

# BREAKING THE CHAINS *of* DARKNESS

RESTORING THE BONDS BETWEEN  
CHRISTIANS AND JEWS



GARY HARGRAVE

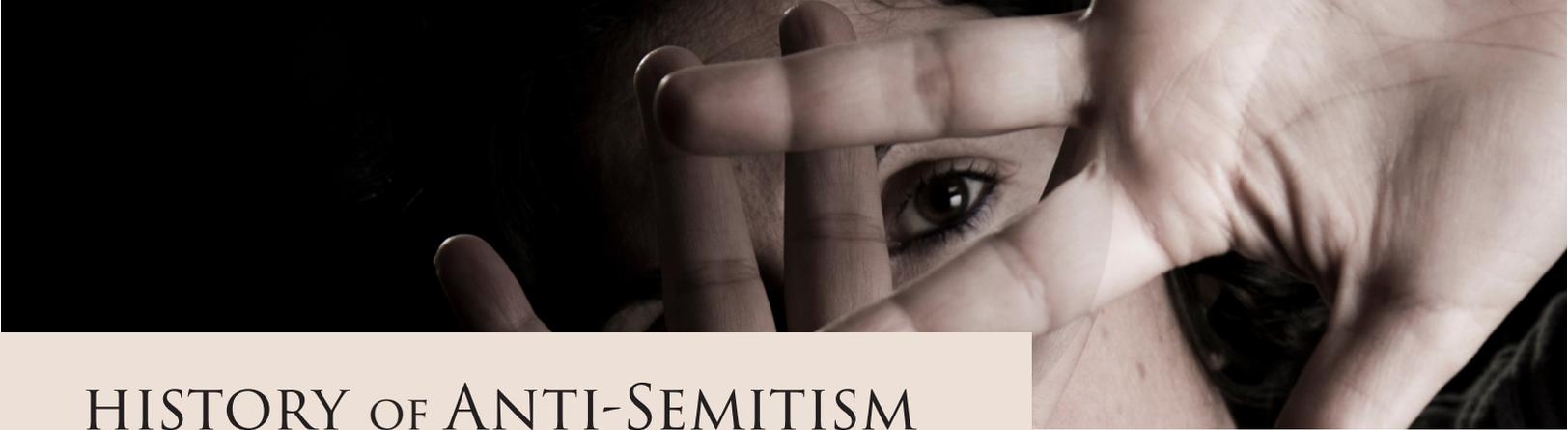


THE ENEMY HAS WORKED FROM THE EARLIEST DAYS TO DRIVE A WEDGE BETWEEN CHRISTIANS AND JEWS IN THE FORM OF ANTI-SEMITISM, A SPIRITUAL FORCE OF DARKNESS AIMED AT DESTROYING GOD'S PEOPLE. WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND HOW THIS HAS SUBTLY CREPT IN, SO WE CAN CAST IT OUT AND RESTORE THE RELATIONSHIP AND UNITY BETWEEN US.

**W**e must take a stand against the belief that Christians have superceded the Jews as God's people (replacement theology). The truth is that Gentile Christians were grafted in to the promises of Abraham, and God will fulfill His covenant with the Jews, our older brothers.

*A major part of the Kingdom of God is the oneness that will come to mankind. The Lord will be one King over one people, His creation.*  
PSALM 22:27-28; DANIEL 7:14; ZECHARIAH 14:9

There are many differences between Christians and the Jewish people; there are theological issues, but all of that is less important than the fact that we must love and be one with them as God's people. We must stand with them against the anti-Semitism that comes to destroy them. A major part of the Kingdom of God is the oneness that will come to mankind. The Lord will be one King over one people, His creation (Psalm 22:27-28; Daniel 7:14; Zechariah 14:9). That creation will be very diverse, but there will be a oneness (Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 4:4-6). Therefore, any form of discrimination is at the heart and soul of seeking to destroy the Kingdom of God.



# HISTORY OF ANTI-SEMITISM IN THE CHURCH

There exists in the hearts of some within the Church a doctrine known as replacement theology or supersessionism, which is the belief that Christians have superseded and replaced the Jews as God's people. I know there seems to be reasons for the conflict between Jews and Christians; we can read about some of these conflicts in the Book of Acts and in the writings of the apostle Paul. But these conflicts have been misunderstood, misinterpreted, blown out of proportion, and used to develop a thinking of anti-Semitism. This occurred very early in the history of the Church, as early as 66 A.D., only thirty years after Christ's crucifixion. It is interesting that after the martyrdom of the apostles Peter and Paul, around 64 A.D., the relationship between the Gentile Christians and the Jews began to disintegrate. When the apostle to the Jews and the apostle to the Gentiles were removed from the scene, it became more difficult to steer the Church through the turbulent waters that were surrounding them (Galatians 2:7-8). God provided an apostle for the Jews. If the Jewish people are not significant, or God had abandoned them, why would God commission Peter to be an apostle to the Jews?





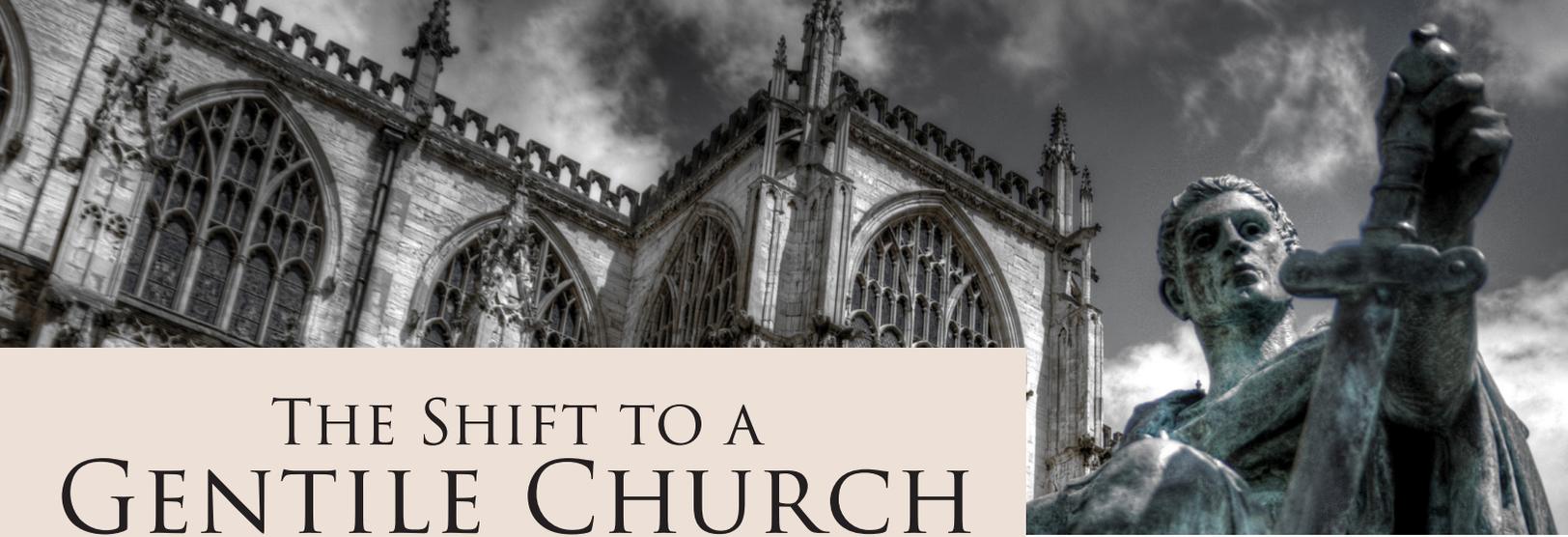
"Muro de las lamentaciones - Muro oeste" by Pedronchi is licensed under CC BY 2.0; photo was cropped.

## THE ORIGINAL CHURCH WAS ENTIRELY JEWISH

**T**he original Church was entirely Jewish. For the first fifteen years there were no Gentiles in the Church; it was literally a sect of Judaism. Paul even called it that (Acts 24:14). When the Jewish apostles and elders of the Church got together, as recorded in Acts 15, it was not to figure out what to do with their relationship to Judaism. The issue was: "What do we do with these Gentiles?" (Acts 15:4-6). They never had to call a council to try to understand, "How do we relate to Judaism?" They were Jews. Paul went to the Temple (Acts 22:17). He made sacrifices at the Temple after Christ's crucifixion (Acts 21:26). When Peter healed the lame man, he was going to the Temple at the hour of prayer (Acts 3:1-8). The first Church met in the Temple (Acts 2:46). They prayed in the Temple. Yeshua (Jesus) had taught them to go to the Temple and to the synagogues (Matthew 12:9; Mark 1:21; Luke 4:44). Much of what we read of Yeshua's teaching and significant miracles happened while He was in the synagogues (Matthew 4:23; Mark 3:1-5; John 6:59; John 18:20). He was obviously recognized in the synagogue because they would bring Him up to read the Torah (Luke 4:16). That is always a place of honor or recognition in a Jewish service.

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ACTS 24:14



# THE SHIFT TO A GENTILE CHURCH

## **Christianity Became a Gentile Entity**

Over the years, however, Christianity became a Gentile entity. There were many factors for this transition, including the destruction of the Temple in A.D. 70 and subsequent revolts of the Jews against Rome. Wanting to avoid being persecuted with the Jews because of these revolts, the leadership of the Church was forced to move away from Jerusalem. In the process, Christianity became something that was principally Roman and Greek. The leadership of the Church changed entirely from Jewish to Gentile. The shift to a Gentile Church was well established by the Council of Nicaea in A.D. 325. In A.D. 364, the Council of Laodicea decreed that everyone—pagans, Christians, and Jews—observe Sunday as a day of rest. The Romans continued to lay down laws mandating separation between Christians and Jews.

## **Losing the Judaic Mindset and Understanding of the Scriptures**

Some might say, “What’s the problem with Gentiles being the leaders of the Church? The Gentiles were included.” Yes, they were included. The problem is that when it came to understanding the Scriptures, the Greeks could not read or understand the Hebrew Bible. The Romans also could not grasp it; it was not their culture. They were not raised in Judaism. The foundations of faith and the covenants were being lost. Much of what happened with the Church in the Book of Acts was because of the Hebraic mindset. The apostle Paul was “a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee” (Philippians 3:5). He understood the Scriptures. He could speak to Jews. He knew how they were raised, because he was raised the same way. Peter had all the same influences in his life (Acts 10:14, 28). If we do not understand that, we cannot really understand the continuum of the Bible, what it is saying, or what Paul and Peter were saying. Remember, the New Testament was written by Jews, with most of the teachings from a Hebraic mindset and cultural influence. In fact, much of it was written specifically for the Jews. Irenaeus, one of the early Church Fathers, stated, “Matthew also issued a written Gospel among the Hebrews in their own dialect, while Peter and Paul were preaching at Rome, and laying the foundations of the Church” (*Against Heresies* 3.1.1). When you lose that Judaic mindset, the wealth of understanding of their culture and religion, you lose some ability to interpret and comprehend the Scriptures.

Ultimately, Christians developed the doctrine of replacement theology because it was easy to draw a line and say, "From Christ on we have a new covenant, a New Testament, a new Church. It is something different, and all of the Old Testament is just old; it is passing away. It makes no sense. It is of no effect where it applies to Gentile Christians." That is what replacement theology does. It replaces the Jews with Gentile Christians, and says, "The Jews have no covenant and no promises. God is not working with them anymore. Because of their unbelief they have been rejected. Now, God is working with the Church, with Christians. But if there are some Jews in the Church, that's okay." Can you see how opposite that is from the events of Acts 15, when the council at Jerusalem worked at finding a way to include the Gentiles?

*I wish the Church today had the heart that the early Jewish Church had toward the Gentile believers. When you read about the council at Jerusalem, you see their love and carefulness, and their ability to reach into what God was doing in that transition, to open the door and include the Gentiles (see Acts 15:6-21).*

Now look at some in the Church today. Rather than being included, Judaism is considered a problem by many. Instead of acceptance, there is religious intolerance. This is born in the heart of satan, and is a tool that he has used to try to destroy God's plan and purpose in the earth. It is one of the greatest dangers that exists against God's plan, and as believers we must fight it.

REPLACEMENT THEOLOGY *is*

ANTI-  
SEMITISM



# GOD'S COVENANT WITH ISRAEL



"Bar Mitzvah 16, Jerusalem, 9734, Yonatan Sindel, Flash 90, IMOT" by Israel photo gallery licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0; photo cropped.

Salvation and relationship with God through His covenants began and progressed as a thread through the entire Bible. Israel is the example; they remain God's chosen people. We read in Isaiah 45:17, "Israel has been saved by the LORD with an everlasting salvation; you will not be put to shame or humiliated to all eternity." To me, that includes the Church age. Some Christians today point to the fact that the Jews failed in keeping the Law and broke God's covenant. There is no question that Israel made a mess of things, and not just once, but many times. Just read Psalms 105 and 106. These psalms recite the ways Israel failed; but the point is that God did not break His covenant with them (Psalm 106:44-46). We are talking about God, the loving Father of His son Israel, who is the apple of His eye (Exodus 4:22; Zechariah 2:8). A loving father does not reject his children just because they do something wrong. God may get angry; He may discipline us, and that discipline can be very difficult, but that does not mean rejection (Hebrews 12:5-11).

## **Replacement Theology Falsifies God's Covenant**

For replacement theology to work, God has to break His covenant. That makes God a liar. If what He promised a people with a specific lineage—the sons of Abraham—was not true, that makes the Word of God a lie. If replacement theology is true, then when Christ came, God would have had to say to the children of Israel, "I am done with you guys. You are out. What I told you is not valid anymore. You have messed up too many times, so it is all over. Everything I said to you now belongs to the Christians." If that is true, here is my question to Christians: "What are you standing on? What is the basis of your faith?" If you really believe that God broke His covenant with Israel by making a new covenant with you, why do you think He will keep that covenant? If He did not keep His covenant with Israel, why do you think He will keep His covenant with Christianity? If you believe in replacement theology, you should be concerned. If Christ's coming changed all the rules, and broke all the covenants established by a Word from the Father, then we should be very concerned that at any time God might change His mind about us. The doctrine says they were rejected because of unbelief. What about the unbelief of Christianity? Are we a true witness of Jesus to the world? What about our division? Christ commanded us to love one another and be one with one another. Have we fulfilled the commandments of Christ? Have we as Christians messed up enough that God can say, "Forget grace! I'm done with you! I'm going to find another people"? Christians have not been doing too well either. So, God says, "I am replacing you." Think about it. Christianity has failed as much as the Jewish people in keeping the commandments.



## GRAFTED IN TO THE ROOT

**C**hrist did not end the covenant God made with Israel. He said very clearly, "I did not come to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I came to fulfill them" (see Matthew 5:17). It is one covenant, and by the grace of God, we as Gentiles were included in that covenant. We read this in Romans the 11th chapter.

*If the first piece of dough is holy, the lump is also; and if the root is holy, the branches are too. But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree, do not be arrogant toward the branches; but if you are arrogant, remember that it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you. You will say then, "Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in." Quite right, they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. Do not be conceited, but fear; for if God did not spare the natural branches, He will not spare you, either. (Romans 11:16-21)*

We are not supposed to be arrogant. Yet racism is one of the most arrogant things that there is, and this intolerance exists today in some Christian churches against the Jewish people. This Scripture is very clear that the Gentiles were grafted in to the root, and the Gentile Christian Church is not that root. It is not the foundation or the beginning. It is a branch that was grafted in to this great, beautiful tree that was already growing. According to the apostle Paul, some of the Jews were taken out due to their unbelief, but there is nothing stopping God from grafting them back in. Read Psalm 106 again. No matter how badly Israel acted, no matter how angry God was with them, He never rejected His covenant with them. And He has not rejected them today. He has not rejected His covenant with the Jewish people, and we as Gentiles stand on that covenant. If it is displaced, there is no Christianity.

God is a loving Father, and He is raising His firstborn son Israel; and we as Gentiles have been grafted in to the family. We are the younger brother, and we should be very careful how we treat our older brother. The way some Christians have behaved toward Jews is like jealous young children trying to push away an older sibling to get to their father. "Dad, do something about this guy! Love me more!" Paul tells us, "It is not you Gentiles who support the root. The root supports you" (see Romans 11:18).

# STAND TOGETHER TO END ANTI-SEMITISM



The root of Judaism still supports us. It is still the covenant. It supports us as we stand before God and worship. Paul continues, "You will say then, 'Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in.' Quite right, they were broken off for their unbelief" (Romans 11:19-20).

We can read the Scriptures and clearly see all the times the Jews had unbelief. They had unbelief in the wilderness. They had unbelief in taking the land. They had unbelief after they took the land. Is Christianity free from unbelief? Everyone has had unbelief. Paul writes, "You stand by your faith. Do not be conceited, but fear" (Romans 11:20). When God told Moses, "I am going to destroy this people," Moses stood up and said, "No, Lord! You made a promise to these people" (see Exodus 32:10-14). I think God is looking for that same response from Christians and the Church. If Christians believe God is ready to reject the Jews, then it should be the Christians who stand up like Moses, before the face of God and contend, "No, wait a minute, Lord. You made promises to them, and You are not a liar. These are Your people. You are their Father. Israel is Your firstborn son. Bless them and help them. Fulfill Your covenant and promises to them."

Today, many evangelical Christians are starting to teach against replacement theology. In fact, hundreds of pastors in North America agree with the idea that we must get rid of this anti-Semitic doctrine. As Christians, we have been grafted in, and we must support Israel and help them in any way that we can. At Hargrave Ministries, our goal has always been to grow and mature as God's people so that we can be His instruments in every situation that we face as we walk with the Lord.

**GOD IS LOOKING FOR US TO STAND AGAINST ANTI-SEMITISM. IT HAS BEEN A DANGEROUS, DESTRUCTIVE REALITY IN THE CHURCH. IT HAS CREATED A HISTORY OF WHICH WE SHOULD BE ASHAMED AND REPENTANT. LORD, HELP US TO GET RID OF IT! WE PRAY FOR A BAPTISM OF LOVE TO SWEEP AWAY THE ANTI-SEMITISM THAT HAS EXISTED IN THE CHURCH AND IN OUR OWN HEARTS. FATHER, GIVE US YOUR LOVE FOR YOUR PEOPLE ISRAEL, AS WELL AS FOR THE CHURCH OF CHRISTIAN BELIEVERS. HELP US TO STAND TOGETHER TO END THIS ABOMINABLE DOCTRINE OF ANTI-SEMITISM, IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!**

# ABOUT GARY HARGRAVE



GARY HARGRAVE has a passion for leading people into spiritual maturity. Gary effectively ministers the life-changing truth of God's Word through Bible teaching and prophetic revelation that emphasizes the Lordship of Christ.

Gary embraces the teachings and insights of the Hebrew Scriptures as the essential foundation of God's Kingdom and the roots of Christian faith.

By cultivating spiritual maturity in Christians, Gary is deeply committed to teaching and inspiring unity in the Body of Christ and between Christians and the Jewish people.

Throughout decades of ministry, Gary has worked closely with leaders in the Jewish, Catholic and Protestant communities to build relationships based on commonality and understanding. He frequently leads study tours to Israel and the lands of the Bible.

Gary is the host of a weekly podcast entitled *Growing In God*, and is the founder of Shiloh University, an accredited online Bible college and seminary.

Gary and his family reside in Hawaii.

**For other insightful resources by Gary Hargrave, including podcasts, books, articles, videos, and other educational materials, please visit: [www.HargraveMinistries.org](http://www.HargraveMinistries.org).**

## ABOUT HARGRAVE MINISTRIES

The calling of the Lord upon this ministry is to lead people into spiritual maturity by revealing biblical truth. **Our passion is to see the Kingdom of God manifest on earth** as the Body of Christ grows in unity, power and love.

Everything we do flows from the revelation of the Jewish roots of our Christian faith. It is our desire and privilege to bless the land and people of Israel. Our Israel outreach includes:

- **Feed the poor and break the cycle of poverty in Israel**
- **Support the orphans and widows of fallen Israeli soldiers**
- Provide physical and emotional care to **child victims of terrorism**
- **Build bridges between Christians and Jews with biblical study and research**
- Support archaeology and preservation of the **biblical City of David**
- Provide 24/7 **care for Holocaust survivors**
- **Help persecuted Jews around the world return to Israel and start new lives**
- Plant trees to **reforest Israel** and help create **"The Gospel Trail"** between Nazareth and Capernaum

Hargrave Ministries is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization supported through the generous contributions of ministry friends and partners. To learn more about the work of Hargrave Ministries or to partner in its outreach to Israel, please visit: [www.HargraveMinistries.org](http://www.HargraveMinistries.org)

