

Mikhael
Karpovetski

FALSE
STEREOTYPES
in JUDAISM
and CHRISTIANITY



Baruch

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FALSE STEREOTYPES
IN JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY
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Foreword

Life often dictates the terms for a person who is seeking; for one who wants to get down to the depths of truth, which is carefully hidden among the interpretations and retellings of ancient history. This human search was imparted to us by God's mercy, fuelled by an insatiable desire to know the truth. One ancient example is found in Abraham, who refused to worship the idols his family worshipped, but he trusted and followed God. In the same way, God's true prophets refused to worship Baal. The finest minds in history have even rebelled against the traditional church in their search for truth, ready even to suffer for it. Now, those who are hungry for righteousness refuse to accept false teachings and interpretations which are considered to be customary and normal. The purpose of this book is to show that Judaism and Christianity are not two separate, conflicting religions, as they are often presented to us, but one united faith, rooted in the Torah, Prophets and Scripture. If those in Judaism would accept the Messiah (Christ), and Christianity would come back to its Jewish roots (the teachings of the apostles), then we could consider them as equal.



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Part 1

JUDAISM
REJECTED
MESSIAH

Chapter 1

The Fulfillment of God's Promises for the Nation

If we reflect on the words of the prophet Isaiah, *“As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths”* (Isaiah 3:12), we will see and understand the importance and actuality of them today. There are many examples from the Tanakh when kings, prophets, leaders and rulers were involved in false teachings, misleading the people. So, what kind of teachings are false?

In order to recognize a false coin, one has to know what the real coin looks like very well. We can use the same principle to discern false teachings. Let's take God's revelation written in the Tanakh and the New Testament as a basis. Why do we refer to these books in particular? There are many others. The answer is simple. King Solomon said in Proverbs:

My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding;

Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God. ∞ Proverbs 2:1-5

We can see in this extract that through King Solomon, God is calling the Jews to accept His Word. What is the Word of God? God had chosen Abraham from long ago and gave him wonderful promises:

Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. ∞ Genesis 12:1-3

Let us incline our ears to listen to the words of God's wisdom and let them speak to our hearts in awe and reverence. Let us meditate upon them and be convinced that God never deceives. If you can entrust yourself to anyone, let it be to God alone. God gave His people five promises. They are:

1. God promised Abraham the Land, and He gave it to him. He said that Abraham's ancestors would be strangers in Egypt for 400 years and then He would lead them out of Egypt and bring them back to the Promised Land.

God promised that Israel and Judea would be captured by enemies for their iniquities. This happened when the Assyrians captured Israel and the Babylonians — Judea. But God showed mercy on His people and brought them back to the Promised Land after the Babylonian captivity and let them rebuild the Temple. Then the hearts of the people turned away from their God again. God had to fulfill the promise given in the book of Deuteronomy and so he scattered the Israelites all over the world. But even then He showed His mercy:

And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath driven thee,

And shalt return unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul;

That then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee. ≈ Deuteronomy 30:1–3

God's promises to His people were carried out precisely, as history proves. The existence of Israel today and the fact that the Jews are returning to that country from all over the world is the best proof of God's promises being true. If I were an unbeliever, I would seriously think of this strong argument for

the existence of God and the validity of His Word. There are four more God's promises, testifying of His faithfulness.

2. God promised to make a great nation from Abraham.

It looked like a joke then because Abraham was called Abram then (in Hebrew it means "a great father") but he didn't have any children. Sarah, his wife, was past child-bearing age. But God gave Abraham a promise and there is nothing impossible for Him. He calls the non-existent as though it is, and always keeps His promises. So, Sarah gave birth to Isaac. Isn't that a miracle that God saved His people from their enemies, who were larger and stronger? All the nations that surrounded Israel in ancient times were wiped out, but Israel wasn't, because God promised in Malachi 3:6, *"For I [am] the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."*

3. God promised to bless Abraham abundantly and to make his name great.

Scripture tells us how blessed the life of this man of faith was. Today all nations know his name as the father of the Jewish people. No other nation knows the name of its forefather.

4. If you take a closer look at the world map today, you might be surprised at how faithful God was to keep His promise to bless those who bless Israel and to curse those who curse them.

God punished Spain for anti-Semitism. From being a strong country, it reversed into a backward country. On the other

hand, the Nordic countries, which have always supported Israel, are prosperous. God also punished Germany in that after they lost the Second World War, the country was divided into two different states by the wall. When the people repented and started helping the Jews, the wall was demolished and the country reunited. Today it is one of the most prosperous European countries. There are many other examples.

But those who aren't Jewish can say, "Well, all of those promises were given by God to His people. What about us?" Don't be disappointed, because the fifth promise is given to everyone.

5. God blessed all the nations in Abraham.

For this reason, He changed his name from Abram to Abraham, from "the great father" to "the father of many nations", because through Abraham and his descendants, God gave the world an understanding of Himself as the One, True God. It is through Abraham and his descendants in particular that all the nations have received the revelation of God — the Bible. In Jesus, the seed of Abraham, God blessed all people, as He had promised. If the Jews hadn't rejected Jesus, other nations wouldn't have had the opportunity to know and accept Him. Therein was God's plan.



Chapter 2

God's Promise about Messiah

When reading Old-Testament prophecies about the Messiah, it is not difficult to get a different idea about Him than the one firmly established in modern Judaism. Contemporary Judaic exegetes (commentators) say that God has no Son. The words of King David in Psalm 2 are a response to this:

Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?

The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, [saying], let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.

He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou [art] my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me,

and I shall give [thee] the heathen [for] thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth [for] thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish [from] the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed [are] all they that put their trust in him.

≈ Psalms 2:1–10

Who does God address in verse 7 when he says, “Thou [art] my Son”? The word “anointed” in Hebrew sounds like “Messiah”, and in Greek, “Christos”. The pronoun “I” is also in different forms in this text. One can make a wrong conclusion that the word “son” here refers to King David as the writer of this Psalm. However, from the context, we can see that the word “son” actually refers to the word “Anointed One”; the One Who the rulers take counsel against. But David was also anointed as a king, and a king can also be called, “The Anointed One” or “Messiah”. Other kings had also set themselves and took council against David. And again the whole context of the Psalm leaves no doubt whatsoever that the word “Anointed” does not refer to David. David was the king of one nation. God didn’t give him other nations as an inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth [for] his possession. God didn’t give David the power to judge other nations and didn’t demand that other nations honor David or tremble before him. Only one coming Messiah could achieve such greatness, as Zechariah

states, who would be worshipped and praised by all the nations during His millennium. And the prophet Zechariah says,

And it shall come to pass, [that] every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.

≈ Zechariah 14:16

In the book of Proverbs, the name of the Son is mentioned together with the name of the Creator:

Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? Who hath gathered the wind in his fists? Who hath bound the waters in a garment? Who hath established all the ends of the earth? What [is] his name, and what [is] his son's name, if thou canst tell?

≈ Proverbs 30:4

Who is this Son in the book of Isaiah?

For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace?

≈ Isaiah 9:6

What kind of nation was He (the baby) given to if not to the people of the prophet Isaiah, the son of Amos? The Judaists claim that Messiah was a human being and thus he couldn't have been God. But the verse says that He was born as a human but was given to us as God. Such descriptions as "The mighty

God” and “The everlasting Father” (the One, Who has no beginning) point that out. In order to dispel all doubt, we can read the quote from the book of the prophet Michah:

But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, [though] thou be little among the thousands of Judah, [yet] out of thee shall he come forth unto me [that is] to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth [have been] from of old, from everlasting”. Who is this One, Who had to be born in Bethlehem but ‘whose goings forth [have been] from of old, from Everlasting’? ≈ Michah 5:2

So, why don't the majority of Jews accept Him? Why do Jewish sages and knowledgeable people and rabbis call Him an impostor? Because it is the fulfillment of the old Jewish prophets that say:

He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were [our] faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he [was] wounded for our transgressions, [he was] bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace [was] upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as

a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither [was any] deceit in his mouth.

≈ Isaiah 53:3–9

A medieval interpreter of the Torah named Rashi, whose works contemporary Judaism is based on, says that the word “rejected” or “not accepted” refers to the suffering nation of Israel. But who are those who didn’t accept Him and turned their faces away from Him? If Israel is a victim, then whose sins and iniquities have the people been paying for for thousands of years? If the nation of Israel is the everlasting, voiceless Lamb taken to the slaughter, then why would we need to fight for the independence of Israel? Why would we need to form an army and to maintain it? Was it Israel that “made his grave with the wicked”? Or was Israel “cut off out of the land of the living”? Thank God, the answer is no despite all of the attempts of the anti-Semites. Is the nation of Israel really sinless as Rashi tried to propose, when referring to the prophet Isaiah? It is obvious that the prophet, living 700 years before Christ, wrote clearly and precisely about the rejection of the Messiah by His people, about His suffering, death, redemption of sins, burial and resurrection. The words of Isaiah are the triumph of His sacrificial death and resurrection:

Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put [him] to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see [his] seed, he shall prolong [his] days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

≈ Isaiah 53:10

It is not by chance that in synagogues during the annual readings of the Torah and the Prophets, they skip chapter 53 of Isaiah.

The denial of the existence of the New Testament is also a big obstacle that prevents the Jews from accepting their Messiah. Rabbis teach that the Old Testament (The Testament of Moses) is an eternal, unchangeable covenant between God and His people. Teachers of Judaism believe that the New Testament is a book full of anti-Semitism and lies. But God Himself speaks through Jeremiah:

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day [that] I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this [shall be] the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man

God's Promise about Messiah

his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

≈ Jeremiah 31:31-34

What kind of a covenant is the old prophet speaking of? Representatives of Judaism can reply to this, "What does Christ have to do with the New Covenant? Can't it be a different covenant not connected to Christ?" So, what kind of a covenant, different from the Covenant of Moses, did God speak about? Covenants, which God made with His people or with an individual person, were always sealed with the blood of a sacrificial animal. In this extract, the Lord uses the words, "make a new covenant" (vekarati brit) which can be translated from the original as "the sacrifice, which the covenant will be sealed with". The very same word is used in the prophecies of Daniel:

Know therefore and understand, [that] from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince [shall be] seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof [shall be] with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

≈ Daniel 9:25-26

It is written in this excerpt: “shall Messiah be cut off” (ikaret aMashiah)? This means that the Messiah would have to die a sacrificial death in order to seal the New Covenant with His blood. Moreover, the timing of these events corresponds to the period which precedes the destruction of the second temple, and exactly matches the time of Jesus’ coming and crucifixion. Could it be a simple coincidence? Could “those Christians” have used our prophecies so craftily to make others believe in their Messiah? But who else can be called Messiah? Maybe Simon bar Kokhba, who was announced to be the Messiah by Rabbi Akiva? The result of this mistake was the death of thousands of Jews who were victims of the rebellion, suppressed by Rome. Could those prophecies refer to Sabbatai Zevi, who was also announced to be the Messiah but then converted to Islam? Could Lubavitcher Rebbe be that Messiah, as many really believe? Which prophecy from the Old Testament refers to him? Why weren’t the prophecies referring to Christ, that Christians believe, fulfilled about him?

There’s only one conclusion: the tenacious unwillingness of the Jews to accept their Messiah was nothing else but a part of God’s plan in order to show salvation to other nations.

I am sought of [them that] asked not [for me]; I am found of [them that] sought me not: I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation [that] was not called by my name. I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way [that was]

God's Promise about Messiah

not good, after their own thoughts.

≈ Isaiah 65:1-2

Even today the Lord is holding out His wounded hands to Israel, calling the people to come to their Messiah.



doing what he does. Judas also had his reasons for the betrayal. The Jewish people also have (and had) their own reasons for rejecting Jesus. At that time, Jesus' teaching was one of the many teachings of Jewish rabbis. Each rabbi had followers. But for Jesus' disciples, it was clear that Jesus was the Messiah they had been waiting for.

Unfortunately, despite all of the miracles that Christ did, He didn't have a lot of followers. The majority of people were waiting for the Messiah, who would overthrow the power of the Roman Empire and give them freedom. Such groups as Pharisees and Sadducees were afraid to lose their influence and Roman support. They were also worried that Jesus would stir up a rebellion against Rome and the Romans would drown it in blood:

Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him. But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done. Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What should we do? For this man doeth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all [men] will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation. And one of them, [named] Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied

that Jesus should die for that nation.

≈ John 11:45–51

Caiaphas' words were motivated by his political position — to prevent rebellion, if to be exact. He had to sacrifice Jesus for that. But he couldn't have known that his words would have a spiritual meaning, a prophecy that Jesus would die for the sins of the people, as it was foretold by the prophets of old. That year Caiaphas was the high priest, was anointed, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. That is why those words came not from him but from the Holy Spirit.

After Jesus' death, resurrection and ascension, His disciples started testifying about Him as the true Messiah the Jews had been waiting for. But the majority of the people didn't accept Jesus as Messiah. Sometime later, a chain of events happened, which crucially influenced the Judaism that our forefathers exercised. Jesus' words about the temple were fulfilled:

And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, he said, [As for] these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. ≈ Luke 21:5–6

After the Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed, the question about how they could perform religious rituals and services arose. Because only in the temple was it possible to be justified before God through the sacrifice for sins. This was made by a priest on different holidays. The Jews who believed in Yeshua accepted Him as the sacrifice and the priest at the same time.

Reasons Why God's People Reject Jesus

For such an high priest became us, [who is] holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself. ≈ Hebrews 7:26–27

The nation, which had rejected God, had to make some changes in their system of liturgy. This is how the Talmud (verbal Torah) appeared. Different regulations made by rabbis, on how a Jew had to perform religious rituals throughout his life, were added to Talmud. Today rabbis teach that the time of the prophets has gone and now is the time of the sages. To increase the significance of the Talmud, they teach that it was given to Moses by God with the commandment not to write it, but to pass it on verbally. But how could this verbal information, which differs from the information from the Bible a lot, be exact? Besides, there's no mentioning of it in the Tanakh:

And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished, That Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, saying, Take this book of the law, and put it inside of the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee. ≈ Deuteronomy 31:24–26

Before leading His people to the Promised Land, God told Joshua:

Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it [to] the right hand or [to] the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. 8 This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

≈ Joshua 1:7–8

God's words to Joshua leave no doubts that the verbal Torah is false, and that it draws the Jews away from Biblical Judaism to Rabbinic Judaism. Thus Isaiah's prophecy was fulfilled.

But the word of the LORD was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, [and] there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken.

≈ Isaiah 28:13

Jesus' followers were also a part of the Jewish nation. Despite the fact that many called them the heretics of Nazareth, nobody had any doubt that they were Jews who proclaimed their teacher, Yeshua as the Messiah.

After the destruction of the Temple, the Zealot party headed by Bar Kokhba revolted against Rome. Rabi Akiva was one of the most influential rabbis at that time. He announced Bar Kokhba to be the Messiah, referring to the

Moses' prophecy about Balaam, who blessed Israel three times instead of cursing:

I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.

≈ Numbers 24:17

Based on this verse, Rabi Akiva came to the conclusion that Bar Kokhba was the Messiah, because the word “star” in Hebrew sounds like “kokhba” and the Romans are the sons of Sheth. The Jews, who believed in Yeshua at that time, could not follow the false messiah along with all the people. That's why they didn't support Bar Kokhba's revolt, which the Romans drowned in blood. Then all the rabbis shifted the blame for the defeat on Yeshua's followers, called them traitors, and deprived them of the right to belong to the Jewish nation. That meant loss of privileges, which the Jews had in Roman society, such as having the right not to worship the emperor as God and not to pay taxes for Roman temples. So, the Jews, Yeshua's followers, became outlaws. The opinion began to be propagated that a Jew who believed in Christ was not a Jew at all and began to grow stronger and stronger in society.

The faith of the Jews and of people from other nations who had accepted Christ as the Messiah, didn't allow them to worship the Roman emperor as God or to pay taxes to support Roman temples. That was the reason for the persecution of Christians in Rome. The Jews were also among them.

False Stereotypes in Judaism and Christianity


In modern society a Jew can be an atheist, Buddhist, agnostic or he can even worship “Mother — Walrus” (as the Chukchi do), and still remain a Jew. But if a Jew believes in Christ, then in the eyes of his people he’s not a Jew anymore. What is really important is who we are in the eyes of God, not in the eyes of people. People’s opinion can never be higher than God’s opinion and His Book of Revelation. A Jew who believes in the Jewish Messiah is twice a Jew. He is a descendant of Abraham in the flesh and in the spirit. Amen.





Part 2

WHERE
THE BELIEF
CAME FROM
THAT A JEW
WHO BELIEVES
IN CHRIST,
CAN NO LONGER
BE A JEW



Chapter 1

The Rejection of Christ by the Jews Is Salvation to the Gentiles

In order to understand why the Jews rejected Christ, we have to know the history of the nation and its relationship with God. God gave the Torah and there were three types of commandments:

1. Moral law- the ten commandments, carved in stone by the hand of God:

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day [that] I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this [shall be] the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After

The Rejection of Christ by the Jews Is Salvation to the Gentiles

those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

≈ Jeremiah 31:31-33

In the light of the New Testament, God writes His commandment on our hearts. Jesus summed up those commandments into two: 'Love your God' and 'Love your neighbor as yourself'.

2. Ritual Law- which was fulfilled in Christ, because everything in the temple service pointed to Him as the perfect sacrifice and perfect priest (Hebrews 7:2-27).
3. The Kashrut Law — cleanness of food, which contained two aspects.

The first one was also fulfilled in Christ. Jesus Christ was the bread, which came from heaven. In other words, His teaching is the spiritual food of the New Testament, which the clean (kosher) food of the Old Testament symbolized (Deuteronomy 14:3-21). The second aspect is that the Jews were the chosen people. They could not be in communion with other nations, could not marry a Gentile, or enter their houses or eat together:

And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land...

≈ Judges 2:2

In the same way, Christianity, which was born from Judaism, was considered nothing more than one of the direc-

tions of Judaism, taught by the young Rabbi Yeshua. The key element of this way was based on the fact that Yeshua's followers believed He was God who came down in the flesh, and was the promised Messiah (The Anointed One). All of the symbolism of the Torah, the prophecies, and the Jewish laws and holidays were fulfilled in Him. However, Jesus' disciples were Jews and lived in their closed world. There had to be a divine interference in their lives for them to start preaching to the Gentiles. And this actually happened to the Apostle Peter when he was visiting Simon the tanner in Joppa (one of the regions of Tel-Aviv today):

There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian [band], [A] devout [man], and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always. He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius. And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa, and call for [one] Simon, whose surname is Peter: He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side. He shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do. And when the angel which spake unto Cornelius was departed, he called two of his household servants, and a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually; And when he had declared all [these] things unto

them, he sent them to Joppa. On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour: And he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance, And saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean. And the voice [spake] unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, [that] call not thou common. This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven. Now while Peter doubted in himself what this vision which he had seen should mean, behold, the men which were sent from Cornelius had made enquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate, And called, and asked whether Simon, which was surnamed Peter, were lodged there. While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee. Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them.

∞ Acts 10:1-20

In order to understand what happened to Peter, we have to know how the Jews looked at the world 2000 years ago. Then

we will understand Peter's astonishment when he received the command from God to kill and eat unclean animals. We will understand why he refused at first, saying, "No, Lord," and explained that he had never eaten anything unclean or common. But then God answered him three times, saying, "What God hath cleansed, [that] call not thou common." In the Tanakh, there's the rule of 'akhpala' (repetition; duplication). If God repeats something twice, that means we should pay special attention to it. For example, we often read, "and the Lord spoke, saying...", or "surely die", or "Verily, verily I say unto you...". In this story, God addresses Peter three times. This means that God's message is not just important, but very important. And yet Peter doubts and hesitates. Often we don't understand God. We don't understand what He says in His Word, or why He leads us through hardships. The reason for not being able to understand could be because of the stereotypes we are not ready to give up. Nevertheless, the most important thing is not to understand God with our minds, but to believe in Him and trust Him and His words. At first, doubt overcame Peter, which was why God gave him clear directions to the house of the uncircumcised Gentile. Unclean animals are a metaphor God uses to symbolize Gentiles. When Peter and some Jews who were with him went to the house of the Roman centurion Cornelius, they saw the Holy Spirit come upon the Gentiles during Peter's preaching in the same way He came upon the apostles on the Day of Pentecost (the Jewish holiday, Shavuot). When in Jerusalem, the brothers asked Peter why he came to the house of someone uncircumcised, and he answered,

The Rejection of Christ by the Jews Is Salvation to the Gentiles

And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as [he did] unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God? When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life. ∞ Acts 11:15-18

By that time, Rome had started building roads on their newly-taken territories. That helped to spread the Gospel among the Gentiles quickly, and the Good News about salvation in Christ now became the gift to all nations, not only to the Jews. Thus, the promise given to Abraham that all the nations would be blessed through his seed, was fulfilled. At the same time, the influence of the Gospel upon the Jews began to diminish.

By the fourth century AD, Christianity completely separated from Judaism and became an independent religion, thus the connection to the Tanakh was lost. Meanwhile, Rome had reached the peak of its power. It accepted Christianity as the state religion and began to spread it everywhere. In the Middle Ages, the whole of Europe was under the influence of the Church, which grew so strong that life outside of it became impossible. The fathers of the Church accepted substitution theology, which stated that all of the blessings promised to the Jews now belonged to the New Testament nations; that the

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Church was the New Testament Israel and that the Jews were no longer God's people and that they deserved only curses. All those of another opinion were announced to be heretics, with all of the consequences that go along with that. Can you imagine the position of the Jews in society?!



Chapter 2

The Reaction of the Jews to Conversion to Christianity

In history, it happened that the Jews who believed in Christ as their Messiah began to blend into the crowd of other people, who made up the church. Throughout the course of time, people's traditions substituted God's commandments in the church. Up to the time of the reformation, the Jews were considered to be rebels. In Spain, the Inquisition forced the Jews to accept Christianity. For centuries, the Jews were accused of all sorts of deadly sins: of the plague- epidemic in Europe, of eating matzos with the blood of Christian children during the Jewish Pesach- Passover (Beilis' case). And after the French officer, the Jew Dreifus, was accused of espionage in favor of Germany, a wave of anti-Semitism broke out, with violence everywhere. Nevertheless, the Jews kept away from other nations and didn't mix with them. The children in Jewish families were taught not to marry 'goy' (the word the Jews use for

Gentiles), and Christianity was a strange, hostile religion. In the first century AD, a Gentile could not become a Christian in the eyes of a Jew, even if he accepted the Jewish Messiah. But in contemporary society, a Jew who believed in Christ is no longer considered a Jew (by other Jews). Today a Jew can be involved in Buddhism or witchcraft, he can be an agnostic or even an atheist, but he can't be a Christian.



Chapter 3

The Influence of the Church's Reformation on the Relationship between Jews and Christians

Until the fourth century AD, Jewish influence was quite strong in the Roman church. In Catholic Europe, Jews became the outcasts. In Russia and other countries, where the Orthodox Church was the main church, life for the Jews was no better. The postulate that the Church was the Israel of the New Testament and that the Jews were not a part of it, caused the legalization of forced baptism on the Jews. Those who resisted baptism were violently persecuted. The Jews that had converted had to refuse their Jewish way of life, and moreover, they had to curse everything connected to

Judaism. That's the way things were before the reformation of the Church started.

Luther, the main ideologist of the Reformation, had a two-sided attitude toward the Jews. He wasn't hostile at first. He believed that if the apostles regarded the non-Jews the same way the non-Jews regarded the Jews, none of the Jews would convert to Christianity. He hoped that the Protestant version of Christianity would finally attract many Jews. But still they were not ready to convert and be baptized. Then Luther's attitude changed, but his anti-Jewish position was not different from the common Catholic one.

Nevertheless, the return to the source- to the Bible as God's authority, was a considerable achievement of Protestantism. John Calvin, one of the main ideologists of Protestantism, whose reforms changed Europe and continue to spread all over the world, believed that the sacred story of the Jews was on-going; that Israel of the biblical times was God's chosen nation, a "true church". And Huguenot Pierre Jure (Huguenots were the French Protestants in the 16th-17th centuries, who were persecuted by the Catholic church and the government), took things a step further, stating that the Jews would come back to Jerusalem and would rule the world together with the Messiah after they accepted Him.

The Russian, religious philosopher, V. Solovyov also expressed similar ideas:

And so, in dealing with Judaism, Christendom has hitherto discovered within itself either an irrational jealousy or a decrepit and impotent indifferentism. Both

The Influence of the Church's Reformation on the Relationship...

of these attitudes are alien to the authentic Christian spirit and have no place at the summit of the Christian ideal.

≈ Vladimir Solovyov, Gregory Yuri Glazov
The Burning Bush: Writings on Jews and Judaism

There is no anti-Semitism in the vast majority of Protestant churches today. On the contrary, they urge people to reconsider their attitude toward Jews and to acknowledge that persecution of the Jews contradicts the teachings of the Lord Yeshua (Jesus). The famous Lutheran theologian F.-V. Marquardt, wrote the following in connection with the Holocaust Remembrance Day:

Today Auschwitz is approaching us as a condemnation of our Christianity, of the past and present way of our Christian existence ... Auschwitz is approaching us as a call for a fundamental reformation. Not only must our way of behavior change, but also our own faith. The outcome of the understanding of the Holocaust should be not only ethical, but also doctrinal consequences. Auschwitz calls for the fact that today we hear the Word of God in a different way than our theological mentors and preachers of past generations. This fundamental reformation affects the essence of Christianity, the way we understood it to this day.

≈ F.-V. Marquardt

The revival of Israel and the return of the Jews to the Promised Land, the fulfillment of prophecies and the fulfill-

False Stereotypes in Judaism and Christianity

ment of God's promises motivate many Christian thinkers (not only Protestants) to revise their anti-Jewish views..





Part 3

THE CONVERSION
OF JEWS
TO CHRISTIANITY



Chapter 1

Is There Any Advantage to Being a Jew?

I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, [of] the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. ∞ Romans 11:1–2

Do the Jews have special privileges? The apostle Paul asks this question:

What advantage then hath the Jew? Or what profit [is there] of circumcision? ∞ Romans 3:1

The word ‘then’ used by the Apostle indicates that he wanted to sum up everything he had said previously:

For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision. Therefore if the uncircumcised keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision? And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law,

Is There Any Advantage to Being a Jew

judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law? For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither [is that] circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he [is] a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision [is that] of the heart, in the spirit, [and] not in the letter; whose praise [is] not of men, but of God. ≈ Romans 2:25–29

On the surface it seems that a Jew has no advantages. But further on Paul draws a paradoxical conclusion: “*Much in every way...*” (Romans 3:2). How is that possible? Does Paul contradict himself? Not at all. At the beginning of the book, we said that there are no mistakes or contradictions in God’s Word, written by the leading of the Holy Spirit. So how should we decide on it?

At first glance, there’s something “hard to understand” in this situation. Peter cites Paul’s critics:

As also in all [his] epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as [they do] also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. ≈ 2 Peter 3:16

The apostle Paul writes his letters in such a way that we should have some food for thought. Let’s think about his words:

What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit [is there] of circumcision? Much in every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God. ≈ Romans 3:1–2

If God has committed His Word to the Jews and His promises are in His Word, then there's no doubt that He will fulfill those promises. God promised a land to the Jews and so the state of Israel was born. God promised that the nation of the Jews wouldn't cease to be, that Abraham's seed would be celebrated and that those, who blessed Israel would be blessed. All of those promises belong to Israel and they have been fulfilled. However, the promise to bless all the nations in Abraham's seed is a spiritual promise, which belongs to every nation:

And in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

≈ Genesis 12:3

The Jews have no advantage in this spiritual promise. Here's what Paul writes further:

What then? Are we better [than they]? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin.

≈ Romans 3:9

And also in Romans 3:29–30:

[Is he] the God of the Jews only? [is he] not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: Seeing [it is] one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.

≈ Romans 3:29–30

Thus, a Jew, who doesn't have faith and has rejected Christ as his Messiah, can only receive physical blessings. He can return to Israel according to law, he can boast of the rich national history and legacy, of the variety of cultures and even of rich

cuisine. But if he stands before God without being covered by the sacrificial blood of Yeshua, he will be judged fairly by the law of Torah, which he violates.

Does the fact that the Jews rejected their Messiah justify anti-Semitism in Christianity? Not at all. Look at how Paul expresses his grief about the fact that the Jews have rejected their Messiah:

I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh: Who are Israelites; to whom [pertaineth] the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service [of God], and the promises; Whose [are] the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ [came], who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen. ∞ Romans 9:1-5

Who else would be ready to lose his place in paradise and be “accursed from Christ” for the salvation of the Jews? Is that possible? It’s unbelievable! That’s why Paul says in the beginning, “*I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost*”. Look at the perseverance which Paul had when he collected money for the needy in Jerusalem. He was sure that the believers had a debt to the Jews:

But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints. For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are

at Jerusalem. It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things. ≈ Romans 15:25–27

Paul's words are true even today. Thanks to Christian values, which are rooted in Judaism, many countries have achieved economic, cultural and scientific progress. *"The Gentiles have been made partakers of their (the Jews') spiritual things."*

What attitude should a present-day Christian church have to the Jews who have accepted Christ? First of all, a church should understand and accept the fact that according to the God's plan, it (the Church) has been joined to Old Testament Israel, the Jews, who've accepted Christ; not vice versa:

Wherefore remember, that ye [being] in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition [between us]; 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; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the

enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God. ≈ Ephesians 2:11-19

Secondly, since “*the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things*” (Romans 15:27 — *t/n*). Their duty is to minister, because by being “partakers of their spiritual things” the Gentiles have gained a lot more. It was through the Jews that the majority of mankind has accepted monotheism. Special revelation — the Bible was given to the world through the Jews. Christ came through the seed of Abraham — and God is above all things. So, after all, which are more important — carnal things or spiritual? Of course, you can touch and feel material things. Many people even forget about spiritual things because of the material world. But actually, spiritual things are the basis for the material. Let’s have a look at some examples from history. The heyday of civilization in Europe started after the reformation of the church. The USA became the great superpower, thanks to Christian values. On the other hand, Soviet bloc and Muslim countries have been regressing in all spheres of life. In the same way that heaven is high above the earth, so spiritual values are high above physical ones. And the Church has become the owner of these values, because it has taken part in “their (the Jews’) spiritual things”.



Chapter 2

The Conversion of the Jews at the Time of the End

The statement that at the time of the end there will be a mass conversion of the Jews may seem quite bold. In the Jewish view of life, there's a well-entrenched belief that Christianity and Jesus are foreign to Judaism. But there's nothing impossible for God. And again I will cite Paul's words:

For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural [branches], be grafted into their own olive tree? For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.

≈ Romans 11:24–26

The main idea of this passage is that the mercy that is being poured out on non-Jews, is the result of the rejection of Messiah by the Jews. This mercy is not endless and will continue up to the moment when Israel will accept their Messiah. The prophet Zechariah talks about it:

And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for [his] only [son], and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for [his] firstborn. In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon.

≈ Zechariah 12:10-11

Israel will be overtaken with repentance when they will see the crucified Messiah! The people will weep about Him and His answer will torment them:

And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.

≈ Zechariah 13:6

But then God will show His great mercy when He will take away reproach from Jacob and the day will come, which the prophet describes: "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.

≈ Zechariah 13:1

Chapter 3

The Undercurrents of Messianic Judaism

One of the significant, recent movements is the Messianic movement, which has stirred up all of the churches. For historical reasons, during the reformation period, the Bible became available to everyone, not only to the priests. Different interpretations of certain Biblical extracts led to the fact that many denominations appeared. Each of them has its own traditions and differentiations. This has had a negative impact on church unity and has led to deviation from the Bible.

How can one define the borders (I mean in teachings, not in works), beyond which a person becomes a heretic (a renegade) and has no salvation? There are four main doctrines (dogmas); if a person dissents from them, he becomes a heretic.

1. The Bible is the true Word of God.

God's Word has never been spoken out by the will of a man, but only by the will of God and through the prophets He chose.

Any change in the Bible leads to the conclusion that a person has refused God's standard and substitutes it by his own standards.

For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: 19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. ∞ Revelation 22:18-19

That's why doctrines are important. The truth of the Gospel is in the fact that for all believers the Bible is the only authority because it was inspired by God. No one can add anything to it or take away from it.

2. Father God sent Jesus to redeem us from sins. Jesus died on the cross, fulfilled the will of His Father, and rose again. He has ascended and is coming again. Jesus intercedes for us before God as the High Priest and the Holy Spirit makes the Gospel the true way of salvation for us. All three are One God:

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. ∞ Matthew 28:19

All three personalities equally have God's nature, or characteristics that only God can have. Nevertheless, they are three different personalities and perform different functions in peo-

ple's salvation. Three in one is compositional and not absolute unity in function.

3. Jesus, by His nature, is a human and God at the same time:

Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. 9 For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

≈ Colossians 2:8-9

4. Redemption and salvation through faith are an act of God's mercy, which can't be earned through good works:

I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

≈ Galatians 1:6-8

If someone thinks differently, he can't be a born-again Christian. The Messianic movement destroys the prejudice that a Jew who believes in Yeshua, ceases from being a Jew. But along with that, regardless of the denomination, Jews who confess Yeshua to be the Messiah get into the religious traditions and interpretations of Jewish exegetes. This goes beyond the frames of four main dogmas.

The main dangers in the Messianic movement:

1. In many Messianic congregations, they accept the authority of the verbal Torah (Talmud) along with the authority of the Bible.
2. Being engrossed in the Jewish interpretations, many congregations compare the concept of the Trinity to the concept of pagan polytheism. They deny the Trinity of God, even though it is written in Tanakh:

Come ye near unto me, hear ye this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there am I: and now the Lord GOD, and his Spirit, hath sent me. ≈ Isaiah 48:16

From this context, we know that the One, Who says these words is God -Jehovah:

Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; I am he; I am the first, I also am the last. Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens: when I call unto them, they stand up together. ≈ Isaiah 48:12-13

The same God, Who is “the first and the last”, Who created Heaven and Earth, was sent to people by the Lord God and His Spirit.

3. In many Messianic congregations, they accept that Yeshua is the Messiah, but deny His divine nature.
4. Keeping the commandments of Torah is the most important thing for some congregations, but they withdraw from grace in Christ.

False Stereotypes in Judaism and Christianity

Many believe that Jewish rabbis are righteous people because they abide by the law of God and that they inherit eternal life even if they reject Christ.


Apart from Messianic congregations, there are some Christian churches that have accepted the false theory of double covenant. To be more specific, they believe that non-Jews can be saved by faith in Jesus Christ, while the Jews are saved by fulfilling the commandments of Torah.



Epilogue

Our world's existence is coming to an end. God's plan is soon to be carried out. Dear friend, if you are a non-Jew, you have the wonderful opportunity to become a son of Abraham by the Spirit, through faith in Christ and become zealous about the awakening of God's people. If you are a Jew, I'm praying that the light of the Truth would shine upon you; that you would refuse the prejudices of the Jewish community and follow your Jewish Messiah- Yeshua.





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