, that "He who can never love Christ enough will never have done fighting against those [Jews] who hate Him" and that Jews are "lustful, rapacious, greedy, perfidious bandits....inveterate murderers, destroyers, men possessed by the devil" whom "debauchery and drunkenness have given them the manners of the pig and the lusty goat."

Gregory of Nissa (331-396) said the Jews are "slayers of the Lord, murderers of the prophets, enemies of God, haters of God, adversaries of grace, enemies of their father's faith, advocates of the devil, brood of vipers, slanderers, scoffers, men of darkened minds, leaven of the Pharisees, congregation of demons, sinners, wicked men, stoners, and haters of goodness."

The Seventh Council of Toledo (694) ordered all Jewish children above the age of seven to be

taken from their parents by force and raised as Christians. What about Protestants? Consider the following statement by Martin Luther:

"What shall we Christians do with this rejected and condemned people, the Jews?...set fire to their synagogues or schools and bury and cover with dirt whatever will not burn, so that no man will ever again see a stone or a cinder of them...I advise that all their prayer books and Talmudic writings, in which such idolatry, lies, cursing, and blasphemy are taught, be taken from them... I advise that their rabbis be forbidden to teach henceforth on pain of loss of life and limb...I advise that safe conduct on the highways be abolished completely for the

Jews...exercise a sharp mercy toward these wretched people...act like a good physician who, when gangrene has set in, proceeds without mercy to cut, saw, burn flesh, veins,

bone and marrow...Burn down their synagogues, forbid all that I enumerated earlier, force them to work, and deal harshly with them, as Moses did in the wilderness, slaying three thousand lest the whole people perish!"

You can find that whole passage in Luther's published works, titled "On the Jews and their lies." This was quoted at the Nuremberg trials by Nazis in their defense and it is in the introductory film at Holocaust Museum in Washington, DC. Do you doubt Luther was a Christian? He sinned, as did King David, who committed both murder and adultery. Luther sinned in this statement after becoming aware of Jewish resistance to the gospel and also a mediaeval rabbinic polemic against faith in

It is time for Christians to stand with their Jewish neighbors against antisemitism. It is time to stand against hatred of Israel. This has absolutely nothing to do with eschatology. It is simply the right thing to do.

Jesus. But we cannot fully excuse him. Real Christians have sinned, and they have sinned in antisemitism. Thankfully, there has been MUCH less of this in the Reformed community.

That being said, I have found it disturbing to see Reformed pastors, elders, and individuals post polemics on Facebook against the Dispensational view of Israel immediately after the horrific events of October 7, without even mentioning how awful the slaughter of over 1200 Jews was, and done in the most sadistic and savage manner possible. Women were raped and killed, babies were murdered, children saw their parents killed in front of their eyes, and all ages were taken hostage. The brutality was perhaps unsurpassed, yet some found this an opportune time to debunk any idea that modern Israel or the Jewish people should be anything significant. The fact that most classic reformed commentators (John Calvin, John Owen, etc.) and many modern ones (Geerhardus Vos, John Murray) would completely disagree aside, it is the height of insensitivity to engage in this theological polemic in the aftermath of October 7 without at least adding a caveat that, regardless of theology, what was done to Israeli Jews on October 7 was reprehensibly inhumane and our hearts go out to the Israelis and Jewish people in general. BUT THE SILENCE WAS DEADENING!

As you can read in our 2023 spring newsletter, we are completely against the dispensational view of Israel. While we do hope for future Jewish revival and a continuing return of a remnant of Jewish people to faith in Jesus, as arguably have most classical reformed scholars, in some ways that is irrelevant as far as taking the Good News to Jewish people is concerned. The fact is, throughout history there have been Jews who believe in Jesus in every era. And it cannot be denied that at the very least the worldwide mission of the church should include Jewish people along with Muslims, Chinese, Greeks, etc.

Given the anguish of the Jews, certainly the most persecuted people of all throughout history (apart from Christians) and in light of rising Jew hatred in America and elsewhere, the least Christians can do is stand against antisemitism in all forms, subtle or overt. It is simply the right thing to do, no matter what our theology or eschatology is. **This sad history should make us even more committed to take the gospel that saves to the Jewish people in a loving way.** -FK



Why chicken? Why not a duck? Schedule a presentation on the Jewish Fall Holidays to find out and hear the shofar (ram's horn) sounded!



Rick doing a Jesus Our Passover presentation. We can do this in a sermon, special presentation, or even a full sit-down Seder meal.

It's time to schedule Jewish holiday programs for your church in 2024. These presentations are simultaneously educational, inspirational, & evangelistic. Contact our office to make arrangements.

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