

The Dangerous Doctrine of Replacement Theology

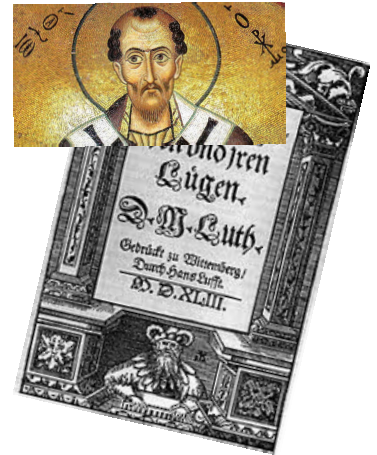
Replacement Theology, also called “supersessionism,” is the dangerous view that the church has superseded or replaced Israel in God’s plan as His Chosen People, the recipients of God’s blessings, and the heirs of His Covenants. This belief system is rooted in the idea that God voided covenants He described as “everlasting” because the Jews rejected Jesus as Messiah and condemns the Jews for His death.

How it Developed

Church fathers such as Augustine, John Chrysostom, the author of the Epistle of Barnabas, and Martin Luther taught their disciples that the Jews were responsible for killing Jesus and should be shunned at best, persecuted and killed at worst. Departing from the Apostle Paul’s warning in Romans 11, many in the early church, as it became increasingly Gentile, adopted the belief that the Jewish people were a forsaken people because they were responsible for Jesus’ death.

Is the claim that the Jews killed Jesus an accurate one?

No. Jesus said, “No one takes my life from me. I lay it down of my own accord” (John 10:18). The Bible says that it was God’s own “predetermined plan” that brought about the death of Jesus (Acts 2:23). And it was the perfect, predetermined plan of God that brought about Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross for sins and paved a way for redemption and relationship with Him forever.

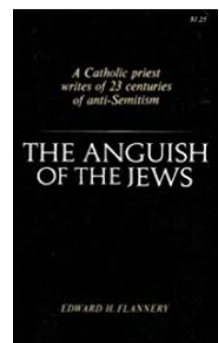


Hatred of the Jews and Persecution by Christians

The sad reality is that when Biblical truths about God’s choice of Israel are abandoned, a vacuum is left. If the Jews are seen as having fallen from grace, as Replacement Theology teaches, what place is left for them? It becomes abnormally rational, under this warped theology, that the Jewish people must be hated, put down, ignored, and shunned since God Himself has disowned them.

And so into this vacuum floods anti-Semitism, flowing straight out of the vile teachings articulated by numerous church fathers through the ages. Instead of loving the Jewish people deeply and fervently as God’s very own, the church, as a whole, learned to hate them.

In the book *The Anguish of the Jews*, Father Edward H. Flannery wrote: “The sin of anti-Semitism contains many sins, but in the end it is a denial of Christian faith, a failure of Christian hope, and a malady of Christian love.” boycotting Israel and its territories is not pro-Palestinian, it’s anti-peace and anti-humanitarian.



The Holocaust

Adolph Hitler’s answer to the “Jewish Question” known as the “Final Solution,” did not suddenly appear because of one depraved and appallingly misguided generation. It arose because the church had soaked in the evils of Replacement Theology for centuries, spawning unprecedented anti-Semitism that, in some cases, persists to this day. It happened because for too many years, too many Christians had been taught the unbiblical and malicious doctrine of supersessionism.



The Complicity of Churches

Hitler's tragic distortion of the Bible, and his so-called Christian faith led to the greatest genocide ever committed— the Holocaust. Yet one man's insane ideology, while it may have sparked horrific events, did not fuel the Holocaust alone. For the Holocaust to happen, millions of Christians had to remain silent. And remain silent they did.

An overwhelming number of Christians looked away during the abhorrent violence, the stifling oppression, and even during the systematic murder of six million Jews. Some may have perhaps had stunned reactions, but ***few took any action.***



Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a German pastor and theologian who gave his life for the protection of the Jewish people during Hitler's regime, has said famously, **"Silence in the face of evil is itself evil: God will not hold us guiltless. Not to speak is to speak. Not to act is to act."**

The Christians who were silent in the face of great evil aided and abetted the Holocaust. While there were some "righteous Gentiles," like Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who went to great lengths to help the Jewish people during this time, most did not. Choosing not to protect and preserve life when it is within one's power to do so is wrong in itself. Proverbs 24:11-12 says:

Deliver those who are being taken away to death, And those who are staggering to slaughter, Oh hold them back. If you say, "See, we did not know this," Does He not consider it who weighs the hearts? And does He not know it who keeps your soul? And will He not render to man according to his work?

A Way Forward

Christians today must embrace the teaching of the Bible that God will never forsake His chosen people, Israel, "because of His great name" (1 Samuel 12:22). God has promised to bless those who bless Abraham's descendants and curse those who curse Israel (Genesis 12:3). Today, Christians can bless Israel by believing the truth about the Jewish people spelled out so clearly in the Bible: the Jewish people are still chosen, still loved, and still precious in God's sight. Because they are important to God, Christians should refuse to remain silent when other countries and individuals attempt to demonize and delegitimize Israel and her people.



We are mandated to stand with Israel in steadfastness, seeking her security and supporting her because, as Jeremiah reminds us, God's commitment to the people of Israel will last as long as the sun, moon, and stars. It is based on His unconditional, irrevocable covenant.¹

¹ [1] To learn more, please request to obtain a copy of "Why Israel: The Jewish State's Biblical Roots, Miraculous Rebirth and Modern Trials" at cufi.org.