

**SIX “C” WORDS
THAT BECAME A SWORD OF
OFFENSE**

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INTRODUCTION

In this series of *Power Books*, we explore how the most significant Christian terms became a sword of offense, while rulings of Church leaders fostered anti-Jewish thinking that has lingered for centuries, and into our present day. Before discussing these most caustic words from Christian history, we will begin with a brief explanation of Jewish ministry itself.

Jewish ministry is one of the most misunderstood ministries. Because of tragic events that were greatly framed by anti-Semitism in early Christian history, much effort must be given to education. Many Christians do not understand that to the Jew, Christianity became a religion of substantive prejudice and hate, not one of love and sacrifice.

Jewish ministry endeavors, in part, to rectify a long-standing historical dilemma as well: the idea that Jews cannot be Jewish if they believe in *Yeshua*—Jesus—the Jewish Messiah. Therefore, we should always seek to place *Yeshua* back into His original Jewish framework.

The purpose here is to demonstrate that historically, culturally, and Biblically, believing in the Messiah is the most Jewish decision that a Jewish person can make. Hence, when we learn of Christian church history and its impact on the Jewish experience, we gain the sensitivities necessary to be effective witnesses of the Gospel to Jewish people.

As we build upon this foundation, believers become empowered to fulfill the mandate to the Jew as stated in Romans 11:11, “*for the purpose of gentile salvation is to provoke the Jewish to envy.*” Sadly, whether through individuals, nations, or religions, dark periods of persecution emerged for the Jewish people throughout the centuries. Even more recently, we need only go back to the Holocaust, in which 6 million Jewish people lost their lives. This history requires us to be extremely sensitive, consciously avoiding terms that inflame and offend, and purposely using terms that mend relationships and foster trust.

As anti-Semitism is increasing worldwide today, the Church is challenged to ensure that history never repeats itself. The simple but deadly equation of historical anti-Semitism plus anti-Israel prejudice could easily be applied to today. We work against this by bringing Jew and gentile closer to each other, and exposing the historical walls that were erected between the Jewish and Christian worlds.



PART I

CHRISTIAN HISTORY

History easily demonstrates that episodes of conflict and contention existed in the early Christian era, shaping an overwhelming schism between Jewish and Christian circles.

Seeds of anti-Semitism were sown into the early church during the first three centuries, becoming a pretext for the Jewish experience with Christianity for subsequent generations. This included an anti-Jewish mindset that produced theologies such as *Supercessionism* and *Replacement Theology*.

These teachings assumed that the gentile Church replaced physical Israel, and a new spiritual Israel was created, which became the new gentile Christian Church. It was thought that the gentile Christian replaced the Jew. Then the blessings spoken of in the Bible regarding the Jew were consigned over to the gentile, but (according to this view) cursing and wrath remained squarely upon the shoulders of the Jewish people.

As a result, it was thought that: Israel and the Jewish people had lost their covenantal inheritance; their distinction and calling were revoked; Israel would no longer be a people and nation carried over from God's covenant with Abraham.

This deeply flawed interpretive reasoning caused obvious prejudice in Christianity toward Jews. Individuals emerged that caused a deep divide between the Jew and the gentile; between Judaism and the New Covenant Church.

Many generations followed which possessed little understanding of God's intended relationship between the Jew and the gentile, or between the church and Israel. The historical and theological pretexts had been formed, creating a trajectory constantly moving away from any Jewish foundation.

Awareness of these historical tragedies is often confronted when a Christian tries to proclaim the Gospel to a Jew, presenting a major obstacle. If the Gospel message of Messiah is to impact larger populations of Jewish people, the understanding of these histories will be paramount, coupled with tangible demonstrations of love.

PART II

RELIGION OF ANTI-JEWISH HATE

When sharing the Gospel with Jewish people, it may at first seem odd (and perhaps even heretical) to refrain from using such terms as ***Cross, Christ, Church, Christian, Crusade, and Conversion***. One might compare it to being given a hammer to build a house, and then being told that no

nails can be used. How do we do it? How do we help Jewish people discover their *Yeshua* without those “nails”?

We begin by turning back to history to retrieve fresh understanding, as noted. But the truth is, if we hope to succeed, we cannot fail to grasp the complexity and severity of anti-Jewish persecutions that came in the name of Christianity—especially since many of these persecutions were launched under the banner of the Cross, as the Crusades are infamous for.

Notably, numerous actions of various Christian leaders caused these terms to become a sword of offense against the Jew. So, let us take a brief survey of Jewish history to understand how these most important Six Words: ***Cross, Christ, Church, Christian, Crusade, and Conversion*** were used as a sword against the Jewish people.

When studying early church history, one will immediately notice a systematic inertia flowing towards anti-Semitism. It did not happen due to one specific event or individual, but through multiple episodes. Early Church leaders emerged who dipped these words in the blood of Jewish victims, poisoning their true meaning due to erroneous interpretations and human (or shall we say devilish) reasoning. It promoted a twisted, profane view of God’s heart for Israel and the Jewish people for generations to come.



PART III

ALWAYS BEING EXILED

We begin here with a simple introduction to the Jewish people and their history. They have been hated, banished, and exiled from most places, while few people other than Jews have experienced this historical reality.

Until 1948, Jews had been scattered throughout the world. We call this the *diaspora*. Their wanderings throughout the nations have defined them for thousands of years, and it explains why Jews can be found in every nation on earth. Few nations, however, are free from the particular bloodguilt of being unwelcoming to Jewish people.

European nations that were infamous for this included England, France, Germany, Portugal, Spain, Lithuania, and Hungary. These nations displaced untold thousands of Jews.

In 1492, 90,000 Jews from Turkey were forced to leave their homes. During that same period, thousands were forcibly baptized in Spain, and thousands more that refused were exiled. When all of these episodes are combined, there were hundreds of thousands of Jews displaced. In addition, thousands died seeking a new home, and thousands more underwent forced conversions and baptisms.ⁱ

One can only imagine what Spanish Jewry of that era may have thought of the Jewish Psalm 60, verse 1: “*O God, thou hast cast us off, thou hast scattered us, thou hast been displeased; O turn thyself to us again.*” (KJV)

PART IV **BRANDED AS DIFFERENT**

Sadly, while the term “exile” defined much of Jewish history, Jews have long been branded by society as “different,” thereby casting shame upon them. Whether portrayed as modern-day money mongers, or depicted in old fables as having horns, Jews have always been viewed as different from gentiles.

However, when Jews were forced to wear special labels to tell them apart from gentiles, it was a practice that was both notorious and demeaning. It also began to lay the groundwork for such a pattern in history. The Catholic Church first practiced this, and Adolph Hitler copied it. Yes, Hitler mimicked many actions that were taken against the Jews in early Catholic Church history.

In 1215, the Catholic Church issued a decree at the 4th Lateran Council that required all Jews to wear a yellow badge upon their breast to distinguish them from gentile Christians. Then in 1317, the Catholic Church at the Ravenna Council declared the following:

“That they (Jews) ought not to be tolerated to the detriment or severe injury of the faithful, because it frequently happens that they return to Christians contumely for favors, contempt for familiarity. Therefore, the provincial of Ravenna some time since...thinking that many scandals have arisen from them commingling with Christians, it is decreed that they should wear a wheel of yellow cloth on their outer garment, so that they may be distinguished from Christians.”ⁱⁱ

This is just one sample of the anti-Jewish persecutions that began to poison the well of Christianity.

Several years ago, Mel Gibson illustrated one effect from his movie, *The Passion of the Christ*. Although from a gentile Christian perspective it was deeply moving, to Jewish people it was a troubling reminder of how they were treated by Christianity down through history. It evoked painful memories and images from the *Shoah* (the Holocaust.)

Hence, how the gentile Christian approaches such stories is vastly different from the Jew.

The Gospels tell the story of the life and ministry of Jesus, the Messiah, the Savior who suffered and died to rise to new life—a story of sacrifice and love—but most gentile believers are unaware of how this story resonates with many Jewish people. The average Christian is not well acquainted

with Jewish history or, equally, with anti-Judaism in early Christianity.

We will discover that the issues which concern the Jewish community the most are simply not “on the radar screen” for Christians. Consider the following Church leaders in history who influenced not only their own generation, but also every one that followed.

PART V

MESSENGERS OF ANTI-JEWISH HATE

One of the most villainous leaders was Martin Luther (AD 1483-1546). But wait a minute Rabbi, didn’t he begin the reformation, and rescue the Christian Church out of a period of deep darkness? Yes!

In fact, in 1523, Martin Luther wrote an article entitled, *That Christ Was Born a Jew*. His article harshly criticized the Catholic Church for presenting a pagan brand of Christianity to the Jews. He expressed empathy for the Jews and said, “If I had been a Jew and had seen such fools and blockheads teach the Christian faith, I should rather have turned into a pig than become a Christian.” Even though Luther was celebrated for birthing the Protestant Reformation, he became embittered towards the Jewish people when they constantly resisted his efforts to convert them to Christianity.

Luther began to pour out venomous sermons against them that were a pure display of anti-Jewish hate; sermons that are renowned in Judaism. Even the Encyclopedia Judaica writes of Luther, “Short of the Auschwitz oven and extermination, the whole Nazi Holocaust is pre-outlined here. Is it any wonder then, that Hitler and Julius Streicher quoted Martin Luther as justification for their destruction of 6 million Jews?”



MARTIN LUTHER'S SERMONS

What then shall we Christians do with this damned, rejected race of Jews? Since they live among us and we know about their lying, blasphemy, and cursing, we cannot tolerate them if we do not wish to share in their lies, curses, and blasphemy. In this way, we cannot quench the fire of divine rage (as the prophets say) nor convert the Jews.” He went on to say, “prayerfully and reverentially we must practice a merciful severity. Perhaps we may save a few from the fire and the flames. We must not seek vengeance. They are surely being punished a thousand times more than we might wish them. Let me give you my honest advice.

“**F**irst, their synagogues or churches should be set on fire, and whatever does not burn up should be covered or spread over with dirt so that no one may

ever be able to see a cinder or stone of it. This ought to be done for the honor of God and of Christianity in order that God may see that we are Christians, and that we have not wittingly tolerated or approved, of such public lying, cursing, and blaspheming of His Son and His Christians.

“**Second**, their houses should likewise be broken down and destroyed. For they perpetrate the same things there that they do in their synagogues. For this reason, they ought to be put under one roof or in a stable, like gypsies, in order that they may realize that they are not masters in our land, as they boast, but miserable captives, as they complain of us incessantly before God with their bitter wailing.

“**Third**, they should be deprived of their prayer books and Talmuds in which such idolatry, lies, cursing, and blasphemy are taught.

“**Fourth**, their rabbis must be forbidden under threat of death to teach anymore.

“**Fifth**, passport and traveling privileges should be absolutely forbidden to Jews. For they have no business in the rural districts since they are not

nobles, nor officials, nor merchants, nor the like. Let them stay at home.

“**Sixth**, they ought to be stopped from usury. All their cash and valuables of silver and gold ought to be taken from them and put aside for safekeeping. For this reason, everything that they possess they stole and robbed from us through their usury, for they have no other means of support. This money should be used in the case (and in no other) where a Jew has honestly become a Christian, so that he may get for the time being one or two or three hundred florins, as the person may require. This in order, that he may start a business to support his poor wife and children and the old and feeble. Such evilly acquired money is cursed, unless, with God’s blessing, it is put to some good and necessary use.”



PART VI

MORE VOICES OF ANTI-JEWISH HATE

We limit our remarks not to Luther, because down through the age many leaders set the stage for others as him to stumble. Certainly, Hitler was unsurpassed when it comes to anti-Jewish hate. But some of the notorious

acts that he undertook were inspirited by Christian history itself. The labeling of the Jew with a yellow star as noted earlier is one example. Below we offer a short list of other voices that spoke out against the Jewish people.

- **John Chrysostom** (AD 334–407) was a bishop of the Church at Antioch, and was considered the greatest preacher of his day. He spoke violently against the Jews. He said there could never be forgiveness for the Jews, and that “God hates them, and indeed has always hated them.” Chrysostom taught that it was the Christian duty to hate Jews, because the Jews assassinated Christ. He called their synagogues worse than brothels, and likened Jewish people to demons devoted to idolatrous cults.
- **Justin Martyr** (AD 100–165) claimed that God’s covenant with the Jews was no longer valid, and that gentiles had replaced the Jewish people in God’s redemptive plan (Replacement Theology).
- **Ignatius** (AD 35-108) was the bishop of the church in Antioch in the second century; he wrote that anyone who celebrated Passover with the Jews or received emblems of the Jewish feast was a

partaker with those who killed the Lord and His apostles.

- **Clement of Alexandria** (AD 150–215) emphasized Greek philosophy rather than the *Tanakh* (Old Testament) as the primary means God gave the gentiles to lead the Jewish people to Jesus.
- **Tertullian** (AD 160–220) was one of the most important Christian writers of the second century; his works were highly significant in developing the basic doctrines of today's church. In one of his writings, titled *Against the Jews*, he blamed the entire Jewish race for the death of Jesus.
- **Eusebius** (AD 263–339) taught that the promises and blessings of the *Tanakh* (Old Testament) were for the Christians, and that the curses were for the Jews. He declared that the church was the “true Israel of God” which had replaced literal Israel in God’s covenants.
- **Jerome** (AD 345–420) was a great Bible scholar whose Latin translation of the Scriptures became the official Bible of the church. Jerome claimed that the Jews were incapable of understanding the Scriptures and that they should be severely persecuted until they confessed to the true faith.

PART VII

OTHER CHRISTIAN RULINGS

Throughout Catholic Church history, numerous anti-Semitic actions and rulings such as those noted were undertaken, showing the Jewish people again that Christianity was a religion of anti-Jewish hate.

Review the following list of further rulings.

- **AD 589:** Jews were forbidden from holding public office.
- **AD 612–621:** King Sisebut of Spain forced either baptism or exile.
- **AD 570–636:** Saint Isadore forbade forced baptisms, but if children were baptized to save their lives, they had to be taken from their parents and reared Catholic. In some situations, Jewish people were given the choice of baptism or death.
- **AD 692:** Christians were not permitted to patronize Jewish doctors (Trullanic Synod, 692).
- **AD 1078:** Jews were required to pay taxes for the support of the Roman Church to the same extent as Christians.

- **AD 1060:** The First Crusade against the Jews commenced, killing thousands who refused baptism.
- **AD 1146:** The Second Crusade, during which the same atrocities took place. Then in 1267, Christians were not allowed to attend Jewish ceremonies. Then in 1357, during Black Death, Jews were accused of poisoning the wells, thus causing the plague. Some of this may have come from the fact that many Jewish people were observing the health laws of *Tanakh* and, were thus not getting sick (Toledo, 681.)

PART VIII

HISTORICAL ACTS OF ANTI-SEMITISM

Generally, anti-Semitic acts in history took the form of the following: *Forced Conversions, Pogroms, Blood Libels, Crusades, and Tribunals*. These were infamous, documented assaults on the Jew, often done in the name of a Christian mission. But of course, it was blatant anti-Jewish hate. A brief explanation of some of these historical anti-Semitic acts are offered here.

POGROMS

Pogrom is a Russian word that means riot or devastation, and applies to violent anti-Jewish attacks. Hundreds of *Pogroms* in large scale became literal

massacres of Jewish people. Such anti-Jewish riots took place especially under the Czarist regime of Russia and Poland.

To Russian authorities the Jews represented a “Jewish problem.” This was regularly met with forced conversions, amounting to one third of the Jewish population, and emigration of another third. This took place in an intensified manner from 1881-1921.

BLOOD LIBEL

A *Blood libel* is a lie or fable that accuses Jews of taking a Christian child’s blood for ritual purposes; specifically, taking the blood to make matzo for Passover. This is of course ridiculous, since the Jewish people observe *Torah*, and in the kosher laws of Leviticus 11, it is forbidden to ingest the blood of an animal, let alone that of a human being.

TRIBUNALS

The most feared and hated word is Inquisition, which literally means “inquiry.” Specifically, Jews were forced to convert to Christianity during the Spanish Inquisition, over the course of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Hundreds of thousands of Jews were killed in a frenzy of hateful anti-Jewish violence. Again, all this was done in the name of Christ.

CRUSADES

Some of the darkest times for the Jewish people took place during the period of the Crusades. These were undertaken as military expeditions. And under the blessing of the church they sought to recover the Holy Land from the Muslims and Jews.

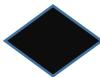
During these episodes, Jews were herded into synagogues, and while the Crusaders sang, "*Christ We Adore Thee,*" they would set fire to the synagogue, burning the Jews alive. The battle cry of the Crusaders was as follows; "*Before attempting to revenge ourselves upon the Muslim unbelievers, let us first revenge ourselves upon the killers of Christ in our midst!*"

FORCED CONVERSIONS

Taking Jewish children at the complete disregard of their parents in order to convert them is reprehensible. But episodes like this took place throughout Europe, Persia, and Morocco from AD 460 to as late as 1858.

The Canonist decree during the nineteenth century by Russian authorities was the most notorious. Children were seized and forced to serve in the czar's army. Then they were shipped off to distant locations for as much as twenty-five years. The purpose was to force Jewish children to lose all

contact with their people, in order to assimilate and convert them to the local religion.



PART IX

AMERICAN ANTI-SEMITISM

We now turn our attention briefly to America. As she became a haven for many people groups during pre-colonial times, Jews were also seeking a place of religious freedom. It seems she was not quite ready for them.

During this early period of American history, settlers were rugged and hardworking, mostly farmers and ranchers. The early Jewish settlers were known more as a people of the city; principally, they were business people and artisans. They worked as hard as anyone else; they just channeled their efforts differently. Still, throughout this period, Jews were viewed as reaping the fruits of others' hard labor.

More centrally though, is that America was seen as a new Christian nation, while Jews were still viewed as Christ killers, a label carried over from former England. During this period in the early American frontier, anti-Jewish prejudices continued throughout the colonies. The problem could only be remedied by conversion to Christianity, according to many of that time. Consider the following people and groups in early America and their attitudes.

PURITANS

In Boston where the Puritans settled, they thought that they were the real Jews, and genuine heirs of the promises that God gave to the Jews.

Three generations after the beginning of the northern colonies, Samuel Willard outlined Puritan sentiments in a sermon that he preached in 1700: “The Jews were a scorn and reproach to the world: the happy day of the conversion could improve their condition.”¹ The Puritans saw the “end of days” upon them, and they believed the second coming of Christ could not happen unless most Jews were converted.

HANNAH ADAMS

Descendant of Henry Adams, and a distant cousin of John Adams, Hannah published a work on the history of the Jews in 1812. In her view of history, the suffering of the Jews is due to their rejection of Christ. Adams accuses the Jews of continuing to regard themselves as “the chosen people,” and “superior to all others.”²

More importantly, what Hannah Adams believed was the general view in America. American freedom for the Jew was

¹ Arthur Hertzberg: *The Jews in America; four centuries of an uneasy encounter*; Simon * Shuster 1989.

² Seth S. Wenger, *The Jewish Americans: Three Centuries of Jewish Voices in America*. Doubleday Publishers 2007

seen as an opportunity for them to be converted to an enlightened Christianity.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

One of the founding fathers of America revealed ambivalence toward the Jews when he said, “They should labor to achieve equality in science that is in secular learning, so that they will become objects of respect and favor.”ⁱⁱⁱ Later, Thomas Jefferson was more positive toward them and their religious rights, especially after the Bill of Rights and the Constitution.

Thomas Jefferson was in fact the one who incorporated the principle of separation of church and state into the Constitution, “thus” he wrote, “building a wall of separation between church and state,” and that “religion is a matter solely between a man and God.”^{iv}

HENRY FORD

Henry Ford, one of the great American industrialists and automaker was a major trumpet of anti-Semitism in his day. Henry Ford financed the production of hundreds of thousands of copies of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.

Published a generation earlier, it most likely originated from the secret police of the Russian czar. It was aimed at

justifying anti-Semitic policies, and was published in the United States in 1919. The publication asserted that the Jews were part of a conspiracy to dominate the world. On this basis, Ford's paper became the chief voice of anti-Semitism in America during the 1920s.

YALE AND HARVARD

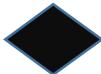
Education was always paramount for Jewish people, and entering prominent institutions of higher learning before the early 1920s went largely unhindered. A problem began, however, when a growing number of universities began to feel uneasy with an increasing Jewish presence, and Jews began to out-perform many of their gentile classmates.

Quotas soon began to be instituted in places like Harvard, Princeton, and Yale. Harvard President A. Lawrence Lowell said in 1922, "If every college in the country would take a limited proportion of Jews we should go a long way toward eliminating race feeling amongst our students." Lowell was later forced to retract his statement, but Jewish enrollment was mysteriously and sharply curtailed after the incident.

At Yale, a decision was made that students should be admitted on the basis of character rather than just scholarship. Dean Frederick Jones at Yale University found that a Jew won almost every single scholarship of any value. He stated, "In terms of scholarship and intelligence, Jewish students lead the class, but their personal characteristics

make them markedly inferior.” Of course, this so-called inferiority was only remedied by conversion to Christianity.

When it came to medical schools, Jewish enrollment was discouraged. Actually, Jewish quotas forced thousands to go abroad for medical training. Gentiles controlled virtually all hospitals, as well as the entire medical profession during the turn of century. It was virtually impossible to find a Jewish doctor on a hospital staff or a Jewish professor in an American medical school. Consequently, the field was virtually closed to Jewish students seeking medical degrees.



CONCLUSION

Perhaps you have seen for the first time the terrible actions that have been taken against the Jewish people throughout the centuries. Now you realize the challenges facing Jewish outreach.

We should feel disgust and anger towards those who would do such horrible things. For this reason, it is important for Christians to have an understanding of the world's past dealings with the Jewish people, so they will develop sensitivity towards Israel and the Jewish people.

Praise God that our mission to reach the “lost Sheep of the house of Israel” today has become empowered by a love for the Jewish people on the part of Christian Church.

As more and more come to understand the mishaps of Christian Church history, deep healing between Jews and gentile Christians will be realized. Both are coming to a greater understanding of each other as they discover that their histories and destinies are intertwined.

In reaching the Jewish people then, particularly in the context of so much openness today, it is incumbent upon us to reach out with actions, terminologies, temperaments, and proper training that embody the love of our Messiah.

Toward this end, we have listed alternative terms to the 6 “C” words. Individuals can easily integrate them into their vocabulary. Following much prayer and preparation, we can begin to engage Jewish people with confidence, an anointing,

and compassionate sensitivity. Truly, “*Now is the time to show favor to her, the appointed time has come.*” *Psalms 102:13.*



REPLACEMENT TERMS

CHURCH: *Congregation, or Assembly, Gathering, Service.*

CHRISTIAN: *Believer; a follower of Messiah; or follower of Jesus the Jewish Messiah.*

CROSS: A difficult topic to contend with at first, because it often requires explanation, and, most importantly, a relationship to bring clarity and understanding to a Jewish person. But terms to use are *redemption* and *atonement*.

CRUSADES: Never use this term, as this represents some of the most notorious and insufferable of acts against the Jewish people.

CONVERSION: A better term is *completion* or *fulfillment*. The term conversion describes the supernatural work that Jesus performs in both Jew and gentile. Still, Jews are not converted to being gentile Christians, any more than gentile believers become Jewish. Jewish belief in Messiah is a work of “*fulfillment*” or “*completion*,” not conversion.

CHRIST: *Messiah, Yeshua.* Yeshua is Jesus’ Hebrew name, and as noted in the edition of Power Books, we are always working to restore a Jewish context to New Covenant terms, which history has infused with prejudice and anti-Jewish hate.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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The New Jewish Encyclopedia / Berman House Publishing.

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ⁱ ⁱ. Martin Gilbert, *The Atlas of Jewish History*/William Morrow and Company, Inc. New York. 1969

ⁱⁱ Abram Leon Sachar, *A History of the Jews (Fifth Edition)* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1967,) 251

ⁱⁱⁱ. Louis Harap. *The Image of the Jew in American Literature*, The Jewish Publication Society, 1974

^{iv}. Ibid