

## **Christ in Prophecy**

### **Prophecy 36: "The Evil of Replacement Theology, Part 1"**

© 2015 Lamb & Lion Ministries. All Rights Reserved.

For a video of this show, please visit <http://www.lamblion.com>.

#### **Opening**

**Dr. Reagan:** Did you know that the Jewish people blame Christianity for the horror of the Holocaust? Did you know why? Would you be surprised to learn that there is justification for their viewpoint? For a detailed presentation regarding this important matter, stay tuned.

#### **Part 1**

**Dr. Reagan:** Greetings in the name of Jesus, our Blessed Hope, and welcome to Christ in Prophecy. Thanks for tuning into our program. I hope it will prove to be a blessing to you. Incidentally, in case you do not know, all our TV programs are posted on our website at lamblion.com. You can go there at any time and watch them on demand. And that is true of other websites as well, like HisChannel.com and LightSource.com.

Now, regarding today's program, I'm sorry to say that I do not have a pleasant message to share with you. That's because I am going to present the origin of anti-Semitism in the early history of the Church, and I am going to discuss its ugly development up to the beginning of the Middle Ages in the Fifth Century. I think you will be amazed at what I have to share because most people are totally unaware of this documented historical record of Christian hatred toward the Jewish people. And most Christians are unaware of the fact that Christian anti-Semitism is rooted in what is called Replacement Theology. It is one of the great ironies of history that the Christian Church was founded entirely by Jews, and yet, within 100 years of its establishment, it had turned against the Jewish people with a vengeance.

The presentation I am about to show you was delivered to the annual Pre-Trib Study Group that meets in Dallas, Texas every December. This is a group of Bible prophecy scholars and teachers from all across our nation and around the world who believe the Bible teaches a Pre-Tribulation Rapture and a 1000 year reign of Jesus Christ. They also believe that God still loves the Jewish people and is determined to bring a great remnant of them to salvation through faith in their Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth.

#### **Dr. Reagan's Presentation**

**Dr. Reagan:** I was raised in a militantly Amillennial church. And by militantly I meant that if you had any other viewpoint you would be dis-fellowshipped. We seldom ever heard any preaching about end time Bible prophecy. The classic sermon within our denomination was one that boldly stated there is not one verse in the Bible that even implies that Jesus will ever put His feet on this earth again. I heard that a 100 times growing up. So you could imagine how shocked I was at age 12 when I was thumbing through the Bible and discovered Zechariah 14. It was very simple to understand it said the Messiah was going to come back to the Mount of Olives. When His foot touched the mountain it was going to split in half. The Jewish people were going to come out to Him. It said that He would speak a supernatural word that the armies around

Jerusalem would be destroyed. And it said that on that day verse 9 He would become King over all the earth. I was stunned. I could hardly believe my eyes. I'd always been taught that the Bible meant what it said so I found this passage to be very confusing since my pastor had always taught that Jesus was never coming back to this earth. So I decided to confront my pastor with it and I was only 12 years old and I was filled with fear and trembling. I'll never forget that encounter. I reminded him of what he had been teaching. And then I asked him to read Zechariah 14:1-9 and tell me the meaning. He pulled out his Bible he read the passage, and then he seemed to sit there for an eternity and suddenly he looked up, he pointed his finger in my face and he said, "Son, I do not know what this passage means. But I can guarantee you one thing it doesn't mean what it says." Well that was hard for me to swallow. Again I'd been taught the Bible meant what it said. And being a stubborn Irishman I decided to seek other opinions. One preacher explained to me that all Old Testament prophecies had been fulfilled. He said, "I have no idea when or where this prophecy was fulfilled. But I can guarantee you one thing it has been fulfilled because all Old Testament prophecies have been fulfilled in Jesus Christ." When I was about 18 years old we had a preacher come to town who was a seminary graduate. In our denomination that was very, very rare, but he was a seminary graduate. He repeated the same old claim that there was not one single verse in the Bible that even implies Jesus will ever put His feet on this earth again. And I came up afterwards and I confronted him with Zechariah 14 and he didn't even need to read it. He didn't even need to think about it. He knew it. He just blurted out one word, "Apocalyptic." Well I had no idea what he was talking about. I didn't know if that was a theory or a disease but he was a seminary graduate so I accepted his explanation. When I started preaching in my early 20's I would confidently proclaim that Jesus was never going to put His feet on the earth again. And one time a little old lady in tennis shoes came up afterwards and she said, "What about Zechariah 14?" And I said, "Apocalyptic." She turned around and ran for the door. I didn't know what I was talking about. She didn't know what she was talking about. All God's children were happy. I didn't realize at the time but I had been introduced to allegorical interpretation of Scripture. The official position of my church was that everything in the Bible meant exactly what it said unless it was talking about the Second Coming in which case it never meant what it said. I was also introduced to Replacement Theology. Although no one in our denomination really knew what that was, I never heard the term. You'll find it hard to believe how I was confronted with this unbiblical concept. I mean you're going to find this hard to believe. I was taught that it was sinful to pray the Lord's Prayer. I heard many sermons about this. Sinful to pray the Lord's Prayer. I was told the Lord's Prayer is irrelevant to modern day Christians because the prayer has already been answered. We were told, the prayer says, "Thy Kingdom come." And we were told the Kingdom has already come the Kingdom is the Church. So it is an irrelevant prayer.

Another way in which I was subjected to the attitude of Replacement Theology was the teaching that all of the Old Testament had been nailed to the Cross and was therefore irrelevant to Christianity. We called ourselves a New Testament Church and when the minister told us to bring our Bibles to church we brought them but 90% of the people had only a New Testament. Many of us did not even own a complete Bible. The beginning of my liberation from these viewpoints occurred when I was about 30 years old. I started reading the Minor Prophets and I was absolutely captivated by them. Their messages seemed so relevant to what was going on in the world today. And once again it was the book of Zechariah that proved to be my turning point. After reading it through from start to finish for the first time in my life I was impacted by the fact that it was full of Messianic prophecies about the First Coming and that every one of those prophecies meant what they said. It suddenly dawned on me that if the First Coming prophecies in this apocalyptic book meant what they said then the Second Coming prophecies must mean what they said. My study of Bible prophecy since that time has convinced me that the twisting of Scriptures through spiritualization is a terrible abuse of God's Word. It has lead Christians to

reject the Genesis account of Creation as well as the promises of God for the future. From the beginning to the end of the Bible we need to interpret God's Word for its plain sense meaning. And the failure to do so will produce tragic doctrines like Replacement Theology. And I'd like to get into the topic of Replacement Theology by going to the root of it; and the root of it is Satan. It is Satan's hatred of the Jewish people. Satan hates the Jews with a passion for several reasons: He hates them because God chose them to be His witnesses to the world. He hates them because through them God gave the world the Bible. He hates them because through them God gave the world the Messiah. He hates them because God has promised that He will save a great remnant of them. And he hates them because God has promised that through that remnant He will bless all the nations of the world during the millennial reign of Jesus. Satan is determined to destroy every Jew on planet earth so that God cannot keep His promises to them.

Part of Satan's strategy, part of his strategy has been to infect the Church with what has historically been called Supersessionism. This is the idea that God has replaced the Jews with the Church. It's only in the 20th Century that this concept has come to be known as Replacement Theology. The roots of Replacement Theology and its fruit of Anti-Semitism go back to the very beginning of Christianity. As I'm sure all of you are well aware the Church began as a Jewish institution. It was founded in Judea by Jews who were followers of a Jewish Messiah. And all of its founding documents were written by Jews. The Jewish nature of the early Church is attested to by this symbol, it is one of the oldest Christian symbols that's ever been found. It's carved into artifacts found in Jerusalem that date back to the First Century. As you can see it shows the fish the symbol of the Church emerging from Jewish roots represented by the menorah and the Star of David. And the fish became a symbol for Christians because the word for fish in Greek is "ichthus" an acronym for Jesus Christ, God's Son and Savior. Now as the Church began to spread beyond its Judean origin and it embraced more and more Gentiles it quickly lost touch with its Jewish roots. This process was accelerated by the destruction of the mother church in Jerusalem during the Second Jewish Revolt against the Romans that ended in 136 AD. Another key to the gentilizing of the Church was the development of an allegorical hermeneutical approach to the Scriptures that enabled the Church to appropriate Israel's promises for itself. Incidentally here is an illustration of the meaning of allegorical interpretation I found on the internet. "Allegory, what you say your story really means after someone else tells you what they think it really means."

For example an example of allegorical interpretation early in Church history consider Tertullian writing in the Third Century using the allegorical approach he was able to argue that the promise of Genesis 25, that the older will serve the younger was really a prophecy that Israel would become subservient to the Church. As a result of these historical developments Christian apologists starting as early as the Second Century began to turn against the Jews characterizing them as "Christ killers." Consider the following examples. Let's begin with the Epistle of Barnabas around 100 AD this is only 70 years after the Church was established. This writing was a contender for inclusion in the Bible. It is a good demonstration of how profoundly Greek methods of interpretation had early impacted Christianity. The writer insisted that the Old Testament was never meant to be read literally but was to be interpreted allegorically. The writer argued that only a Christian could make sense of the Bible. He further argued that the carnal Jews with their earthly mindset had failed to recognize the hidden messages of their own Scriptures. And as a result had eternally forfeited their entitlement to the covenant promises made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Or consider Ignatius of Antioch he said that those who partake of the Passover are partakers of those who killed Jesus. Or Justin Martyr in the Second Century he claimed God's Covenant with Israel was no longer valid and that the Gentiles had replaced the Jews. Additionally he was the first person to identify the Church as the true spiritual Israel and he declared that the plight of the Jews, their exile and their persecution had

happened quote, "In fairness, in justice because they had slain the just one." Early on the idea of deicide is mentioned over and over. Consider Melito of Sardis once again he focused on the issue of deicide proclaiming the King of Israel slain with Israel's right hand alas for the new wickedness of the new murder. Irenaeus as student of Polycarp who in turn was a disciple of the Apostle of John declared, "The Jews were disinherited, disinherited from the grace of God." He argued that it happened because they had rejected the Son of God and because they slew Him. Clement of Alexandria claimed that Israel denied the Lord and thus forfeited the place of true Israel. Hippolytus of Rome he is considered by many to be the most important theologian of the Third Century, he was a student of Irenaeus. He declared that the Jews had been darkened in the eyes of their soul with a darkness utter and everlasting. He further stated that they were destined to be slaves to the nations, to the nations. Not 400 years as in Egypt. Not 70 years in Babylon but slaves to the nations forever. Tertullian of Carthage he blamed the Jews for the death of Jesus and argued that they had been rejected by God. Cyprian of Carthage his student he wrote, "I have endeavored to show that they Jews departed from God and lost God's favor while the Christians succeeded to their place deserving well of the Lord by faith and coming out of the nations and from the whole world. He added, "We Christians when we pray say, 'Our Father' because he has begun to be ours and has ceased to be the Father of the Jews who have forsaken Him." Ceased to be the Father of the Jews who have forsaken Him. And of course there was Origen of Alexandria a person who perfected the allegorical approach to Scripture. He was responsible for much Anti-Semitism all of which was based on his assertion that the Jews were responsible for killing Jesus. In his treatise against Celsus he wrote these words, "We say with confidence that they the Jews will never be restored to their former condition. For they committed a crime of the most unhallowed kind in conspiring against the Savior of the human race. It accordingly behooved that city where Jesus underwent these sufferings to perish utterly and the Jewish nation to be overthrown and the invitation of happiness offered them by God to pass to others." To Christians. And then there is the Council of Elvira this council was held in 305 AD, it was an ecclesiastical senate of the Spanish clerics held in the city that we know today as Grenada. The council voted to prohibit Christians from sharing a meal with a Jew, marrying a Jew, blessing a Jew or observing the Sabbath.

We come now to the great turning point in the history of Christianity namely Constantine's conversion to Christianity in 306 AD and his ultimate adoption of Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire in 321 AD. As we have seen by the beginning of the Fourth Century Replacement Theology and its virulent Anti-Semitism had become entrenched in Christian thought. And when Christianity was given the approval of the empire overnight the Emperors began to enact into law the concepts and claims of Christian theologians against Jews and Judaism.

In the Edict of Milan in 313 AD favor was granted to Christianity while synagogues were outlawed. Another edict issued in 315 AD authorized the burning of Jews if they were convicted of breaking laws. As the church became increasingly dominate further laws were passed that severely curtailed rabbinical jurisdiction, prohibited conversions to Judaism, excluded Jews from holding high office or serving in the military. As Clarence Wagner has summed it up, "Instead of the Church taking this opportunity to spread its Gospel message in love it truly became the Church triumphant ready to vanquish its foes."

And then we come to the Council of Nicea 325, the first ecumenical council of the Church. It was held in what is modern day Turkey, and it was convened and presided over by Emperor Constantine. This is the historic Council that settled the Christological issue of the nature of the Son of God and his relationship to God the Father. But regarding the Jews, the Council changed the celebration of the Resurrection from the Jewish Feast of First Fruits to Easter in an attempt

to disassociate it from the Jewish feasts. The Council stated, "For it is unbecoming beyond measure that on this holiest of festivals we should follow the customs of the Jews. Henceforth let us have nothing in common with these odious people." In addition to calling them "odious people," documents of that Council called the Jews "polluted wretches," "a most horrible rabble," and "parricides."

Then there is Eusebius of Caesarea, he taught that the promises of Scripture were meant for the Gentiles and the curses were for the Jews. He asserted that the Church was "true Israel." Hilary of Poitiers, said, "Jews are a perverse people accursed by God forever." He was a French bishop who was granted sainthood by the church. And then perhaps the worst of all, John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople. He was nicknamed "The Golden Tongue" for his powerful preaching. He presented eight sermons against the Jews. And here is some of what he had to say: "The synagogue is not only a brothel and a theater, it's also a den of robbery and a lodging place for wild beasts. Jews are inveterate murderers possessed by the Devil. Their debauchery and drunkenness gives them the manners of a pig. This is why I hate the Jews." In his other sermons he said he denied the Jews would ever receive forgiveness, he claimed it was a Christian duty to hate Jews, and he claimed that Jews worshipped Satan. And folks this man was canonized by the Church as a Saint.

And then there is St. Jerome the renowned translator of the Bible into Latin. He described the Jews as "serpents, wearing the image of Judas. Their psalms and prayers are the braying of donkeys. They are incapable of understanding Scripture." The very people who wrote it, incapable of understanding it.

One of the worst of the anti-Semites was Saint Ambrose, of Milan the man who converted Saint Augustine. Regarding the Jews, he wrote a virulent anti-Semitic diatribe that read like this, "The Jews are the most worthless of all men. They are lecherous, greedy, rapacious. They are perfidious murderers of Christ. They worship the Devil. Their religion is a sickness. The Jews are the odious assassins of Christ, and for killing God there is no expiation possible, no indulgence or pardon. Christians may never cease vengeance, and the Jew must live in servitude forever. God always hated the Jews." God always hated the Jews. You wonder if he ever read his Bible. "It is essential that all Christians hate them."

Saint Augustine considered the greatest of all the Church fathers in terms of his over all impact on the theology on the Church. With regard to the Jews he simply endorsed what his teacher had taught him. His only new contribution was his answer to a frequently asked question, "Why has God allowed the Jews to continue to exist?" His answer, "Although the Jews deserve death they are destined to wander the earth to witness the victory of the Church over the synagogue." But in terms of Replacement Theology he provided another cornerstone for the development of it, for he developed Amillennialism and his contention that the Millennial Kingdom had begun with the coming of Jesus and that the Roman Church was the fulfilment of the kingdom promises that were made to Israel.

So by the mid-Fifth Century at the beginning of the Middle Ages Replacement Theology and Amillennialism had become entrenched doctrines of the Church. And the Jews had been demonized, condemned, and ostracized to the point that the Church had become a Gentile organization that was off-limits to the very people who founded it.

These views were then reinforced by Thomas Aquinas the renowned theologian of the Middle Ages. He argued that because of their sin of deicide, the Jews were destined to "perpetual slavery." He further argued, "Jews should be compelled to work rather than live in idleness and

grow rich from usury." The only reason they ever got involved in usury was because they were not allowed to hold regular jobs in any trade. Second, Jews should be forced to wear a distinctive badge in order to distinguish them from Christians. Third, Jews and heretics could be legitimately killed after a second warning.

To illustrate how severe the rejection of the Jews had become by the Middle Ages, I want you to consider the oath that the Church in Constantinople required a Jew to take in order to become a Christian, they had to swear this before the congregation: "I renounce all customs, rites, legalisms, unleavened breads, sacrifice of lambs of the Hebrews, and all other feasts of the Hebrews, sacrifices, prayers, aspersions, purifications, sanctifications, and propitiations, fasts, and new moons, and Sabbaths, and superstitions, and hymns and chants and observances of synagogues, and the food and drink of the Hebrews. In one word, I renounce absolutely everything Jewish, every law, rite and custom. And if afterwards I shall wish to deny and return to Jewish superstition, or shall be found eating with a Jew, then let the trembling of Cain and the leprosy of Gehazi cleave to me and may I be anathema in the world to come, and may my soul be set down with Satan and the devils."

A similar Visigoth oath from the Seventh Century required a Jewish convert to "renounce every rite and observance of the Jewish religion" and contained a promise that the person would "never return to the vomit of Jewish superstition."

Even the so-called friends of the Jews held them in low esteem. These three men were considered the greatest friends of the Jews in the Middle Ages: Bernard of Clairvaux, Peter the Venerable, and Pope Innocent III. They were considered friends because these three men had the courage to speak out against the murder of the Jews and to say that it was not right and it should stop. And yet Bernard of Clairvaux characterized the Jews in his writings as "more than bestial," "an evil seed," "a race who have not God for their father, but are of the devil." Peter the Venerable, a contemporary of Bernard, was known to be the meekest of men and a model of Christian charity. And here is what he said of the Jews, he said, "I doubt whether a Jew can really be human, they are monstrous animals, and they are brute beasts." And Pope Innocent III argued that Jews should not be killed because they should be left to wander the earth "until their countenance be filled with shame."

Again, by the beginning of the Middle Ages in the Fifth Century, two erroneous concepts about the Jews had become firmly established in Church doctrine: (1) The Jews should be considered "Christ Killers" and should be mistreated accordingly. (2) The Church has replaced Israel, and God has no future purpose for the Jews. And these concepts were reinforced throughout the Middle Ages through the Crusades, artistic expressions, blood libels, Black Plague myths, distinguishing marks, relegation to ghettos, pogroms, and The Inquisition.

## Part 2

**Dr. Reagan:** Welcome back to Christ in Prophecy and our discussion of the origins of Christian anti-Semitism. Next week, the Lord willing, we will continue with this presentation and I will show you some startling evidence about how the writings of one of Christendom's greatest heroes laid the foundation of the Holocaust; writings that Hitler endorsed in his book, Mein Kampf.

In our remaining time in this program, I want to share some observations with you regarding the information I have already presented. I concluded that by the beginning of the Middle Ages in the Fifth Century, two erroneous doctrines had been firmly established in the Church: First that the Jews should be considered Christ killers and should be treated accordingly. And second,

that the Church has replaced Israel and therefore God has no purpose left for the Jewish people. I am going to deal with both of these erroneous concepts in detail in next week's program, but I want to respond quickly to each allegation right now.

Let's look first at the accusation that the Jews were the killers of Christ. Now folks, this can be dealt with quickly because the Bible tells us specifically who killed Jesus. You will find the passage in Acts 4:27. It reads as follows: "For truly in this city, Jerusalem, there were gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel." Now, notice carefully who this passage says was responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus: The Roman rulers, the Gentiles and the Jews. But that is not a complete list. Do you realize who is missing from that list? You and me. That's because Jesus died for the sins of all humanity. Our sins put Him on the Cross, and not just the sins of the Jewish people.

The second allegation that the Church has replaced Israel and God has no purpose left for the Jewish people can also be refuted quickly with Scripture. All you have to do is read Romans 9 thru 11. Throughout these three chapters Paul affirms that God still has a purpose for the Jewish people and that He has not forever rejected them. In fact Paul teaches that it is God's purpose to bring a great remnant of the Jews to salvation in Jesus in the end times, at the end of the Tribulation. Further, in Romans 11:2, Paul says point blank: "God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew." Also, in Romans 3:1-4 Paul asks the question, "Has God rejected His people because of their unfaithfulness?" And he answers that question by saying, "May it never be!" That doesn't mean that the Jewish people are saved. It just means God is determined to bring a great remnant of them to salvation through their Messiah Yeshua.

Well, that's our program for this week. I hope you will be back with us next week when we continue this study of Christian anti-Semitism and its relationship to Replacement Theology. Until then, this is Dave Reagan speaking for Lamb & Lion Ministries, saying, "Look up, be watchful, for our Redemption is drawing near."

**End of Program**