

CHRISTIANS HATE JEWS.

Why should we become Christians and join those who hate and persecute us?

This objection is one that has been a stumbling block for many Jewish people. Unfortunately there is some truth to this objection in the history of those who have claimed to be believers, and sadly in the case of too many who actually were Christians. For example Martin Luther in his treatise "The Jews and Their Lies" writes these words that are excerpted from that document:

I had made up my mind to write no more either about the Jews or against them. But since I learned that these miserable and accursed people do not cease to lure to themselves even us, that is, the Christians, I have published this little book, so that I might be found among those who opposed such poisonous activities of the Jews who warned the Christians to be on their guard against them. I would not have believed that a Christian could be duped by the Jews into taking their exile and wretchedness upon himself. However, the devil is the god of the world, and wherever God's word is absent he has an easy task, not only with the weak but also with the strong. May God help us. Amen."

I shall give you my sincere advice:

First to set fire to their synagogues or schools and to bury and cover with dirt whatever will not burn, so that no man will ever again see a stone or cinder of them. This is to be done in honor of our Lord and of Christendom, so that God might see that we are Christians, and do not condone or knowingly tolerate such public lying, cursing, and blaspheming of his Son and of his Christians. For whatever we tolerated in the past unknowingly - and I myself was unaware of it - will be pardoned by God. But if we, now that we are informed, were to protect and shield such a house for the Jews, existing right before our very nose, in which they lie about, blaspheme, curse, vilify, and defame Christ and us (as was heard above), it would be the same as if we were doing all this and even worse ourselves, as we very well know.

Second, I advise that their houses also be razed and destroyed. For they pursue in them the same aims as in their synagogues. Instead they might be lodged under a roof or in a barn, like the gypsies.

This will bring home to them that they are not masters in our country, as they boast, but that they are living in exile and in captivity, as they incessantly wail and lament about us before God.

Third, I advise that all their prayer books and Talmudic writings, in which such idolatry, lies, cursing and blasphemy are taught, be taken from them. (remainder omitted)

Fourth, I advise that their rabbis be forbidden to teach henceforth on pain of loss of life and limb. For they have justly forfeited the right to such an office by holding the poor Jews captive with the saying of Moses (Deuteronomy [sic] 17 [:10 ff.]) in which he commands them to obey their teachers on penalty of death, although Moses clearly adds: "what they teach you in accord with the law of the Lord." Thoses [sic] villains ignore that. They wantonly employ the poor people's obedience contrary to the law of the Lord and infuse them with this poison, cursing, and blasphemy. In the same way the pope also held us captive with the declaration in Matthew 16:18, "You are Peter," etc. inducing us to believe all the lies and deceptions that issued from his devilish mind. He did not teach in accord with the word of God, and therefore he forfeited the righ [sic] to teach.

Fifth, I advise that safe-conduct on the highways be abolished completely for the Jews. For they have no business in the countryside, since they are not lords, officials, tradesmen, or the like. Let they [sic] stay at home. (...remainder omitted).

Sixth, I advise that usury be prohibited to them, and that all cash and treasure of silver and gold be taken from them and put aside for safekeeping. The reason for such a measure is that, as said above, they have no other means of earning a

livelihood than usury, and by it they have stolen and robbed from us all they possess. Such money should now be used in no other way than the following: Whenever a Jew is sincerely converted, he should be handed one hundred, two hundred, or three hundred florins, as personal circumstances may suggest. With this he could set himself up in some occupation for the support of his poor wife and children, and the maintenance of the old or feeble. For such evil gains are cursed if they are not put to use with God's blessing in a good and worthy cause.

Seventh, I commend putting a flail, an ax, a hoe, a spade, a distaff, or a spindle into the hands of young, strong Jews and Jewesses and letting them earn their bread in the sweat of their brow, as was imposed on the children of Adam (Gen 3[:19]).

From Luther's Work, Volume 47: The Christian in Society IV, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971). Pp 268-293.

The following is just a sampling of how the Church fathers spoke against the Jews:

- ◆ The Epistle of Barnabus shows the Church exalted at the expense of the synagogue and the deadly word "Deicide" (the killing of God) appeared in Christian writings.
- ◆ Justin Martyr charged that the Jews crucified Christ in the highest pitch of their wickedness. It was during this time (150 A.D.) that the first encounter with Replacement Theology was embraced where the church was taught that it replaced the Jews as God's chosen people.
- ◆ New ideas opposing "law" sprang up as early as 160-320 A.D. Marcion, 2nd century, adopted Matthew 5:17 as key theme to ending God's law and taught that the grace of God superseded it, rejecting the Old Testament.
- ◆ Several Church Councils from 341 A.D. to 626 A.D. prohibited Christians from celebrating the Sabbath, festivals, and even eating with the Jews. It seemed that the greatest concern with Judaism on the part of Christian leaders was the attraction that it held for Christians. . . These rules do not come out of bad relations between Jews and Christians (what would now be called, erroneously, anti-Semitism), but rather were

enacted because relations were good and the authorities wanted to separate the two peoples.

- ◆ John Chrysostom, 344-407 A.D., preached: "The Jews ... are worse than wild beasts ... lower than the vilest animals. Debauchery and drunkenness had brought them to the level of the lusty goat and the pig. They know only ... to satisfy their stomachs, to get drunk, to kill and beat each other up ... I hate the Jews ... I hate the Synagogue ... it is the duty of all Christians to hate the Jews.

It is important to explain to your Jewish friend that throughout history men have used religion to justify hatred and persecution of others. True Christianity is called to love sinners. We are to love sinners but hate their sin. We see this demonstrated in Jesus' encounter with the woman at the well.

It is important to explain the difference between Gentiles and Christians. Most Jewish people (at least in North America) think that if you are not Jewish you are a Christian. Jewish people do not understand the concept of regeneration, or being born again. They need to understand that not all Gentiles are Christians. (Matt. 7:21-23) Moreover not all Christians act like Christians. This may be due to their lack of growth or that they never were truly converted in the first place. It may also be that an area in their lives has not been surrendered to the Lord.

It would be good to share with your Jewish friend that Jesus warned His followers that there would be false or counterfeit Christians in the church. These people would distort the teaching of Jesus and do things in His name that He never advocated. (see Matt. 13 - the parable of the wheat and the tares)

Genuine Christians should be aware of the promise about treatment of the Jewish people as taught in the Abrahamic Covenant, that God would bless those who bless His people and curse those who curse them. (Gen. 12:3)

Finally, you need to remember and share that there will be a judgment of all men. We all will have to give an account for how we have conducted ourselves. God, who is the perfect judge, will judge with a holy and perfect justice and all will acknowledge that His will and justice is holy, pure and right.

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