



TNT *Restoration Class*

2. Off Our Foundations: Our Journey Away from Torah May 12, 2015

I. FROM THE READING

(Quotes from Thomas Lancaster's *Restoration* Chapters 2)

Chapter 2: Our Journey Away from Torah

A. A Gospel Dispersion

- 13-Like the Jewish people, the Gospel spread out into every nation during times of great persecution.
- It is as if the Gospel is in exile because, like the Jewish people, it has been removed from its context and disconnected from its point of origin.
 - We Gentile Christians have in some ways misunderstood and misapplied the Gospel because we have been ignorant of the Jewish origin and Torah context of the Gospel.
 - Like the Jewish people in exile, the Gospel has flourished. Like the Jewish people in exile, it has entered every nation and every culture on the globe. Like the Jewish people in exile, the Gospel has impacted the entire world.
 - But the time is nigh for the exile to come to an end.

B. Christianity: Initially A Sect Within Judaism

- 14-In the days of the Apostles, Christianity was not yet a separate religion from Judaism.
- The first-century church never thought of herself as separate and excluded from Judaism....She might have conceived of herself as a reform within Judaism, but not as a separate entity.
 - Yeshua kept the Torah, taught the Torah, and lived by the Torah. He taught His disciples to keep the Torah in imitation of Him.
 - He did not institute a new religion, nor did He cancel the Torah.
 - When non-Jews began to enter the faith through the ministry of Paul of Tarsus, they too congregated in synagogues and embraced the standards of biblical Judaism.
 - Ritual conversion through circumcision was not required of them. Neither were they required to forsake their ethnic identity and 'become Jewish.'
- 15-The inclusion of Gentiles in the big tent of Judaism was unpopular. Jewish authorities in local synagogues pressured the non-Jews to undergo formal conversion. So did many of the Jewish believers.

C. Jewish Persecution: Driving Apart the Jews and Non-Jewish Believers

- Nero [killed Paul and Peter and then] sent the dreaded Tenth Legion, under the famous General Vespasian, to put down the revolt in Judea. Suddenly Jews were regarded as enemies of the state.
 - After Nero died and Vespasian was made emperor, Vespasian's son Titus carried on the war by bringing the Roman army against Jerusalem.
 - The Roman legions destroyed the city of Jerusalem and burned the Temple. The Jewish believers in Judea and Jerusalem either fled east across the Jordan River or were carried off into captivity and sold as slaves along with their countrymen.
- 16-Emperor Vespasian followed up the Jewish War by imposing a heavy, punitive annual tax upon all Jewish households in the empire. He determined Jewish households as those who worshipped after the Jewish manner. With the addition of the *Fiscus Judaicus* tax, Gentile believers had financial, political and cultural incentives to distance themselves from Judaism.
- Shortly after the Jewish War and the destruction of Jerusalem, synagogues throughout the world introduced a new benediction in the daily liturgies that was actually a curse on believers in

Yeshua and other heretics. The synagogue authorities expelled worshippers who would not pray the curse. (John 16:2)

-The Gentile pagans resented the non-Jews because they were essentially Jewish. The Jewish authorities resented them because they were believers.

-The expulsion left believers with no place to assemble on the Sabbath, or to assemble at all.

D. Children of the Tribulation & a Second Century Replay

17-By the time of the second century began, anti-Jewish sentiment was so high in the church (especially the Roman church) that most non-Jews no longer wanted to be identified with Jews at all. The first-century believers were long dead and gone.

-Theologically, the church leaders decided that the Christian church had replaced the Jews as the true Israel of God.

-The new generation (2nd century) was the generation that lived through the Second Jewish Revolt. In the third decade of the 2nd century, the Jews of Judea revolted against Rome again, this time during the days of the pagan Emperor Hadrian. They banded together under the leadership of the rebel warrior Shimon Bar Kokba. Rabbi Akiva declared him to be the messiah... The refusal to declare Bar Kokba as the Messiah surely alienated the last Jewish believers among the Jews of Israel. It was the last break between the believers and Judaism.

-Rome quickly crushed Bar Kokba's rebellion. Jerusalem was again destroyed.

18-In those days, Emperor Hadrian made laws declaring it illegal to keep the Sabbath, to ordain rabbis and to practice Judaism. Believers could be arrested for keeping the laws of Torah... Rome made no distinction between Jews and believers practicing the Jewish faith. To survive, it became necessary for believers to further disassociate from Judaism. Unfortunately, Paul's compiled letters, when read outside their original context, provided ample justification for that disassociation.

E. The Church Fathers...Or Confused Children of the Schism

-We call the leaders of the generation of Gentile believers who lived through the Second Jewish Revolt the Church Fathers. They were godly men doing the best they could with the understanding they had. Unfortunately, their understanding of Torah was largely a misunderstanding.

-Ignatius had to prohibit [believers from keeping the Sabbath] because despite all the adversity, John's and Paul's congregations were still keeping Sabbath.

19-In the epistle of Barnabas (written in this era), the laws of Torah are allegorized and Judaism is condemned.

-It was in this era that we have the first record of Christians proselytizing Jews... Justin Martyr explained to Trypho (Hellenistic Jew) that the Torah was given to Jews as a punishment for their exceptional wickedness and because of God's special hatred for the Jewish people.

-Yet even Justin Martyr admitted that, in his day (153 CE), there were believers who still practiced the laws of Torah, both Jewish and non-Jewish believers.

-Marcion came sweeping through the church with his refined doctrine that the Jesus of the New Testament had defeated and unseated the evil god of the Jews.

-Marcion's anti-Jewish, anti-Torah version of Christianity caught on quickly.

-He was wildly popular and stunningly influential, and his teachings remained deeply rooted—even after he was denounced for his heresies (in 144 CE).

F. Sunday as the "Lord's Day"

20-By the early second century, Sundays were already being observed as 'the Lord's Day' in Christianity, but Sunday had not yet eclipsed the Sabbath.

-The Roman Christians celebrated Passover only as a one-day commemoration of the resurrection. Passover Sunday replaced the observance of Passover and the seven days of Unleavened

Bread. The Roman church ordered believers to quit reckoning Passover by the traditional Jewish method and to only keep this annual resurrection festival.

-Part of the fallout of the controversy was that Sunday was elevated while all the biblical elements, festivals and days were eliminated. It became a Christian innovation to fast on the Sabbath and rejoice on Sunday as a weekly celebration of the annual Sunday resurrection festival. The church began to celebrate Sunday as a weekly commemoration of the resurrection.

G. Constantine's Nail in the Coffin

-By the time Constantine converted to Christianity and declared it the official state religion, most of the Jewish elements were gone.

-Constantine made the divorce from Judaism final with the Council of Nicea (325 CE): "Let us have nothing in common with the detestable Jewish rabble." The decisions made at Nicea defined the course the church would take henceforth.

21-The edicts of these various councils make it clear that many believers were still, even in the fourth century, keeping Torah.

-In the late fourth century, John Chrysostom delivered a series of sermons in Antioch against the Jews and against the "Judaizers" among the Christians.

-Chrysostom went on to denounce Christians who participated in the festivals, the Sabbath and the dietary laws. He rebuked them for attending the synagogue.

-Yeshua warned His disciples that, in the troubled times to come, "Many will fall away... False prophets will arise and will mislead many. Because lawlessness is increased." (Matthew 24:10-12).

22-Paul: "Let no one in any way deceive you, for *it will not come* unless the apostasy comes first... For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work" (2 Thes 2:3,7).

H. Fruit of the Foundational Break: The Dark Ages

-As time went on, and the Dark Ages began, the Christian church turned violent toward the Jewish people... The pages of church history are stained red with the spilled blood of the Jewish people.

-The church tightened her grip on her own people by forbidding laity from possessing a copy of the Scriptures.

Since the fourth century after Christ, there have been three anti-Jewish policies: [forced] conversion, expulsion, annihilation. The missionaries of Christianity had said in effect: You have no right to live among us as Jews. The secular rulers who followed proclaimed: You have no right to live among us. The Nazis decreed: You have no right to live. Michael Brown's *Our Hands are Stained with Blood* pg. 7.

Consider the Holy Crusades for Christ. Three major Crusades were carried out, and each time the story was the same: As the impassioned armies marched through Europe and the Middle East, they committed atrocities against the Jews. On one occasion, they set a synagogue on fire and then marched around it singing "Christ We Adore Thee" while the Jews burned to death within. This has left an indelible impression on the minds of the Jewish people: *The Crusaders affixed crosses to their outer garments*. To Jews who know their past, crusade and cross are dirty words. (Brown, 92)

... this was considered fitting punishment for the Jews, "the murderers of Christ," "those who had crucified Jesus". The Crusaders were only avenging His death. Hundreds of entire Jewish communities were destroyed by these roving mobs armed with crucifixes. (Brown, 94)

Here are excerpts from typical professions of faith that a Jewish baptismal candidate would have to confess. Our forefathers who converted to Catholicism were required to say words like these: "*I do here and now renounce every rite and observance of the Jewish religion. I promise I will never again return to the vomit of Jewish superstition. [We will not] associate with the accursed Jews who remain unbaptized. I renounce the whole worship of the Hebrews,*

circumcision, all its legalism, unleavened bread, Passover, the sacrificing of lambs, the feast of Weeks . . . I renounce absolutely everything Jewish. If I defile the holy Faith, . . . May there fall upon me . . . my house and all my children all the plagues which smote Egypt. . . and . . . be handed over to . . . the company of the Devil and his Angels.” (Brown, 94)

Let us hang our heads in shame. The “Church” has blood on her hands. (Brown, 97)

Now, each day has had its share of pain. Concentration camp survivor and Nazi hunter Simon Wiesenthal has compiled a chronicle of Jewish martyrdom for every day of the year. Here is merely *one typical day*, selected at random . . . June 23.

1270 – In Weissenbur, Germany, 7 Jews are arrested without charges . . . tortured and executed.

1298 – The Rindfleish Persecutions . . . annihilated 146 Jewish communities in southern and central Germany. 900 Jews of the large community of Wurzburg are burned at the stake.

1919 – During a pogrom, 45 Jews are slaughtered, 35 Jewish women are raped by insurgents.

1942 – The SS murders 850 Jews I Wiepole, in the district of Cracow, Poland.

1943 – A deportation train leaves Paris for Auschwitz, carrying 1000 Jews, among them 100 under the age of 16 and 13 babies, who are all killed upon arrival. (Brown, 105-106)

I. Returning from Exile

22-Almost 500 years ago, the return from exile began.

23-If you take the time to read [Martin Luther’s] 95 Theses, it may surprise you to discover how benign it is. This is not a list of radical reforms that Luther sought to impose on the church.

-It is a continuous sustained argument against the selling of indulgences—that is, charging people for grace and forgiveness.

-But it was enough. Someone had dared to question the authority of the church to impose its own man-made rituals and doctrines. . . .”Hey, wait a second. That’s not in the Bible. That’s not part of the original Christian faith.”

-Thanks to Gutenberg, it was not long before Bibles were being printed in common languages so that anyone who wanted could read what was written.

J. A Key to a Righteous Return

24-The motives of these reformers are pure and good. Their methodology, however, has been flawed. An important piece of the puzzle is missing. What the various Protestant reformers have failed to recognize about the first-century church is that she was Jewish.

-Any attempt at church reformation, any attempt to return to the original New Testament church falls short as long as it refuses to acknowledge the essential Jewishness of our faith.

-It seems that during Luther’s lifetime, hopes were high in the Jewish community that the Protestant Reformation would put a stop to Christian persecution of the Jewish people. In fact, the opposite happened.

-In 1543, Luther published *On the Jews and Their Lies*, in which he advocated burning down synagogues in every town and forcing Jews to convert or die.

K. Luther’s Wicked Fruit

-Most scholars agree that he was disappointed that Jews did not embrace Protestant Christianity. . . . But another part of his ire arose from the things that were happening within his own movement. The Protestants were reading their Bibles and concluding that authentic, biblical Christianity was indeed Jewish. . . . The result was even more bitter persecution by the reformers to try to stop the ‘Judaization’ of the Protestant movement.

25-As early as 1538, just 21 years after the Wittenberg door incident, Oswald Dlaitd and Andreas Fischer launched a radical return to the Hebrew roots of the faith from within the Anabaptist church of Moravia.

-It was against these Moravian Hebrew Rooters that Luther wrote *Against the Sabbath Keepers*, which condemned Sabbath observance as sinful.

-Wherever the Bible was read without theological manipulation, believers were returning to Torah. In the end, however, the Protestants largely prevailed. The return to Torah was stifled. The Gospel would remain in exile. The time was not yet ripe.

26-Theologians and churchmen were abashed to realize that their own religious prejudices and bigotry had contributed to the greatest human travesty of all time (the Holocaust).

-Though he was a self-proclaimed pagan, Hitler justified the genocide by pointing to Christian writings and Christian history. He even quoted Luther.

Twenty years later, when the Jews did not convert *en masse*, when Luther was old and sick, . . . he had a change of heart:

[Martin Luther] on how to treat the Jews: "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 stone or cinder of them. This is to be done in honor of our Lord and Christendom....Second, I advise that their houses also be razed and destroyed....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. Fourth, I advise that their rabbis be forbidden to teach henceforth on pain of loss of life and limb. Fifth, I advise that safe-conduct on the highways be abolished completely for the Jews...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. Erwin Lutzer's *Hitler's Cross* pg. 86.

L. The Holocaust

Without Christian anti-Semitism, the Holocaust would have been inconceivable. While it is true that many Nazis were anti-Christian, they were all . . . the children of Christians. (Brown, 7)

One German man's experience told to a pastor on the East coast after a sermon on abortion:

I lived in Germany during the Nazi Holocaust. I considered myself a Christian. We heard stories of what was happening to the Jews, but we tried to distance ourselves from it, because, what could anyone do to stop it?

A railroad track ran behind our small church and each Sunday morning we could hear the whistle in the distance and then the wheels coming over the tracks. We became disturbed when we heard the cries coming from the train as it passed by. We realized that it was carrying Jews like cattle in the cars!

Week after week the whistle would blow. We dreaded to hear the sound of those wheels because we knew that we would hear the cries of the Jews en route to a death camp. The screams tormented us.

We knew the time the train was coming and when we heard the whistle blow we began singing hymns. By the time the train came past our church we were singing at the top of our voices. If we heard the screams, we sang more loudly and soon we heard them no more.

Years have passed and no one talks about it anymore. But I still hear that train whistle in my sleep. God forgive me; forgive all of us who called ourselves Christians yet did nothing to intervene. (Lutzer, 99)

M. The Fruit of An Antinomian Jesus

Do you know that this is one of the greatest objections to the gospel that religious Jews have had?

If Jesus was truly the Messiah, why did He do away with the Law? Historian Jules Isaac notes: "*The Jewish rejection of Jesus was triggered by the Christian rejection of the Law . . . The rejection of the Law was enough: to ask of the Jewish people that they accept this rejection . . . was like asking them to tear out their heart. History records no example of such a collective suicide.*" (Brown, 82)

Rather than taking the Law away from Israel, God promised to put it on their hearts. The New Covenant does not do away with God's Law. Instead, it makes it relevant in a new and living way. This actually should be *attractive* to other Jews! (Brown, 83)

Let me translate for you the words of an Israeli writer who expresses the heart of many of his people: *“Instead of bringing redemption to the Jews, the false Christian messiah has brought down on us base libels and expulsions, oppressive restrictions and burning of [our] holy books, devastations and destructions. Christianity, which professes to infuse the sick world with love and compassion, has fixed a course directly opposed to this lofty rhetoric. The voice of the blood of millions of our brothers cries out to us from the ground: “No! Christianity is not a religion of love but a religion of unfathomable hate. All history, from ancient times to our own day, is one continuous proof of the total bankruptcy of this religion in all its segments.”* (Brown, 89)

For hundreds of years, “Christ” has been a curse word in thousands of Jewish homes. This is largely the fault of “Christians.” Millions of Jews have hated the name of Jesus. Could we possibly have produced anything worse? (Brown, 91)

N. Important Reformational Changes

26-Bible scholars began to reexamine the assumption that the church had replaced the Jewish people. They also reexamined the assumption that Jews are cursed by God and enemies of Christ.

-Sometime in late 1946 or early 1947, they (Muhammed edh-Dhib (“the Wolf”) and two of his cousins from the Ta’amirah Bedouin tribe discovered what would come to be called the Dead Sea Scrolls.

27-On November 29, 1947 (the same day the UN voted to partition Palestine and allow Israel statehood), Professor Eleazar Sukenik of Hebrew University purchased the remaining scrolls, one of which was a scroll of the prophet Isaiah...On the same day, the ancient prophecies of Isaiah and the ancient land of Israel were returned to Jewish hands.

-The Jewish return to the land of Israel and the reestablishment of a Jewish state came as a fulfillment of biblical prophecy...and it was no longer possible for Christians to dismiss the Jewish people.

-The modern-day Jewish Roots movement is born out of an intersection of these things. The Holocaust, the formation of the State of Israel and the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls all combined to spark a complete renaissance in the way that early Christianity is studied and understood.

-It is a prophetic reawakening, coinciding with the return of the Jewish people to their ancient homeland.

O. Tears of Repentance & A Return to Our Biblical Foundations

1. Repentance in our hearts related to the actions of “the church” towards the Jewish people
2. Returning to covenantal faithfulness and our roots
3. Faithfulness in the midst of conflict
4. Bringing the Jews to jealousy

I say then, they did not stumble so as to fall, did they? May it never be! But by their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make them jealous. Romans 11:11

III. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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