

## Revisiting 'the Jews' of the Fourth Gospel

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century has brought us into a time and place where religious bigotry and intolerance are at epidemic proportions and has affected even the arena of research and scholarship. The Fourth Gospel (FG) has in the past 50 years been under constant attack<sup>1</sup> and defense<sup>2</sup> as to whether it is Anti-Semitic, or whether it may be Anti-Judaistic. I have included in Appendix I of this paper, examples that go far beyond sincere concepts of belief and create atmospheres of hatred between competing ideologies.

In 'Revisiting the Jews of FG', it is my desire to re-examine that particular term 'the Jews', in order to see how it is used in various passages from the Tanak (Old Testament). Three of the evangelists begin the story of the Messiah by referring to the Baptist or the scene of the birth of Christ.<sup>3</sup> The author of FG takes us back to the very

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<sup>1</sup>Scholars such as Rosemary R. Ruether, Faith and Fratricide, (New York: The Seabury Press, 1974), Charlotte Klein Anti-Judaism In Christian Theology, Translated by Edward Quimm (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), and Adele Reinhartz, "A Nice Jewish Girl Reads the Gospel of John", Semeia, Vol. 77, 1997, 177-193, Eldon J. Epp, "Anti-Semitism and the Popularity of the Fourth Gospel", CCAR Journal, Vol. 22, Fall 1975, 35-57, are sincere examples of critical examinations into Fourth Gospel and New Testament texts. These books, journals, papers number in the hundreds.

<sup>2</sup>There are likewise many books and journal articles that are defensive, and I will only note Charles K. Barrett, "The Old Testament in the Fourth Gospel", Journal of Theological Studies, Vol. 48, 1947, 155-169.

<sup>3</sup>C. K. Barrett, The Gospel According to John, (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1978), 149.

beginning before anything ever existed, to the creation scene where Jesus, the λογος of the Prologue, can be seen as the “opening chorus of a drama”<sup>4</sup>, for its emphasis is on the Deed of God in Christ and its demand upon those who believe, and is a positive statement intended to declare that the λογος pre-existed with God, and the λογος, Jesus Christ, is the incarnation of God in the flesh.<sup>5</sup>

In the pages that will follow, I wish to emphasize that FG is very dependent on the Tanak for the creation of his gospel, for the “history of Jesus of Nazareth cannot be understood except against the backdrop of the Old Testament”.<sup>6</sup> Within the Prologue, FG leaps over the entire Tanak to say “In the beginning” as an attempt to take its subject, Jesus Christ, and identify Him as the Word that is present prior to the creation. In addition, however, FG immediately begins to parallel the events of FG with “the Prologue and the balance of the book”<sup>7</sup>

As the Prologue comes to a close, we are told that the record of John begins when "the Jews" send Priests and Levites to enquire of John as to his identity. This term is to

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<sup>4</sup>James P. Berkeley, Reading the Gospel of John, (Philadelphia: The Judson Press, 1958), 243.

<sup>5</sup>N. A. Beck, Mature Christianity: The Recognition and Repudiation of the Anti-Jewish Polemic of the New Testament, (London: Associated University Press, 1985), 251.

<sup>6</sup>Claus Westermann. The Gospel of John: In the Light of the Old Testament (trans. Siegfried S. Schatzmann: Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1998), 2.

<sup>7</sup>D. A. Carson, The Gospel According to John. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1991), 111.

be used seventy-one times in FG,<sup>8</sup> and has caused considerable controversy as to its meaning. In 1979, Von Walde took the position that the term means "religious authorities"<sup>9</sup>. This was followed by an article in 1982, in which the research is primarily directed toward reviewing ten major scholars and how they agree in the majority of 31 instances as to the identity of "the Jews", while disagreeing on ten other texts.<sup>10</sup> Von Wahldde concludes that the term does not mean the common people of Judaism, but primarily in the sense of 'religious leadership'.<sup>11</sup> (Another point that should be noted about this number are the occurrences of this term in FG, and the size of the Sanhedrin. There were 70 members of this body, and the High Priest. This total of 71 matches the number of times that the term 'the Jews' appear in FG. Is this simply an accidental match, or did the author know what he was doing.)

Throughout FG Jesus is seen in a struggle against those called 'the Jews', and it must be noted that this could be a representation of the Tanak prophets and the "religious authorities of that day who often found themselves in a struggle between what they

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<sup>8</sup>R. Alan Culpepper, "The Gospel of John and the Jews", Review and Expositor, Vol. 84, 273.

<sup>9</sup>Urban C. Von Wahldde, "The Terms for Religious Authorities in the Fourth Gospel", Journal of Biblical Literature, Vol. 98, 234.

<sup>10</sup>Urban C. Von Wahldde, "The Johannine Jews: A Critical Survey", New Testament Studies, Vol. 28, 33-60.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 42.

believed, and the message of the prophet. In Jeremiah 23:1-40, we see a time when the prophet states that the religious leadership was leading the people astray and driving them away from Him..

Jeremiah (23:5ff) declares that God will send a righteous branch, or King that will someday execute judgment and justice. The eleventh verse of this chapter cries out against the prophets and priests who had the role to speak for God, as well as to represent the people before the Lord. Jeremiah sees the failure of the prophets as a plague against the people of God. In verse thirty-six, Jeremiah says that these false leaders have changed the very words of God to benefit themselves, and the people no longer knew the desires of God for their lives.

Amos, of Tekoa, one of the first great prophets, maintained through his ministry that he was not a professional prophet, but in many ways was “uncompromising, the most radical, and the clearest thinking of all the prophets.”<sup>12</sup> We see the use of the term “Thus saith the Lord” (1:3, 1:6, 1:9, 1:11, 1:13, 2:1, 2:4, 2:6) in pronouncing judgment against the nations that surrounded Israel. He then turned his attention to Israel, predicting the judgment of God against the sinfulness of Israel and a call for repentance. At the close of his words, he leaves a hope for tomorrow in stating that God will raise up the

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<sup>12</sup>J. Philip Hyatt, Prophetic Religion: A Search for the Key Ideas of the Religion on Which Jesus Built, (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1947), 19.

tabernacle of David, and return the remnant to the land of Israel.

Throughout the Tanak, the failure of the people of God was seen in light of the failure of the leadership; thus it can be seen that the tension in FG between Jesus and "the Jews", does not lie with the common people, but with the leadership that had turned Judaism into a "Temple people". Proverbs (29:16) places a high importance on what we see as examples for the lives that we live, and it refers to the consequences of wicked leadership that governs and encourages sin which leads to the righteous falling into an unrighteous life. In that same chapter, we find in verse twenty, "Where there is no vision, the people perish; but he that keepeth the law, happy is he". Thus when the horn of warning is silenced, as when the leaders fail to speak, all the restraints of God's people are cast off and they fall in sin.<sup>13</sup> In First Isaiah (9:16), the prophet declares that the "leaders cause them to err".<sup>14</sup>

The confrontation of Jesus with 'the Jews' throughout FG is also not directed against the revelation of God, for it is not the teaching of God that Jesus attacks: it is the teaching that has been molded at the hands of men. Temple worship and sacrifice had become the center of the teachings of Judaism, and they had forgotten the things that

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<sup>13</sup>J.F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck, The Commentary(Wheaton: Victor Books, 1983), 968.

<sup>14</sup>J. Philip Hyatt, Prophetic Religion: A Search for the Key Ideas of the Religion On Which Jesus Built, (Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1947), 58.

God really demanded.

In the imagery of Hosea, we see the people as prostitutes that have departed from God and become spiritual adulterers, just as Hosea's wife, Gomer, has committed adultery. In Hosea (4:9) it is the voice of God that says unto them, "For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings" (6:6). The prophet Micah is also heard to say, "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God" (6:8).

When the term 'the Jews' first appears in FG, there is no hostility shown between Jesus and these authorities, but they are clearly identified as Priests and Levites, "originally designating the tribes of Judah and Benjamin which formed the separate kingdom of Judah", but here in FG they are the "entire theocratic community as summed up in its official heads".<sup>15</sup> Thus it is the Sadducees that have come to inquire of John,<sup>16</sup> and this term is always carefully used in Jewish ecclesiastical polity,<sup>17</sup> for it refers to the temple staff of Pre-exile Judaism. It is this same party that is referred to in John 12:9-11

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<sup>15</sup>W. Robertson Nicoll, Editor, The Expositor's Greek Testament, Volume I, (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1983), 692.

<sup>16</sup>A. T. Robertson, Word Pictures in the New Testament, Nashville: Broadman Press, 1960), Volume V, 18.

<sup>17</sup>Barnabas Lindars, The Gospel of John, (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1972), 102.

that is determined to not only kill Jesus, but Lazarus, because many "believed on Jesus" for raising Lazarus from the dead.

The second confrontation with 'the Jews' takes place with the events at the Wedding Feast in Cana. The feast has run out of wine, and Jesus commands the servants to take and pour water into the empty water pots, and take them into the feast. We see here a passage that has been normally interpreted as "good wine" replacing the "bad wine", or the new Christian faith replacing the outdated Jewish faith,<sup>18</sup> and the replacement of Jewish institutions and religious views.<sup>19</sup> These conclusions are often drawn upon because the waterpots were used in Jewish purification rites.<sup>20</sup>

There is another distinctive possibility that we need to take into consideration. Jesus instructs the servants to place water into the waterpots, but the wine is taken from the same waterpots. In Isaiah, 12:3, "Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation", and it is through Judaism that God makes available His salvation. In Isaiah 55:1, the prophet states "Come, all you who are thirsty", and we see this as an invitation extended to the Samaritan woman when Jesus says that salvation "is of the Jews" (John 4:22c).

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<sup>18</sup>Beck, 253.

<sup>19</sup>Raymond E. Brown, The Gospel According to John I-XII, (Garden City: Doubleday, 1968), 104-105.

<sup>20</sup>Lindars, The Gospel of John, 123-125.

Paul acknowledges this in Romans 1:16 when he declares that the gospel is "the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek". Sanders has noted that "it is we Gentiles who must enter Israel by the door Christ has provided".<sup>21</sup> Though the leadership had failed to lead the people of God, Christ now appears, as Paul has noted "at the appropriate time in history".<sup>22</sup>

Smalley connects this with the statement in John that the good wine has been held back until now,<sup>23</sup> but now the prophetic event will unfold in Jerusalem.

The cleansing of the temple is one of only a few incidents that are recorded in all four gospels. Robinson sees in John a connection between John the Baptist and the cleansing of the temple in noting that Malachi 3:1-3 sees God's Messenger declare that the Lord "who they seek" shall appear "suddenly" at the temple and he shall "Purify the sons of Levi" that "they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness".<sup>24</sup>

The setting is important for we are at the annual Passover when not only must the

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<sup>21</sup>James A. Sanders, "Torah and Christ", Interpretation, Vol. 29, 389.

<sup>22</sup>See Galatians 4:4, The word chronos is used to note a period of time, denoting an appropriateness to the period in question.

<sup>23</sup>Stephen S. Smalley, John: Evangelist and Interpreter, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1978), 178.

<sup>24</sup>J. A. T. Robinson, The Priority of John, (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1985), 129.

annual temple tax be paid,<sup>25</sup> but it is a time when travelers from various parts of the empire have come to fulfill an annual obligation.<sup>26</sup> Travelers who came many miles would not be able to bring their own animals for sacrifice and would therefore be required to purchase an animal close by the temple. The temple area was a very large setting with many other buildings and yards. FG records in 2:14 that the animals were being sold in the area of the νηερον, which indicates the outer court of the temple, or perhaps the Court of the Gentiles.<sup>27</sup> It was also there that money could be exchanged from a foreign currency to the required half-shekel.<sup>28</sup> The money changers were needed in order to provide the needed currency that would be free from the pagan images often found on coinage. Those who made these exchanges would charge a certain fee for this service,<sup>29</sup> but in most research, little is ever said about this except that the fee was small.<sup>30</sup> This is rather difficult to believe, as many things could affect the fee, such as the

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<sup>25</sup>C. R. Erdman, The Gospel of John, (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1983), 32.

<sup>26</sup>Manford G. Gutzke, Plain Talk on John, (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1968), 28.

<sup>27</sup>Brown, The Gospel According to John I-XII, 115.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., 115.

<sup>29</sup>William Hendriksen, The Gospel of John, (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1953), 122.

<sup>30</sup>Gutzke, 29.

amount of discount that would be applied against various monies used within the Empire. Distances to whatever lands that the money originated, the economic conditions existing in those lands, leads one to believe that the fee could sometimes be substantial.

Jesus must have seen in all of this the commercialization of the spiritual heritage of Judaism.<sup>31</sup> John the Baptist had declared that the Kingdom of God "was at hand". In Zechariah 14:20,21, the prophet had declared that in the end time all those who would come to the House of God would come in purity, in true sacrifice, and the Canaanite would no longer be in the House of God.<sup>32</sup> Therein lies the zeal of God, in desiring a true worship of Him. The prophets had been declaring that God was no longer satisfied with the type of sacrifices being brought to Him, for the real problem lied in the heart of men who would sacrifice to atone for their sin, but their lives continued deep in slavery to sin.<sup>33</sup>

Sanders finds it difficult to fully explain the purpose of this 'cleansing' setting forth several theories,<sup>34</sup> that are possible and probable. One possible answer should really

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<sup>31</sup>Merrill C. Tenney, The Gospel of Belief: An Analytic Study of the Text, (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1948), 84.

<sup>32</sup>E. P. Sanders, Jesus and Judaism, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 67. Sanders sees in the context of the word Canaanite as meaning 'trader', hence the use of term money changer.

<sup>33</sup>See Isaiah 43:23 and Hosea 6:6.

<sup>34</sup>Sanders, Jesus and Judaism, 76.

combine actions. First of all, this action is directed against the Priestly caste, and not a rejection upon Judaism and the Temple that God Himself had required to be built. Secondly, it is very possible that Jesus was in fact stating that the era of the Temple and its sacrifices was drawing to an end.

All the Synoptics collaborate this 'cleansing' by using the same terminology that the House of God "shall be a house of Prayer". All three also use quotes from Isaiah 56:7 and Jeremiah 7:11 to authenticate this prophetic event.<sup>35</sup>

The authorities in the Temple are quick to ask under whose authority is Jesus acting? The reply is such that it causes a great deal of confusion. Jesus says, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it in three days".(John 2:19b) The authorities believe that he is speaking about the Temple itself, but we should note two items. Jesus did not say that he would destroy the Temple; however, in Mark 13:1, Jesus does predict that the Temple will be destroyed.<sup>36</sup> Later at the trial of Jesus, one witness will state that Jesus did threaten to destroy the temple and rebuild another without the use of hands, (Mark 14:57) while two other witnesses will say that Jesus claimed the power to destroy the temple and to build it again in three days. (Matthew 26:60) At the crucifixion both Matthew

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<sup>35</sup>B. H. Throckmorton, Gospel Parallels, (New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1949), 140.

<sup>36</sup>This is also found in Matthew 24:1-3 and Luke 21:6-7.

and Mark record cries coming from the crowds “you would destroy the temple and build it again, save yourself”.<sup>37</sup> Likewise John notes (2:22) that the disciples did not understand the meaning of the cleansing until after the resurrection.

This incident cannot be taken lightly. The Jew of that day saw the temple as the “place where Israel atoned for sin”<sup>38</sup> as well as the place where their God dwelt behind the Vail within the Holy of Holies. It was difficult for them to understand what Jesus said and the meaning that it carried for them. This act could be seen as an attack on their religious heritage, and explains why Jacob Neusner sees this incident as an attempt by the early church to replace the Eucharist for the Passover, “one table for another”.<sup>39</sup>

Mark Matson has noted that the Temple Incident supports the actions of Jesus as “primarily prophetic, referring to God’s coming Eschatological activity on behalf of his people”.<sup>40</sup>

In Jeremiah (31:31-34), the prophet speaks of a day when the Law of God would be placed within the heart of man. Jeremiah insisted and promoted personal religion “by

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<sup>37</sup>See Matt. 27:39, 40 and Mark 15:29, 30.

<sup>38</sup>Jacob Neusner, “The Absoluteness of Christianity and the Uniqueness of Judaism” Interpretation, Vol. 43, 25.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., 26.

<sup>40</sup>Mark A. Matson, “The Temple Incident” in Jesus in Johannine Tradition (ed. Robert T. Fortna and Tom Thatcher; Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001). 147.

his insistence that sin comes primarily from the sinful heart”.<sup>41</sup> It is in this sense that FG sees Jesus as the Logos, the Word of God, the Living Torah, and as “the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world”.(John 1:36b) The Paschal Lamb, Jesus, now becomes offered once for the “sin of the world”.<sup>42</sup> This is accomplished through the New Birth that FG speaks about in the persons of Nicodemus and the Samaritan Woman.

FG sees the coming of Jesus Christ into the world as that act of God which provides the mechanism for mankind to become once again the children of God. This is not a new start, or a changing mind of God; this has been the intention of God as spoken by the prophets of Judaism. Through this new birth, Christ enables mankind to receive His spirit, and mankind becomes as Paul states, A New Creation reconciled to God.<sup>43</sup> God’s spirit now comes to dwell within the believer, and becomes the temple where God resides.<sup>44</sup>

The ‘Jews’ of John are not the people of Israel, rather they are the Leadership of Israel, content with the sacrificial system that has elevated them to their positions of

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<sup>41</sup>Hyatt, 25.

<sup>42</sup>The writer of Hebrews (9:28) saw Christ as dying once, and this is used in I Peter 3:18, and is used in verse 19 also to note that Christ was a “lamb without blemish and spot”.

<sup>43</sup>See II Corinthians 5:17-19.

<sup>44</sup>F. B. Meyer, Gospel of John, (Fort Washington: Christian Literature Crusade, 1970), 56.

power. This places Jesus and these leaders in direct opposition to one another, and FG sees this tension not as one between the people of God and Jesus, but as a bankrupt leadership that has lost the meaning of what it is to walk with God.

Throughout FG there is a recurrence of a theme that Jesus speaks not for himself but the Father who has sent Him. This is seen as “whoever hears my word and believes Him who sent me”(5:24), “For I have come down from heaven, not to do my will, but to do the will of him who sent me”(6:38), “My teaching is not my own. It comes from Him who sent me”(6:16). This is repeated in 7:28, 7:33, 8:15,16,18,26,40 and continues throughout FG. During the ministry of Jesus there was speculation that an “eschatological prophet” that would be similar to Moses would appear.<sup>45</sup> This is found in the writings of the Qumran Sect (1 QS 9:11),<sup>46</sup> and points back to Deuteronomy 18:15,18,19 where Moses speaks of the Prophet who God will send that “... You must listen to him .... I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command Him. If anyone does not listen to my words that the Prophet speaks in my name, I myself will call him to account”.

John the Baptist is asked (1:21), “Are you the Prophet?” When Jesus had feed the

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<sup>45</sup>W. Barnes Tatum, In Quest of Jesus: A Guidebook, (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1982), 117.

<sup>46</sup>Marie-Emile Boismard, Moses or Jesus: An Essay in Johannine Christology, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 67.

5,000, the people say (6:14), “Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world”. At that time, an overzealous crowd has the desire to take Jesus by force, and to proclaim him King over Israel.<sup>47</sup> It is Fortna who notes that Jesus did not repudiate the charge of the crowd, but rather Jesus retreats to another place.<sup>48</sup> Later, the crowds again speak out (7:40) “Surely this man is the prophet”. At this point, FG has coordinated the titles of Word, Prophet, King and Messiah to Jesus.

Earlier (1:29,36), Jesus had likewise been pronounced by John the Baptist as the Lamb of God that was to take away the sin of the world, “an apparent allusion to the lamb slaughtered for the Passover ritual”.<sup>49</sup> FG now looks upon the theme of the “Suffering Servant”<sup>50</sup> found in Second Isaiah 52:13-53:12, and specifically 53:7 “... he was led like a lamb to the slaughter ....” and 52:13 “ ... lifted up and highly exalted ...”. Three times in FG Jesus is to use the term “lifted up” (ὑψωσεν). These are found in 3:14 where Jesus speaks of the raising of the “serpent on a standard that those who believed might look and live”, and “draws a vivid parallel between the Act of Moses and the Cross” of

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<sup>47</sup>Jouette M. Basser. “The Galileans: A Neglected Factor in Johannine Community Research”, Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Volume 43(1981), 251.

<sup>48</sup>R. T. Fortna, “Theological Use of Locale in the Fourth Gospel”, Australasian Theological Review, Sup3 (1974), 75.

<sup>49</sup>Donald Senior, The Passion of Jesus in the Gospel of John, (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1991), 33.

<sup>50</sup>Raymond E. Brown, The Gospel According to John I-XII, (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, 1966), 146.

Christ on which “ ... the basis of the kingdom of God (the atoning death of Christ on the Cross ....”.<sup>51</sup> is seen. “Lifted up” is again used in 8:28 and 12:32, and is defined specifically in verse 33 as the kind of death that Jesus would undergo.

The second important term that is used in FG is glorified (δοξαζεν). Ashton is convinced that 12:23 speaks of the Son of Man being glorified, and this is followed “that when Jesus was glorified .... then they remembered”. Ashton believes that this points to the time when Christ has not only died, but has been resurrected.<sup>52</sup>

This is, of course, the death and resurrection of Christ to Paul and is the gospel that he has been instructed to preach. In I Corinthians 15:1, Paul notes that “... I want to remind you of the gospel I preached unto you .... that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures ... that he was raised on the third day ....”. This, the core of New Testament thought, is at the center of FG.

Markus Barth saw the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ was not simply a theological dogma, but an essential to the Christian faith.<sup>53</sup> He noted that there were statements within the Tanak that did not permit, or allow, God to forgive and to justify

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<sup>51</sup>Archibald Thomas Robertson, Word Pictures in the New Testament. Vol. 5 The Fourth Gospel. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1932), 49.

<sup>52</sup>John Ashton, Understanding the Fourth Gospel, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 494.

<sup>53</sup>Markus Barth and Verne H. Fletcher, Acquittal by Resurrection. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964), 1-96.

mankind in his sin. Some of those texts were Exodus 23:7 “I will not justify the wicked”, and Proverbs 17:15, “He who justifies the wicked and he who condemns the righteous are both alike an abomination to the Lord”.<sup>54</sup>

Barth notes that the legal ground for justification “... cannot be found in works of the law ... cannot consist of faith, if faith be defined as a means of knowledge .... cannot be placed in a sudden impulse or inclination of God’s heart toward the sinner”.<sup>55</sup> In the text of Romans 4:25, we find “He was delivered over to death for our sins, and was raised to life for our justification”. Barth concludes that justification lies in the person of Jesus Christ, for it is through his life and history that mankind places his faith, and this faith must be exclusively in Jesus Christ, due to it being the Deed of God alone.<sup>56</sup>

Within the text of the Suffering Servant, we find that “he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors” and “by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many”.<sup>57</sup> This is the conclusion of FG that is found in chapter 20 verse 31, “But these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the son of God, and that believing ye may have life through His Name.”.

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<sup>54</sup>Barth and Fletcher, Acquittal, 86.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., 92-93.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., 94.

<sup>57</sup>Isaiah 53:11b; Isaiah 53:12e.

The author of FG does not place the blame for the Crucifixion on the Romans, the Jewish people, the Jewish authorities, and he does not blame the world. The radical view that the author held was that God loved His creation so much that He personally sent His only Son to reconcile the world unto Himself. The author of John believed that the crucifixion was the plan of God and the plan cannot be placed on any other group or person. Thus we see an exclusivity created in the mind of God, but we never see any hatred or bigotry directed toward any groups, or individuals. There are many faiths and religions that are exclusive in nature, including our own, but we are reminded by James D. G. Dunn:<sup>58</sup>

**We all only ‘see in a mirror dimly’. We all know only ‘in part’ (I Cor. 13:12). The full light of God’s truth which will swallow up our partial insights and provisional formulations has yet to shine in full strength on our petty and disordered minds. Until then liberty of opinion, genuine respect for those who differ and a reverent agnosticism in many matters of secondary importance is a wholly proper and indeed essential response of faith. Since we walk by faith and not by sight, our confidence should be in the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, rather than in what we see and handle and control. ‘Let him who boasts, boast of the Lord’!**

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<sup>58</sup>James D. G. Dunn, The Evidence for Jesus, (Louisville: The Westminster Press, 1985), 107.

## Appendix I

### Examples of Historical Anti-Semitism

At the end of the Fourth Century, Emperor Theodosius had set, through Imperial legislation, "Christianity as the official religion" of the Roman Empire,<sup>59</sup> and some of these early "Roman Christians" saw the ties of Easter to Passover, as well as other Christian customs, and this drew them to Judaism. These people were referred to as "Judaizing Christians" and became a target of a pastor in Antioch of Syria named John Chrysostom, because he saw these people as a threat against the church.<sup>60</sup>

"No Jew adores God" was Chrysostom's statement in Discourse 1 of 8 discourses directed to these Judaizers.<sup>61</sup> This statement was made in light of John 8:19 in which Jesus had said to those present that they did not know Him, and likewise could not have known the Father. He continued in Discourse 6 that the Jews "did slay Christ ... this is

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<sup>59</sup>J. Chrysostom, Discourse Against Judaizing Christians, Translated by Paul W. Harkins, (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1977), xxv.

<sup>60</sup>R. R. Ruether, Faith and Fratricide, (New York: The Seabury Press, 1974), 170.

<sup>61</sup>Chrysostom, 11.

why you have no chance for atonement, excuse or defense".<sup>62</sup> The implication was that the Jew was forever lost, with no hope of salvation or forgiveness of sin, and for that reason, he believed that "God has turned his back on your religion",<sup>63</sup> and concludes that the temple "was a den of thieves",<sup>64</sup> a "dwelling of demons",<sup>65</sup> and "that place is a brothel".<sup>66</sup>

Chrysostom's implications are clear, for they go far beyond differences of academic thought or religious belief, but are attempts to humiliate, degrade and blaspheme the people of Judaism and their beliefs.

This type of rhetoric continued during the reformation when attempts were made to destroy the Talmud of the Jews, and called into question their very right to existence. Martin Luther seen by many as the Father of the Spiritual Reformation was himself thoroughly caught up in Anti-Semitism in the later years of his life. In 1523, he had authored a tract that proclaimed Jesus Christ was a Jew, and admitted to the fact that Christians had historically maligned those of the Jewish Faith. He noted that had the

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<sup>62</sup>Chrysostom, 154.

<sup>63</sup>Chrysostom, 162.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., 174.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., 145.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., 10.

original apostles treated Jews as those in current history, no one would have entered the Christian Faith.<sup>67</sup> Yet only twenty years later in another tract dealing with the "Jews and their Lies", Luther sees the Jews as a "rejected and damned people ... Revenge already hangs on their necks, a thousand times worse than we could wish on them".<sup>68</sup> Readers of Luther's writings can see toward the end how Luther viewed Jews "since Christ's appearance on earth, the Jews have had no more future as Jews".<sup>69</sup>

The evolution of Luther's thoughts caused him to conclude that "protection of Jews was not his job," it was "a matter for the civil authorities".<sup>70</sup> Johannes Reuchlin's thoughts were even more revealing, for he said, "if the Jews do not show signs of improvement, they must be expelled".<sup>71</sup>

It is to this point that Adolf Hitler once remarked to two Bishops at a meeting that he "was only putting into effect what Christianity had preached and practiced for 2000 years".<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>67</sup>H. A. Oberman, The Roots of Anti-Semitism, Translated by J. I. Proter, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981), 93.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid., 93.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., 46.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., 120.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., 120.

<sup>72</sup>Ruether, 224.

The examples that we see above are certainly different than when we see some of the conclusions drawn by one of the great Jewish Scholars, Jacob Neusner, and a Christian contemporary R, Allen Culpepper.

Neusner has stated that there is no continuity between the Judaism prior to Jesus Christ, and the Christianity of Paul.<sup>73</sup> It is Neusner's conviction that Judaism and Christianity represent "people of one sort talking about different things to people of a different sort altogether"<sup>74</sup>. He does not see any common ground between the two faiths, because the Judaism of the Old Testament dealt with sanctification, while Christianity of the New Testament is dealing with the Salvation of Israel.<sup>75</sup> Thus he concludes that the statement of Jesus found in John 4:23 is not true at all, for "salvation is not of the Jews, not at all".<sup>76</sup>

R. Alan Culpepper notes that FG is stating that those "who do not receive Jesus have missed the true revelation in their own tradition".<sup>77</sup> These two points of view are radically different from each other, but both are statements of faith. At what point do

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<sup>73</sup>Jacob Neusner, "The Absoluteness Of Christianity and the Uniqueness of Judaism - Why Salvation Is Not of the Jews" (Interpretation 43/1 (1989), 18-31.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid., 26.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid., 27.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid., 31.

<sup>77</sup>R. Alan Culpepper, "Anti-Judaism as a Theological Problem ...", 61-82.

ideas, thoughts or beliefs become dangerous?

Is this the type of rhetoric and anti-Semitism found in FG, or is FG simply a statement of faith that finds itself in opposition to another group of people.

FG begins with the proclamation that the λογος has come into the world, and is a positive statement intended to declare that the λογος pre-existed with God, and the λογος, Jesus Christ, is the incarnation of God in the flesh.<sup>78</sup> Within the Prologue of FG (1:12b), we find one of the central themes is "to them gave he power (legal right, or εξουσιαν) to become sons (children, or τεκνα) of God". It is the statement of FG that the world must return into the mold of the children of God again. This is because we see in Genesis that Adam is created in the "image of God (1:27), or the likeness of God (5:1), but all of Adam's children are created in the "likeness" or "image" of Adam. These passages can be seen as a small chiasm pointing to man's nature that is passed on, accepted willingly in the act of sin, versus the nature of God that can once again be planted into man. FG speaks to this in John 3 where Jesus encounters Nicodemus and tells him that he must be "born again". Paul uses this same thought in 1 Corinthians 15:21-22, as well as Peter in 1 Peter 1:23.

In translating the Mishnah, Neusner saw the "Israelis, who are called children to

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<sup>78</sup>Beck, 251.

the Omnipresent".<sup>79</sup> This passage of R. A. Aquiba ties this statement to Deuteronomy 14:1 that Israel is the child of God, and must not forsake the Torah (Proverbs 14:2). It is interesting to note that the Torah is seen as the Books of Moses, Hebrew Scriptures, Oral and Written Revelation of Sinai, in both the Mishnah and the Talmud.<sup>80</sup> Neusner further notes that the Torah is the revelation of God. In a very simple manner, he states that Christians saw in the coming of Jesus the arrival of the Messiah, while the Rabbis saw the Messiah coming only when they would merit this event.

In an article attempting to understand the reasons for Jews and Christians to head into different directions, Sanders makes a point of the two phase facet of the Torah: the muthos and the ethos. The muthos can be seen in the gospel (the story of God's deeds), and its story of the work of God and its identify. Conversely, the ethos is the law or requirements of God, its ethics and subsequent life style that is demanded.<sup>81</sup> The Torah was always both of the above thus the people of Judaism continued in this manner with no need for the type of Messiah as portrayed in Jesus Christ.

Neusner observes that Judaism replaced portions of their religious practices at the

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<sup>79</sup>Jacob Neusner, Editor and Translator, The Mishnah, A New Translation, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 680.

<sup>80</sup>Neusner, Judaism in the Beginning of Christianity, 12.

<sup>81</sup>Sanders, "Torah and Christ", 372-390.

beginning of the Common Era.<sup>82</sup> The Temple was the Holy Place, and this was replaced by a Holy People who sought to live their life through submission of their will to the Will of God. In place of the Priesthood, the holy scholarly man would qualify through the process of learning the Word of God. In place of the sacrifices at the altar, Judaism must now carry out their religious duties and acts of kindness to those around them.

On the other hand, the New Testament became the reality of Jesus Christ, not simply about Him. Christians therefore see the reality of their faith in Jesus Christ, and this story of God moving in these final days through and in the person of Jesus Christ. This is the symbolism of the Prologue of FG, for the Word (Torah) becomes flesh and dwells in the people of God. In the fullest sense, "became" (egeneto) should read as "arrived on the scene as" human nature.<sup>83</sup>

The Jewishness of this phrase may be seen in the expression "dwelt or lived among us", for the word dwelt or lived is eskenosen from skene or tabernacle. To the Jewish-Christian mind, a scene could emerge from Exodus 40:34 when the presence of God was housed in the Tabernacle of the Wilderness.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>82</sup>Jacob Neusner, From Testament to Torah, (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1988), 44.

<sup>83</sup>J. F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck, The Bible Commentary, (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1983), 273.

<sup>84</sup>W. E. Vine, A Comprehensive Dictionary of the Original Greek Words, (McLean: MacDonald Publishing, 1927), 347.

The Logos as portrayed in FG sets the scene for the entire gospel, and although it portrays a different interpretation of the Torah, it certainly does not cast hatred or prejudice to one that practices Judaism. It is rather an emphasis on the Deed of God in Christ and its demand upon those who believe.

Our problem in viewing Judaism and Christianity must be dependent and based on our faith that deals with honesty and the ability to respect the views of those who think differently than we do. If this is the basis of our faith our thoughts and beliefs will not end up creating dangerous and intolerant views.

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