

“They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.”

Jesus, speaking to the Jews who would believe in Him in the generation to come (John 16:2 KJV), predicted 33 AD

“Give me Jabneh and its wisemen, and the family chain of Rabban Gamaliel.”

The Talmud Gittin, 56. Y. b. Zakkai’s request of Gen. Vespasian, 69 AD; Jabneh (Yavne) was the location of the Messiah Conspiracy’s contrivance

“How shall we maintain ourselves against the Minim [Messianic Jewish Christians]? ”<sup>1</sup>

The students of Rabbi Joshua at his deathbed, circa 135 AD

“...you appointed chosen men and sent them into all the civilized world, proclaiming that ‘a certain godless and lawless sect has been raised by one Jesus of Galilee....the priests and teachers of your people have caused His name to be profaned and blasphemed throughout the whole earth.’”<sup>2</sup>

Justin Martyr, Christian philosopher, 135 AD

“The Jewish practice of excommunication during the period under consideration is **shrouded in mystery** despite all that has been written on the subject.”

Douglas Hare, assistant professor of the New Testament, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, 1967

“I have been accumulating research for a number of years for a book...thanks to Philip, I have some incredible material to write this....He...has done research...and contributed incredible documentation for it. The book will be called *The Messiah Conspiracy*. And I really am thankful to Philip...he’s got a simple-hearted purpose, that’s to love the Lord and serve Him.”<sup>3</sup>

Hal Lindsey, best-selling Christian author, 1986

The discovery of the Messiah Conspiracy to the unique new depth you will see in this and the next two chapters, is the product of over twelve years of relentless research on our part—enjoy!

Author Philip Moore, 1996

# 7

## THE MESSIAH CONSPIRACY

Vapors have been rising from this terrible conspiracy for two millennia. Various historians have gotten a whiff here and a taste there of how the rabbis sought to cover up the early evidence of Jewish

belief in Jesus’ claimed Messiahship of Israel. However, we have never seen these bits and pieces put together in a comprehensive

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<sup>1</sup>Hugo Mantel, *Studies in the History of the Sanhedrin*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, © 1961, p. 191, used by permission. [ ] mine.

<sup>2</sup>A. Lukyn Williams, D.D., *Justin Martyr, The Dialogue With Trypho*. India: Diocesan Press, © 1930, pp. 224, 242.

<sup>3</sup>Quoted from a personal tape made while on tour in Israel with Hal Lindsey, during a dinner tribute. This included a word of thanks to the author for doing research for Dr. Lindsey (referenced on our front cover). We hope that Hal’s next book will be the one mentioned.

chronological order. Moreover, in studying this subject, one would practically have to become a biblical scholar.

One of the aims of this chapter is to present a comprehensive overview of how and why this rabbinical plot to deny the Messiahship of Jesus began and just what the purpose was. It is our hope that we will inform the layman and casual reader of one of history's greatest secrets, which has been a blinding force for the Jew thus far, as to who Jesus said He was, and what He came to do for all mankind.

## TWENTY CENTURIES OF DECEPTION

For nearly twenty centuries, rabbis of all branches of contemporary Judaism, which was reconstructed at Yavne, have been successful in convincing nine-tenths of world Jewry that Jesus is not for the Jews and that He is not worthy of Messianic consideration because such a consideration would be at the expense of "Jewish heritage and identity." Of course, nothing could be further from the truth!

It is our hope that all of our readers will recognize the magnitude of this problem through the evidence we are about to present! Remember, a deception can be best corrected only after it is fully understood.

We believe, after you have read all of our documentation in relation to the Birkat ha-Minim (BHM) and other devices used by the first century rabbis to excommunicate the Jewish Christians, that we will be able to dispel the status quo.<sup>4</sup> As Douglas Hare has well said: "The Jewish practice of excommunication during the period under consideration is *shrouded in mystery*. Despite all that has been written on the subject."<sup>5</sup>

## YAVNE'S MESSIAH CONSPIRACY—UNTIL NOW, NO ONE HAS DARED TO CALL IT A CONSPIRACY

Conspiracy? Was there a conspiracy concerning the Messiah nearly 2000 years ago? Are the rabbis of Yavne responsible? If **there** was and if **they** are, what can you do to expose and remedy the consequences of their actions?

All through history there have been blatant lies about the Jewish people plotting to take over the world,<sup>6</sup> but in truth, the Jewish people have not been the conspirators, rather they have been the victims of a

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<sup>4</sup>By this statement the author is not implying that he is uncovering all, but is rather partially removing the present veil of the secret conspiratorial activities of certain rabbis against the Jewish Christians of this period, through heavily and intensely researched documentation involving some relatively recent archaeological discoveries.

<sup>5</sup>Douglas Hare, *The Theme of Jewish Persecution of Christians in the Gospel According to St. Matthew*. London: Cambridge University Press, © 1967, p. 48. Italics mine.

conspiracy perpetrated upon them by a small group of elitist rabbis who gathered at Yavne nearly 2000 years ago. These individuals set out to isolate the Jew from any possible opportunity to hear of or make a decision about Jesus' Messianic claims, free of guilt and prejudice.

Hal Lindsey, foremost prophetic author and television personality, whose books have sold millions, commented on this event at Yavne: "In 70 AD when Titus conquered the city...a million and a half Jews were killed....The surviving rabbis who managed to escape went to a place called Yavne on the coast of Israel, and there they hammered out a basic rabbinic way of teaching that would...be the basic way of teaching in the synagogues for the next nineteen some hundred years on how the Jews would live without the Temple and without sacrifice. In Yavne, they hammered out the basis of rabbinic Judaism....the curse was this—that at the heart of this rabbinic teaching was a systematic teaching with a vengeance to isolate and insulate the Jewish person completely from Jesus—**completely**. And to explain away the Messianic prophecies—to explain away the significance of Jesus' claims—to pervert, to distort, and down through the centuries this has been done....there was a tradition that helped the race survive. On the other hand, it helped blind them to the very thing [an acceptance of Jesus as Messiah]<sup>[7]</sup> that could have meant a

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6A classic example is *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, a lie which presumes to detail, step by step, the idea that the Jews have been, and are now contriving plans to take over the world by inter-marriage with ultra-rich families, economics, or other means. Even today this book is heavily circulated among Arab countries. Jewish Messianic scholar, Michael Brown has noted: "Saudi leaders have followed in Abdul Aziz' footsteps; King Faisal highly praised the notoriously anti-Jewish book called *The Protocols of the Eders of Zion*, (conclusively proved to be a forged work of lying propaganda) and gave it to all his international guests to read. In 1972, he stated that 'all countries should wage war against the Zionists.' " Michael L. Brown, *Our Hands are Stained with Blood: The Tragic Story of the "Church" and the Jewish People*. Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishers, © 1992, p. 54, used by permission. Available through Messiah Biblical Institute, POB 7163, Gaithersburg, MD, USA 20898-7163. Tel. (301) 977-0156. For an in-depth understanding of the evil lies and purpose behind such satanic literature as the *Protocols*, we also suggest you read *The History of a Lie*, "*The Protocols of the Wise Men of Zion*," by Herman Bernstein, and; *The Truth about the Forged Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, by Lucien Wolf.

7We believe that once there is a national Jewish acceptance of Jesus as Messiah, He will completely restore the world's Jews to Israel and set up a worldwide Messianic Kingdom of peace. See our chapters 29 and 30, entitled, "After Messiah Arrives and Ends the War—Paradise" and "New Heavens and a New Earth." Jesus said, "until" in Matthew 23:39. Therefore it is theoretically possible for Israel to accept Jesus at any time and thereby initiate His Second Coming. However, according to prophecy, it is impossible, for they will only call on Him when the great Arab/Russian invasion occurs at the end of the seven-year Tribulation yet to begin at some point in our near future. The Bible's offer of the Advent of Messiah at Israel's anytime acceptance is indeed a bona fide offer. However, we know from prophecy its actual time is at Israel's last possible moment of distress, God's appointed time

secession of the suffering—that could have meant a secession of the dispersion.”<sup>8</sup>

### TIME IN REVERSE—2000 YEARS—LET’S GO BACK TO THE FUTURE FORWARD OF THE FIRST CENTURY

Outside, there is a man in a coffin waiting to be carried out of the city of Jerusalem. This man is not dead, nor is he Dracula. He is none other than *Rabbi Yohanan ben Zakkai* carefully being smuggled out to see Vespasian, who will secure Yavne for him, a small coastal town in Israel. It will be in this city that the most devious conspiracy of all time will be devised by Yohanan and his colleagues, Samuel the Small, Gamaliel, Aquila, and Joshua, to name only a few.

This **conspiracy** concerned the Jewish people and the purposeful intention to isolate them from exposure to and knowledge of the identity of the Messiah. The prime instrument in this effort was the *Birkat ha-Minim*, which was a benediction cursing the believers! An obscure passage of the Talmud reveals: “Our Rabbis taught: Simeon ha-Pakuli arranged the eighteen benedictions in order before Rabban Gamaliel in Jabneh. Said Rabban Gamaliel to the Sages: Can any one among you frame a benediction relating to the *Minim*? Samuel the Lesser arose and composed it.”<sup>9</sup>

A few lines above this record in the *Berakoth* section of the Talmud are the words: “These eighteen are really nineteen?—R. Levi said: The benediction relating to the *Minim* was instituted in Jabneh.” The Talmud’s footnote to Jabneh clearly says, “After the rest.” Thus, we see that this ancient sacred prayer reported to have been arranged by Ezra,<sup>10</sup> was doctored to include a curse against the defenseless *Minim*/Nazarenes by Gamaliel in Yavne, the town secured by Yohanan.

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(Hos. 5:15). Even the rabbinical writings show this. The ancient rabbinic work known as *Midrash Rabba* maintains: “A time has been appointed by God for the coming of Messiah. Yet if Israel but repent [of] his sins, the glorious redemption will be hastened, and Messiah will make His appearance before the appointed time. (Exod. Rabba 25).” [ ] mine. Interesting, isn’t it?

<sup>8</sup>Hal Lindsey, *From Abraham to the Middle East Crisis*, © used by permission. [ ] mine. This audio tape series is available through Hal Lindsey Ministries, POB 4000, Palos Verdes, CA, USA 90274.

<sup>9</sup>*The Babylonian Talmud*, *Berakoth* 28b-29a, p. 175.

<sup>10</sup>Attorney Walter Chandler documents the mutilation of this wonderful 2500-year-old piece of Jewish literature: “As soon as Samuel Hakaton had composed this malediction, it was inserted as an additional blessing in the celebrated prayer of the synagogue, the ‘Shemonah-Essaria’ (the eighteen blessings). These blessings belonged to the time of Ezra—that is to say, five centuries before the Christian era; and every Jew has to recite it daily. St. Jerome...says: ‘*The Jews anathematize three times daily in their synagogue the name of the Christian....*’ ” Walter M. Chandler, *The Trial of Jesus, From a Lawyer’s Standpoint*, Illustrated Edition, Vol. II, p. 149.

**Y.B.Z. —HOW DID HE GET FROM JERUSALEM TO YAVNE<sup>11</sup>  
AND WHAT DID HE DO WHEN HE ARRIVED?**

Solomon Grayzel elaborated on the details of how Y.B.Z. obtained Yavne and the academy. He mentions: "When he saw the end of Jerusalem approaching, Johanan decided that the time had come for him to act. A famous story<sup>[12]</sup> tells what happened after this. Some of Johanan's pupils announced that their master had died and asked permission to carry his body for burial outside of Jerusalem. Theirs was a dangerous mission, doubly dangerous, since the suspicious Zealots were on one side of the walls and the cruel Romans on the other. But they managed to carry the living Johanan beyond the lines of danger, where he rose out of his coffin and made his way to Vespasian, the Roman general....Vespasian knew that the man before him was a very influential man, whose good will would have restraining effect upon the moderates among the Jews in and outside of Palestine....One can imagine Vespasian's astonishment when all that Johanan requested was permission to open a school in a little town by the seacoast which the Jews called Jabne and the Romans Jamnia. Vespasian...must have thought the request ridiculous and Johanan a foolish old man. He certainly would not have believed that the school would save the Jewish people...and prove, more than any other single event in history, that Spirit is mightier than Sword."<sup>13</sup>

Because Vespasian granted Yohanan's request for Yavne, Vespasian also arranged safe passage for Yohanan and these rabbis to this coastal town where they formulated their work leading to the excommunication of Jewish Christians from Judaism. The results of their misguided and irresponsible actions are still echoing in our twentieth century, in that many Jews think it is taboo to even consider Jesus' Messianic claims. In the minds of these rabbis (including many of their modern contemporaries), part of saving the Jewish people involved separating them from their faith in Jesus. This was not and is not true. What it is, is extremely misleading, wrong and evil (as we will document later in this and the next two chapters)!

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<sup>11</sup>This author uses the spelling Yavne, because it appears on a highway sign in Israel directing the way to its ruins. Other spellings include Jabne, Jabneh, Jamnia, Yavneh and Yavnah.

<sup>12</sup>The story he mentioned is in the Gittin 56 section of the Babylonian Talmud.

<sup>13</sup>Solomon Grayzel, *A History of the Jews*. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, © 1970, pp. 194-195, used by permission.

**HOW YOHANAN'S CALCULATED GUESS, WHICH HE  
CLAIMED WAS A "PROPHECY," PAID OFF, RESULTING IN  
THE GENERAL AWARDED HIM YAVNE—TEDIOUS**

Max Dimont, in his book, *Jews, God and History*, lends incredible insight into how an old bearded rabbi (Y.B.Z.) was able to dupe a fearless Roman general into giving him Yavne, the town used for Judaism's reformulation, where the Messiah Conspiracy took place! Of course, Yohanan was not a prophet or a writer of part of the Bible, but a shrewd and realistic rabbi obsessed with preserving the people of Judaism under one unassimilated roof.

The keys to his plan were playing dead and making a fantastic guess cleverly disguised as a prophecy. As Dimont documents of the time: "[In] Besieged Jerusalem....People were dying by the thousands of starvation and pestilence. Leaving the city was forbidden on pain of death. Suspected Peace Party members were thrown over the wall by the Zealots, who held as tight a grip inside the city as the Romans did outside. To outwit the Zealots, Jochanan ben Zakkai resorted to a ruse. He took a few of his disciples into his confidence and outlined his plan to them. The disciples then went out into the street, tore their clothes according to the plan, and in mournful voices announced that their great rabbi, Jochanan ben Zakkai, had died of the plague. They asked and received permission from the Zealot authorities to bury the revered rabbi outside the gates of Jerusalem to check the spread of pestilence in the city. With a show of great grief, clad in sackcloth and ashes, the disciples carried a sealed coffin with the live Jochanan ben Zakkai in it out of Jerusalem and to the tent of Vespasian, where they opened the coffin and the rabbi stepped out....The general waited, and the rabbi spoke. He had a prophecy and a request to make, said the rabbi. The general indicated he would listen. Boldly Jochanan ben Zakkai prophesied that Vespasian would soon be emperor, and in such an eventuality, would Emperor Vespasian grant him, Jochanan ben Zakkai, and a few of his disciples, permission to establish a small school of Jewish learning....Stunned by the prophecy and surprised by the modesty of the request—which to a soldier like Vespasian made no sense—he promised the favor would be granted provided the prophecy came true.

It was not superstition on which Rabbi ben Zakkai had based his prediction. He had made a shrewd and calculated guess. That same year Nero had committed suicide. As the Romans had no laws of succession, it stood to reason that eventually the throne would go to the strongest man, who, in ben Zakkai's mind, was Vespasian. In that same year, three political and military hacks held the throne of Rome in succession, each assassinated after a few months in office.

Jochanan ben Zakkai had guessed right. In the year 69 the Roman Senate offered the throne to Vespasian. Unlettered and superstitious as Vespasian was, he could not help but be awed by the bearded rabbi's prophecy. He kept his promise to Zakkai, who now founded the first yeshiva—Jewish academy of learning—in the town of Jabneh, north of Jerusalem. It was destined to play a central role in Jewish survival.<sup>14</sup>

**THE RABBIS, FROM THEIR YAVNE HIDE-AWAY,  
HAVE DECEIVED THE JEWISH PEOPLE AND  
DELAYED REDEMPTION TO THIS VERY DAY**

Now that you have been briefed on Yavne and Y.B.Z., back to the doctored curse of the conspiracy. We believe this conspiracy is the most heinous of all time, because in a sense, it has delayed world redemption until this very date. It has kept us from realizing the fruits of the world to come and the New Jerusalem,<sup>15</sup> which will only be brought in by the Messiah Jesus at His Second Coming, as we find in the New Testament book of Romans: “For all creation is waiting patiently and hopefully for that future day when God will resurrect his children....For we know that even the things of nature, like animals and plants, suffer in sickness and death as they await this great event. And even we Christians, although we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, also groan to be released from pain and suffering. We, too, wait anxiously for that day when God will give us our full rights as his children, including the new bodies he has promised us—bodies that will never be sick again and will never die” (Rom. 8:19, 22-23 *The Living Bible*).<sup>16</sup>

14Max I. Dimont, *Jews, God and History*. New York: The New American Library of World Literature, Inc., Signet Books, © 1962, pp. 103-104, used by permission. [ ] mine.

15In Hebrew, *olam haba* (world to come) and *Yerushalim hadash* (New Jerusalem).

16The rest of this passage in Romans ends on quite a positive note for Israel and the world. It reads: “...think how much greater a blessing the world will share in later on when the Jews, too, come to Christ....And how wonderful it will be when they become Christians [Messianic believers in their Messiah]!” (Rom. 11:12, 15 *The Living Bible*). *The Living Bible* simplifies the more difficult verses of certain English translations of the New Testament. However, when it says Christians, it may be confusing to some Jews who do not realize that the word Christians does not designate a religion foreign to Judaism. This word is actually derived from the Greek *Christos*, which means “Messiah” (in Hebrew *Mesiah*), predicted by the Old Testament in our true faith. *Ian* simply means “one who follows Christ,” i.e. Messiah! “...When God turned away from them it meant that he turned to the rest of the world to offer his salvation; and now it is even more wonderful when the Jews come to Christ. It will be like dead people coming back to life. And since Abraham and the prophets are God's people, their children will be too. For if the roots of the tree are holy, the branches will be too....I want you to know about this truth from God, dear brothers, so that you will not feel proud and start bragging. Yes, it is true that some of the Jews have set themselves against the Gospel now, but this will last only until all of you Gentiles have come

These elitist rabbis have instilled identity crises and guilt trips by using the formula of the Birkat ha-Minim to detect,<sup>17</sup> ostracize and alienate believers. They have succeeded, even into our modern time, in making Jesus a stranger to the Jewish heart. The Bible teaches that only after<sup>18</sup> the Jews have believed in Him as Messiah, as foretold by the holy prophetic writings of the Hebrews known to us as the Old Testament (Zechariah 12:10; Romans 8:19-23; 11:11-12, 25-26), can world redemption and the prophesied Second Coming of Jesus to initiate this begin<sup>19</sup> (Isaiah 11:6-8).

What these rabbis did from their little hideout at Yavne, in their attempt to destroy the Christian (Messianic) faith among the Jews, drastically affected the lives of everyone on planet Earth during the last 2000 years. When you finish reading this book and clearly see exactly what they did, you will begin to see how to remedy and reverse this conspiracy which has affected us all! That remedy will involve using cautious knowledge and loving sensitivity to inform your Jewish friends about the misinformation given them, and to show them, using the prophecies of the Bible, that Jesus, *Yeshua*,<sup>20</sup> is the Messiah who loves them and alone can bring redemption!

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to Christ—those of you who will. And then all Israel will be saved. Do you remember what the prophets said about this? ‘There shall come out of Zion a Deliverer....’ ” (Romans 11:15-16, 25-26 *The Living Bible*; [ ] mine). Though this conspiracy and consequent Jewish rejection is wrong, God is presently allowing it to continue to a lesser degree, as long as non-Jews are converting to Jesus!

17Ken Carroll, Ph.D. of religion at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, quite accurately pointed this out regarding first century Jewish believers in Jesus: “Since they did not withdraw from the community of Israel, they had to be cast out. This end was to be obtained by the various devices for the detection of the *Minim*—the Formula against the *Minim*.” Ken Carroll, Ph.D., *The Fourth Gospel and the Exclusion of Christians*, p. 20.

18See our *Vol. II*, chapter 22, “Only the Family of David Can Welcome the Son of David Back to the City of David,” which illustrates the Messianic parallel of David in II Samuel, as it relates to the return of Jesus, only *after* His brothers receive Him. This interesting material is from Michael Brown’s book, *Our Hands are Stained with Blood: The Tragic Story of the “Church” and the Jewish People*.

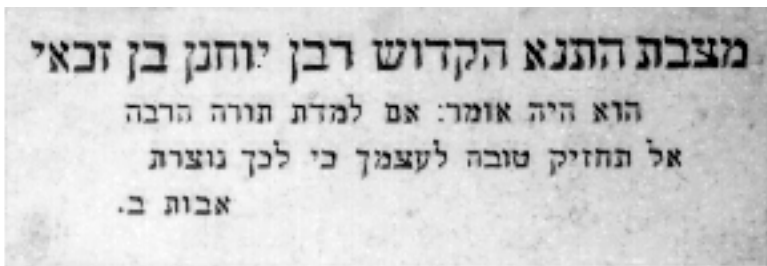
19We are not talking about the first part of the Second Coming known as the Rapture, which could happen at any time, when Jesus will save Israel. This occurs seven years before His kingdom begins (see our chapter 25, “The Rapture Factor”). It will be between the Rapture and the second phase of the Second Coming, seven years afterward, that the majority of Jews (including the 144,000) will begin to realize that Jesus is the Messiah.

20<sup>Yeshua</sup> ישוע is Jesus’ Hebrew name.





Tomb of Rabbi Yohanan ben Zakkai in Tiberias, Israel.



## JUST WHO WAS YOHANAN BEN ZAKKAI? WHO WAS HE TO PUT IN HIS TWO CENTS?

Let's look at Yohanan ben Zakki's true outlook as he lay on his deathbed: "In his last hours, Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai kept weeping out loud [to his disciples]....'Do I then go to appear before a king of flesh and blood, whose anger if he should be angry with me, is but of this world?....I go rather to appear before the King of Kings of Kings, the Holy One, blessed be he, whose anger, if he should be angry with me, is of this world, and the world to come....Moreover I have before me two roads, one to Paradise and one to Gehenna, and I know not whether he will sentence me to Gehenna or admit me into Paradise.'"<sup>21</sup>

Yohanan ben Zakkai's statements about his fear of *Gehenna* (Hebrew for Hell), are a far cry from those of Yohanan ben Zebedee<sup>22</sup> (better known as the apostle John) who emphatically stated to us for all time: "And the witness is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that you may **know** [not hope or think or doubt] that you have eternal life" (I John 5:11-13 NASB; [ ] mine).

The apostle John knows that the words he uttered in the New Testament are true because he witnessed firsthand<sup>23</sup> both the resurrection of Yeshua ben Joseph<sup>24</sup> (Jesus), who gave the promise of eternal life, and the empty tomb from which He rose.<sup>25</sup> Yohanan ben Zakkai, though he was a scholar and chief reformer of what became modern Judaism, is still in the tomb which bears his name in Hebrew, as you see pictured.

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<sup>21</sup>Jacob Neusner, *First-Century Judaism in Crisis, Yohanan Ben Zakkai and the Renaissance of Torah*, p. 199. [ ] mine.

<sup>22</sup>The apostle John was also called rabbi (John 3:26).

<sup>23</sup>The apostle John, who wrote the fourth book of the New Testament, attests to his witness of Thomas actually touching the resurrected Jesus, for he could not have written about it in the present tense if he had not actually seen it. John tells us that: "...saith he [Jesus] to Thomas, 'Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.' And Thomas answered... 'My Lord and my God' " (John 20:27-28 KJV; [ ] mine).

<sup>24</sup>Yeshua ben Joseph is Jesus' Hebrew rabbinical first century designation. Yohanan ben Zebedee is John's. In Hebrew, *ben* means "son of" and of course, the last name is the father's first name.

<sup>25</sup>As we saw in our chapter 5, "Which Prophecies Did Jesus Fulfill?"

### **A RISEN RABBI'S WORDS ARE SUPERIOR TO A DEAD ONE'S**

These words, "I know not whether he will sentence me to Gehenna [Hell],"<sup>26</sup> expressed by the one who is considered the greatest reformer of modern Orthodox Judaism, are very shaky! They bring to mind the words of Jesus: "A disciple is not above his teacher...." (Matt. 10:24 NASB).

Can we really follow a man who has no real security, who is himself groping in the dark? Jesus also said: "...if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch" (Matt. 15:14 KJV).

The truth is that the Bible gives us absolutes whereby we may know if we are headed for eternal Paradise or eternal Hell. Both are formative tenets of ancient Judaism.<sup>27</sup> This is something about which Yohanan ben Zakkai had no peace. We know this because in his last hours he was crying out on his deathbed in fear of where he might end up—Hell!

### **A RABBI WHO SURVIVED HITLER'S HOLOCAUST THROWS OFF THE SHACKLES OF Y. B. Z. TO EMBRACE THE BIBLE'S TRUTH OF MESSIAH**

A rabbinical student and survivor of Hitler's Holocaust, Rachmiel Frydland, read these words of Y.B.Z.: "...I know not whether he will sentence me to Gehenna [Hell] or admit me into Paradise." Mr. Frydland had been taught that this prominent rabbi: "...saved Judaism from extinction after the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem in the year A.D. 70."<sup>28</sup> His reaction to the rabbi's expression of insecurity and doubt regarding something as important as your eternal destiny, was: "If this Rabbi Yohanan was not certain, what hope was there for me?"<sup>29</sup>

Rachmiel Frydland left his rabbinical school, Yeshivat Emek Halacha, in Warsaw, Poland, to investigate who the Messiah might be, using the Bible as his guide. He became one of the leaders of modern Messianic Judaism; Judaism which accepts Jesus for who He said He was, namely the Jewish Messiah. He wrote a comprehensive biography<sup>30</sup> regarding his life of survival and discovery, which we believe is a must for all who inquire into the true history of the Nazi

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26 [ ] mine.

27 See our *Vol. II*, chapter 33, "The Reality of the Ancient Jewish Acknowledgment of Hell, Covered Up Until Now."

28 Rachmiel Frydland, *When Being Jewish Was a Crime*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, © 1978, p. 66, used by permission.

29 Ibid, p. 67.

30 Frydland's biography is available through Messianic Literature Outreach, POB 37062, Cincinnati, OH, USA 45222.

Holocaust. His book, *When Being Jewish Was a Crime*, details the many times he was almost killed in Poland during the Nazi persecutions and how, as a result of his religious search, he realized Jesus was the Messiah. He details that many who died in German ovens were Messianic Jews who believed in Jesus. There is an untold story of the many Jews who secretly believed in Jesus<sup>31</sup> in the camps, which history has yet to record!



The sign reads: “Rabbi Gamaliel, the president, the son of Rabbi Shimon, the son of Old Hillel from the line of the presidents, from the seed of King David from the great sages (*tannim*), the wisest people in Yavne.”

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<sup>31</sup>See our *Vol. II*, chapter 21, “Nazis Murdered Over One-Quarter Million Messianic Jews for Jesus—Unknown to Most.” This chapter contains the testimony of Rachmiel Frydland and Arnold Fruchtenbaum, Ph.D.

## OUR VISIT TO THE GAMALIEL TOMB IN YAVNE

Behind the plaque on this wall, in the building you see pictured on the opposite page, lies the late Rabbi Gamaliel who has long since passed into eternity. Rabbi Gamaliel, according to the Talmud, contrived and began a consorted effort to drive hundreds of thousands of Jews who believed in Jesus from the synagogue.

In the early centuries shortly after Jesus left the earth, Rabbi Gamaliel helped to reconstruct Judaism into a new form of cultural cement which denied many biblical doctrines previously taught and accepted as truly Jewish and Scriptural within the former biblically based Jewish faith. He initiated this effort with the Birkat ha-Minim in a coordinated plan to destroy the acceptance of those who were Jewish and who had believed in the Messiah. His new mainstream Judaism, which continues today, is a tragedy for the many who are kept from the wonderful world of Messiah's assurance, joy and hope! I will never forget the spirit of gloom which overwhelmed me when I visited Gamaliel's tomb.

### THE BAKER PAPER—UNFORESEEN REVELATIONS CONCERNING RABBI GAMALIEL AND HIS BIRKAT HA-MINIM

Julie Baker, whom I had the pleasure of meeting through Mike Bentley in Israel a few years ago in 1987, provides interesting insight into the Birkat ha-Minim. She notes in her paper, "Yavneh: Achievements and Significance," concerning Judaism's first century reconstruction: "It was Gamaliel who 'introduced the policy of exclusion and brought about the permanent fissure in Judaism between Rabbinic Judaism and Christianity.' The primary way Gamaliel II accomplished this was by instituting the Birkat ha-Minim which was added to the 18 Benedictions. These were recited in the synagogues and so the purpose of the 19th Benediction was to keep the Minim out of the synagogue by making them very uncomfortable. Ultimately, it did just that. The word minim is a general term for heretics but a number of 'tannaitic restrictions directed against minim clearly refer to Jewish Christians, as can be shown by their context and date.' Jerome, as well as a Genizah fragment found in 1925 also support this contention. This shows that 'the Sages at Jamnia regarded the Jewish Christians as a menace sufficiently serious to warrant a liturgical innovation.'<sup>[32]</sup>

The Sages at Yavneh also took other actions to thwart the influence of these Messianic Jews. The Septuagint was set aside

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32Julie Baker's source was Phillip Sigal, *The Emergence of Contemporary Judaism*.

because it had been taken over by the Greek converts to Christianity as well as the Jewish believers. So a new translation was begun by Aquila of Pontus....Social ostracism was also practiced and Jewish people were told not to sell to Jewish believers or take anything from them or teach them or obtain healing from them.

There are a number of factors that account for these drastic measures taken against Jewish believers....The fact that in the decades since 30 CE the Jewish believers had been having a fair amount of success in spreading their beliefs was a reason to worry. When approximately 20% of the people of Israel become adherents to a new way, this was something to cause consternation especially later with the presence of the spiritual void brought about by the Destruction of the Temple. It is not surprising to see that the leaders at Yavneh reacted in a hostile fashion to people they believed were inhibiting their ability to put the nation back together again.”<sup>33</sup>

**JULIE BAKER’S CORRECT CONCLUSION SHOULD  
LEAD US TO PRAY THAT THE JEW RETURNS TO  
THE BIBLICALLY BASED TRUTH!**

Julie points out that Y.B.Z. deposed the priesthood and sacrifice. She quotes a statement made by Rabbi Phillip Sigal,<sup>34</sup> which is: “Yohannan ben Zakkai did nothing less than restate Judaic theology.” She correctly concludes that in the rabbis’ attempt at Yavne to lock out Jewish Christians and substitute their brand of “replacement Judaism,” the Jewish faith from that time on was removed from its true biblical base.

Julie notes: “Yavneh did allow Judaism to survive only in a drastically different form. The Sages passed measures to hold onto the land and to build up the economy so that the people could get back on their feet monetarily. But more than anything the Sages changed the theology and structure of Judaism and moved it further from its Biblical basis. Rabbinical Judaism had been born and this is the shape Judaism would keep, with slight modifications, to the present day.”<sup>35</sup>

We pray that this book, along with its newly uncovered documentation concerning the ancient truth of Judaism and its prophetic fulfillments found in the New Testament, and the Jews who believed in Jesus as the Messiah, will help to restore the Jewish faith in its true and biblical<sup>36</sup> form before the Antichrist makes his entrance

<sup>33</sup>Julie Baker, “Yavneh: Achievements and Significance,” submitted to Dr. Goldberg at The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, April 16, 1986, used by permission.

<sup>34</sup>Baker’s source was Phillip Sigal, *The Emergence of Contemporary Judaism*, p. 23.

<sup>35</sup>Julie Baker, “Yavneh: Achievements and Significance,” April 16, 1986.

<sup>36</sup>In an article entitled “Sparks Fly Over ‘Messianic’ Congregation,” a rabbi by the name of Cohen commented: “‘They [Messianic Jews] are basing their approach on what they perceive as a biblical approach and bypassing rabbinic Judaism, which is not the Jewish

into humanity and deceives Jews wholesale with his predicted false claims of Messianic identity (see our chapter 23, “The False Messiah Armilus Equals Antichrist”)!

### **MIN AND MINIM**

Before we go into greater detail about the Birkat ha-Minim, let’s see who the *minim* were. What are *min* and *minim*? Most of you who just read these words are probably scratching your heads and saying, “Does this writer have all of his marbles, or not?” I admit these words sound very strange to twentieth century ears. However, they have had great significance in the past, especially the first century. In reality, they are Hebrew acronyms coined by the early rabbis to identify Jews who accepted Jesus as Messiah. This was the so-called blessing for the believers in Jesus from Nazareth which was inserted into the eighteen benediction Amidah synagogue prayer for the purpose of driving a schism between early Jews for Jesus and the other non-believing sects of Judaism.

### **MIN AND MINIM—WHAT DO THEY REALLY MEAN?**

The acronyms *min* and *minim* mean just this in plain English: “m” (*mem* מ) stands for the Hebrew word *Maamine*, which means “to believe”; the “i” (*ude* י) stands for the Hebrew word *Yeshua*, which means “Jesus”; the “n” (*noon* נ) stands for the Hebrew word *Nazaret* (נצרת), in English, Nazareth. This is the town in northern Israel, a despised town, by the way, where Jesus grew up; a fact predicted by the prophet Isaiah.<sup>37</sup> The “im” (*ude mem* ימ) simply makes the Hebrew word *min* plural. It was used to refer to a group of believers.

You now know one of the hidden secrets of history. We know who the *minim* were and still are today: *Mem* = believers; *ude* = in Jesus; *noon* = from the despised town of Nazareth; *ude mem* = plural, a group of them.

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thing to do. We are a rabbinic religion....’ ” Rick Hellman, “Sparks Fly Over ‘Messianic’ Congregation,” *The Kansas City Jewish Chronicle*, Apr. 16, 1993, p. 18A. [ ] mine. These words still reflect the standard of most rabbis. Let us work hard to get our Bibles out and enlighten them, as the Scriptures command—in love!

<sup>37</sup>Matthew 2:23 says: “And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets. He shall be called a Nazarene” (KJV). This verse refers to Isaiah 11:1, where Christ is spoken of as a *netzer* (or “rod”) out of the stem of Jesse. Few realize that in the time of Jesus, Nazareth was despised. This verse also refers to Jesus being despised, as was predicted of the Messiah in Isaiah 53.

### JOCZ AND DERENBOURGH CONFIRM MINIM IS A RABBINIC “PUN” FOR BELIEVERS!

Though there are some who deny that *minim* is an acronym for believers, Professor Jakob Jocz of Wycliffe College in Toronto correctly identifies the word and meaning of the Hebrew word *minim* with what we believe to be the truth.

*Minim* were Jewish believers in Jesus; the name is the initials in the form of an acronym for “believers in Jesus from Nazareth.” Jocz quotes the authority Derenbourg as evidence. In the words of Professor Jocz: “... Derenbourg’s theory, which explains *minim* as a contraction of the initials *maamine Yeshua nozri* or *min* for *maamin Yeshua nozri* is by no means too far-fetched, especially when we remember how fond the Rabbis were of making puns and juggling with words....the *minim* called themselves *maaminim*. Herein lay their distinction from the rest of the people: they were the *believers* [*maaminim* is Hebrew for believers].”<sup>38</sup>

### THE TALMUD ADMITS TO THE COMPOSITION OF THE BIRKAT HA-MINIM AT YAVNE AT THE REQUEST OF GAMALIEL

With the knowledge we have just obtained, we can now move on to better understand who these individuals were and how history has treated<sup>39</sup> them. First, we will investigate the benediction which was inserted into the famous 2500-year-old Amidah synagogue prayer, which contained eighteen separate benedictions. As the Talmud admits: “Our Rabbis taught: Simeon ha-Pakuli arranged the eighteen benedictions in order before Rabban Gamaliel in Jabneh. Said Rabban Gamaliel to the Sages: Can any one among you frame a benediction relating to the *Minim*? Samuel the Lesser arose and composed it” (Berakoth 28b, Babylonian Talmud).

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38Jakob Jocz, *The Jewish People and Jesus Christ*. London: Baker Book House, © 1949, p. 177, used by permission. [ ] mine.

39Was there a rabbinic lynching of believers? Did first century rabbis agree that it was all right for the Jewish Christians’ (*minim*) lives to be placed in jeopardy? Douglas Hare documents: “The most extreme treatment that the rabbis will countenance is that the lives of *Minim* may be endangered and not saved, Tos. B. Mezia 2:33: ‘The *Minim* and the apostates and the betrayers are cast in [to a pit] and not helped out’ (translation by R. Travers Herford, *Christianity in Talmud and Midrash* ([1903], p. 94).” Douglas Hare, *The Theme of Jewish Persecution of Christians in the Gospel According to St Matthew*, p. 39. Hare’s source was the Talmud, Jewish rabbinic law and history of that time, which can be found in any good library.



### WHY BHM THE MESSIANIC JEWS? ASSIMILATION MIGHT HAVE OCCURRED BECAUSE THEY WERE IN EVERY SYNAGOGUE OF THE EAST

Rabbi Gamaliel II, the grandson of the famous Sanhedrin judge mentioned in the New Testament book of Acts, feared the fact that so many Jews were accepting Jesus as the Messiah along with millions of pagans in the Roman world. He falsely reasoned that because so many pagan Gentiles (non-Jews) were accepting Jesus, they would have a strong bond in common with the Jews who also believed in Jesus. Thus, since the pagans were not brought up celebrating the Jewish traditions and holy days, he reasoned that the intermingling of Jews with these millions of non-Jews would bring about assimilation (a situation in which Jews forsake Jewish heritage, religion and identity), something greatly feared by the rabbis. Thus he felt Jews might be absorbed into the Gentile world and would be lost to Jewish heritage and culture, which would result in the extinction of the race! This neither happened in the first century, nor has it happened today in the modern *Jews for Jesus* movement.

Messianic Jews maintain that their acceptance of Jesus has shown them what Judaism is all about. They even claim that they are more proud than ever to be Jews.<sup>40</sup> Due to the fear of assimilation, Rabbi Gamaliel and Samuel the Small devised this prayer to detect and isolate Jews who believed in Jesus, which amounted to nearly twenty percent of the first and second century synagogues. The rabbis felt that these Jews should be expelled from the Jewish community in order to prevent them from sharing Jesus with unbelieving Jews who were attending the same synagogues. We read in Adolf Harnack's book, *The Mission and Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries*: "Jerome (Ep. ad Aug. 112, c. 13) does assert that Nazarenes were to be found in every Jewish synagogue throughout the East. 'What am I to say about the Ebionites who allege themselves to be Christians? To this day the sect exists in all the synagogues of the Jews, under the title of 'the Minim'; the Pharisees still curse it, and the people dub its adherents 'Nazarenes,' etc. ('Quid dicaru de Hebionitis, qui Christianos esse se simulant? usque hodie per totas orientis synagogas inter Judaeos heresis est, quae dicitur Minaeorum et a Pharisaeis nune usque damnatur, quos vulgo Nazaraeos nuncupant')."

<sup>40</sup> 2241

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<sup>40</sup>We suggest you read *The Fig Tree Blossoms*, by Paul Liberman; *Everything You Need to Build a Messianic Synagogue*, by Phillip Goble; Zola Levitt's many books; MMI's many publications; and *Jews for Jesus'* extensive materials, all of which confirm that there is a greater and more complete Jewish meaning to the faith once a Jew accepts Messiah Jesus.

<sup>41</sup>Adolf Harnack, *The Mission and Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries*. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, © 1908, p. 100.

**THE RABBIS HAD A UNIVERSAL PROBLEM ON  
THEIR HANDS—HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS  
OF JEWS WERE BELIEVING IN JESUS**

Messianic Jews were attending “every synagogue of the east.” It is clear from this interesting evidence that the Messianic Jews were not merely a local problem for the rabbis.

The apostles spread the good news of His Messiahship throughout the world as Jesus had requested (Acts 1:8). They used the fulfilled prophecies to back up His claim. The bottom temporarily fell out of rabbinicism. Hundreds of thousands of Jews throughout the Diaspora were becoming Messianic Jews. They were experiencing new life, hope and happiness as they saw the evidence and received it with open hearts. This was proof that He had become the Passover lamb—Messiah ben Joseph—securing the final blood atonement and assuring eternal salvation, as promised throughout the Old Testament. They realized He would be returning to fulfill the kingly prophecies at the height of a future global war (Gog and Magog/Armageddon), resulting in all of world Jewry accepting Him. These were His conditions of return in the role of Messiah ben David (the kingly portrait of Messiah promised in the Old Testament; Matthew 23:39; Romans 11:26).

**PARKES RECONSTRUCTS THE ANTI-CHRISTIAN  
LETTER, *USED TO EXCOMMUNICATE THE JEWISH  
FOLLOWERS OF JESUS*, SENT OUT BY YAVNE,  
FROM JUSTIN EUSEBIUS AND JEROME**

Because this **problem** of Jews for Jesus persisted in strength throughout the Diaspora (see James 1:1),<sup>42</sup> the rabbis devised a plan to sabotage the movement. They sent emissaries and letters with copies of the famed Birkat ha-Minim to virtually every synagogue in the world, in an attempt to drive out those Jews who believed in the Messiah.

We read in the scholarly work of James Parkes: “...the rabbis at Jabne, had decided that the presence of these people could not be tolerated, the Judeo-Christians, however much they disagreed from other Jews on the question as to whether the Messiah had or had not come, still considered themselves to be Jews; and it is not too much to

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<sup>42</sup>James 1:1 of the New Testament says: “James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes [of Jews] which are *scattered abroad*, greeting” (KJV; [ ] and italics mine). For an overview of the twelve tribes, see Genesis 49. “Scattered abroad” refers to the Diaspora, where Jews were scattered throughout the other countries.

suppose from this that there were also Jews who considered that a disagreement on this point did not make fellowship with them impossible. They must have been generally accepted, or it is incredible that they should have continued to frequent the synagogue. They were evidently there as ordinary members, since it needed the introduction of this formula to detect them....It is reasonable also to date the letters and 'Apostles' sent out to the Jews of the diaspora to the end of the first century. Through his emissaries the Jewish Patriarch of Palestine was able to keep in fairly close touch with the Jews in the rest of the world because of the annual collection which was made by all the synagogues to the central organisation. The decision which is marked by the inclusion of the test malediction on the heretics into the Eighteen Benedictions was an important one. The matter touched the diaspora even more closely than Palestine itself. We may therefore presume that before the end of the century all the synagogues of the diaspora had been informed of the new malediction and warned to have no dealings with the Christians<sup>43</sup>....It is difficult, but necessary, to try to distinguish what was sent out officially from Palestine....If we take the substance of what is told us by Justin, Eusebius and Jerome, we can make a fair reconstruction of the letter. It contained a formal denial of the truth of the Christian account of the teaching and resurrection of Jesus. Christianity [Messianism] was a denial of God and of the Law. It was based on the teaching of Jesus, who was a deceiver, and who had been put to death....His disciples had stolen His body, and then pretended that He had risen again from the dead and was the Son of God. It was therefore impossible for Jews to have anything to do with such teaching, and His followers should be formally excommunicated. (Justin, *ibid.*, and Jerome, *On Isaiah*, xviii, 2; P.L., xxiv, p. 184.) Jews were to avoid all discussions of any kind with the Christians. [Messianic Jews] (Justin, xxxviii, and Orogen, *Celsus*, VI, 27; P.G., XI, p. 1333.)....letters also contained a copy of the Birkath-ha-Minim, with instructions to include it into the Eighteen Benedictions. For the daily cursing of Christ in the synagogue is very closely associated with the letters. (Justin, xvi, xlvii, xcv, cxxxiii.).... All three writers insist on the official character of these letters, and on their wide dispersion."<sup>44</sup>

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43Messianic Jews, or if you please, ancient Jews for Jesus who had accepted the Jewish Messiah in accordance with the biblical promises.

44James Parkes, *The Conflict of the Church and the Synagogue*, pp. 78-80. Parkes' footnotes were inserted into his text for clarification using ( ). [ ] mine.

### **“I, BELIEVING THEM, CRUCIFIED HIM”—PILATE**

Additional evidence of this conspiratorial schism can be found in an ancient document known as *The Acts of Pilate*. The information revealed in this piece of literature exposes an admitted plot to cover up Messianic truths simply because they would cause a split in the synagogue of that day.

Pilate, the Roman governor, made these statements in a letter to Tiberius Caesar in an attempt to explain why he killed Jesus. Again, we have more evidence of how the priests and rabbis sold out the Jewish population at large for their own gains and purposes.

James Parkes, in *The Conflict of the Church and the Synagogue*, summarizes *The Acts of Pilate*, as he notes: “The next development is that the High Priest, also impressed by the events of the Crucifixion, calls a meeting to examine carefully whether the prophecies really prove that Jesus was the Messiah. The meeting finds that He was; and their decision comes to the ears of Pilate, who sends to them to adjure them to tell him the truth. They admit that He was the Messiah, but say that they have decided to conceal the fact, ‘lest there should be a schism in our synagogues’. They implore Pilate to keep silence. Pilate, however, writes to the emperor Tiberius that ‘the Jews through envy have punished themselves and their posterity with fearful judgments of their own fault; for their fathers had promised that God would send them His Holy One, and when He came, and performed marvelous works, the priests through envy delivered Him to me, and I, believing them, crucified Him.’”<sup>45</sup>

### **THE JEWISH CHRISTIAN SCHOLAR, JACOB JO CZ, REVEALS TO US THE MOTIVE, MEANS AND OPPORTUNITY FOR THE MESSIAH CONSPIRACY**

Jacob Jocz, the famous Jewish professor and scholar, while agreeing with Jesus’ claims, is most honest with the facts of this period. He tells us in his book, *The Jewish People and Jesus Christ*: “The *Shemoneh Esreh*, which is the *Tephillah* par excellence and ‘the central feature of the three daily prayers’, contains a strange ‘blessing’, the much discussed *Birkat ha-minim*. It is associated with the names of Gamaliel (circa A.D. 100) and Samuel the Small (died circa A.D.

125). The classical Talmudic passage recording the introduction of the ‘benediction’ reads: Our Rabbis have taught: Simeon the cotton-dealer (Dalman transl. *Flachsschäler*) arranged the eighteen benedictions in order in the presence of Rabban Gamaliel at Jabneh.

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<sup>45</sup>Ibid, p. 103.

Rabban Gamaliel asked the sages: ‘Is there anyone who knows how to word the benediction relating to the *minim*?’ Samuel The Small stood up and worded it. The *Shemoneh Esreh*, which according to tradition, was drawn up by the Men of the Great Synagogue, has thus acquired an *extra* ‘benediction’, though it still retained the former name of ‘Eighteen’ (benedictions). Immediately preceding the passage quoted above the question is being asked: ‘As to those eighteen benedictions;—there are nineteen! R. Levi said: The benediction relating to the *minim* was subsequently instituted at Jabneh....It is obvious from this passage that the Rabbis have tried to find some justification for the introduction of a curse into the otherwise lofty prayers of the *Shemoneh Esreh*. Jewish scholars<sup>[46]</sup> have for a long time maintained that the *Birkat ha-minim* was mainly directed against heresy as such, and only indirectly against Hebrew Christianity. Even Israel Abrahams in his notes to *Singer’s Prayer Book* says that the benediction ‘was directed against...sectarians (*minim*) within the Synagogue....’...The Jewish believers in Jesus of Nazareth were the real and immediate danger to the Synagogue. There can be little doubt who are meant by the *minim*. There was no other sect or heresy which could compare in importance with Hebrew Christianity.

The Hebrew Christians were steeped in the traditions of Judaism, many of them were loyal to the ‘traditions of the elders’. They were spiritually alive, abounding in religious zeal. They were aggressive, and, above all, they were the enthusiastic bearers of the greatest Jewish heritage—the Messianic hope. They were dangerous because they had

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46Why did the scholar Akiva abhor Christians and their books? We verify from scholar Joshua Bloch, in his article “Outside Books” that: “The Nazarenes and their books became objectionable not so much because of their belief about the role of Jesus but because of their persistent attempt to exalt him to a position almost equal with that of God....they evidently became quite dangerous in the days of Rabbi Akiba....Rabbi Akiba and his circle regarded the teachings of the christian books current in their day about the ‘divinity’ of Jesus of Nazareth, as a serious infringement of the belief in the Divine Unity....” Hence, the deity of Jesus was taught in the first century—a concept that is denied by many rabbis and liberal “Christian scholars.” Bloch also notes: “...the Nazarenes are specifically named. The text from the Genizah which Schechter published (*Jewish Quarterly Review*, London, 1898, v. 10, pp. 654-659) is directed against ‘the Notzerim and the Minim,’ which Marcel Simon (*Verus Israel*, Paris, 1948, p. 236) translated by ‘the Nazarenes and the other Minim.’ In the wording of the prayer as it is now familiar וּלְמַלְשֵׁינֵם is substituted for מְזִידִים. The text of the prayer in current prayer books has the appearance of having been modified more than once in the course of centuries and adapted to new conditions and surroundings (see S. Baer, *Abodat Yisrael*, p. 93 f.; Singer, *Authorized Daily Prayer Book*, p. 48 with I. Abrahams’ note, p. LXIV f. Cf. G.F. Moore, *op. cit.*, v. 1, p. 292 and v. 3, p. 97, note 68 and S. Krauss, ‘Imprecations against the *Minim* in the Synagogue,’ in *Jewish Quarterly Review*, April, 1897, v. 9, pp. 515-518.)” Joshua Bloch, “Outside Books,” *Mordecai M. Kaplan, Jubilee Volume*, pp. 95, 99-100.

the advantage of attacking [the new false rabbinical] Judaism from *within*.”<sup>47</sup>

They were exposing what real Judaism was all about—the Messiah, Jesus. The religious leaders of the new cultural Judaism could not swallow this! It was a slap in the face to the false Judaism of cultural cement they were attempting to construct to guard against assimilation during the coming 1900-year Diaspora. Jocz continues: “It therefore became imperative for the Synagogue to isolate them. For that purpose the *Birkat ha-minim* was composed. Loewe [the scholar who helped write *A Rabbinic Anthology* with C. G. Montefiore] rightly calls it a ‘test passage’; its intention being to ‘separate the sheep from goats, and compel the *minim* to declare themselves’. It naturally had the effect of widening the breach between the Jesus-believing and the non-believing Jews in that it made it impossible for the believers to worship in the synagogues.”<sup>48</sup>

Jocz makes the following observations based on the most up-to-date scholarly sources: “(1) The *Birkat ha-minim* had no precedent in the Synagogue; it was a new creation, entirely dictated by internal necessity. (2) It was composed at an early date, not many years after the destruction of Jerusalem....the introduction of the *Birkat ha-minim* resulted, not only in widening the breach between Hebrew Christians and orthodox Jews, but also in further prejudicing the Jews against Jesus of Nazareth....Israel Abrahams has shown that the Synagogue’s dealings with *minut* [Messianic Jewish believers in Jesus] must be viewed as an internal affair. Its main purpose was self-defence. For that purpose, it introduced the *Birkat ha-minim*; it altered its liturgy; it changed its emphasis, especially with regard to Messianic teaching; it created barriers.”<sup>49</sup> One such barrier would be to de-emphasize Jesus’ deity. Was it done? A.J.B Higgins said: “...the tendency in post-Christian Judaism was to tone down messianic dogma and to emphasize the human nature of the Messiah.”<sup>50</sup>

### **RABBI SAFRAI VERIFIES BRUCE’S CLAIM IN OUR ARCHAEOLOGICAL ARCHIVES OF THE ORIGINAL BHM, DURING A CHAT AT HIS FLAT**

I thought it important to obtain a modern scholarly Jewish opinion on this subject from a rabbi who would not be biased—one who would only be interested in the true facts, even those facts which

47Jakob Jocz, *The Jewish People and Jesus Christ*, pp. 51-53. [ ] mine.

48Ibid, p. 53. [ ] mine.

49Ibid, pp. 57, 190. [ ] mine.

50A.J.B. Higgins, *Jewish Messianic Belief in Justin Martyr’s Dialogue with Trypho*, published in the compilation by Leo Landman, *Messianism in the Talmudic Era*. New York: KTAV Publishing House, Inc., © 1979, pp. 183.

have remained hidden from the eyes of history, such as Rabbi Safrai. I say this because the text of the BHM was changed from *minim* and *Nazarenes* to **slanderers** soon after its true purpose was considered successful.

The scholar F. F. Bruce, author of *New Testament History*, speaks of the powers of the Sanhedrin and its strong hold on the Jewish synagogues of that era: "...it was indeed through the synagogue that

the Sanhedrin exercised its authority. An outstanding example of this is provided by the effective exclusion of Nazarenes and other 'heretics' from participation in Jewish worship when, about A.D. 90, a member of the Sanhedrin named Samuel the Less rewrote one of the blessings recited daily in the synagogue so as to make it include a curse on such persons. In the present Jewish prayer book this blessing appears as the twelfth of the Eighteen Benedictions; it runs thus: 'And for slanderers let there be no hope, and let all wickedness perish as in a moment;

may all Thy enemies be speedily cut off, and the kingdom of arrogance do Thou speedily uproot and break in pieces, cast it down and humble it speedily, in our days. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, who breakest enemies in pieces and humblest the arrogant.' But towards the end of the first century it was given this form: 'For apostates let there be no hope, and the kingdom of arrogance do Thou speedily uproot in our days; and let Nazarenes and heretics (*minim*) perish as in a moment; let them be blotted out of the book of life and not be enrolled with the righteous. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, who humblest the arrogant.'

This revised edition of **the prayer was authorized by the Sanhedrin and adopted in synagogues, so that Jewish Christians, by keeping silence at this point, might give themselves away and be excommunicated.** The 'heretics' or *minim* were members of other sects of which the Sanhedrin disapproved. It is only after A.D. 70 that we can begin to talk about normative Judaism and of deviations from the norm; in the days of the Second Temple there was a much greater variety of Jewish religious life and practice, and no one form could claim to represent the standard by which others were to be judged.

When the rabbis of Jamnia discussed the recognition of canonical books and the rejection of others, one group to which they paid attention was 'the books of the *minim*'. These contained the name of God, and yet their contents were unacceptable....they certainly included Jewish Christian writings.<sup>7751</sup>

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51F.F. Bruce, *New Testament History*. New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., © 1971, pp. 385-386, used by permission. Bold mine.

Recent discoveries in an ancient Egyptian synagogue proved the near original words were *minim* and **Nazarene**. Many modern rabbis, interested in maintaining this secret, deny that the BHM was ever used for the purpose of excommunicating Messianic or Christian Jews from the synagogue in the first to the fourth centuries. As we will see shortly in greater detail, many even deny that there was a sizable Jewish Messianic community in existence.<sup>52</sup> Ask any rabbi and compare what he says to the historical facts you are reading here and see if it all lines up. Most likely it will not!<sup>53</sup>

In 1984, while in Israel doing research on this subject for a popular Christian writer, I interviewed world-renowned Hebrew scholar and professor, Rabbi Shmuel Safrai, of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. We had a cozy little chat in his apartment. He agreed with me that F. F. Bruce was accurate! He told me about his book, *A History of the Jewish People*, as he pulled it from his bookshelf and handed it to me.

**THE ISRAELI RABBI SAFRAI ADMITS THE TRUTH ABOUT  
THE TRUE INTENTION OF THE BHM—IT WAS TO CUT  
OFF CHRISTIANITY, ESPECIALLY THE JUDEO-  
CHRISTIANS!**

In Rabbi Safrai's unique book, we found the following: "Throughout the Jabneh era, from immediately after the destruction of the Temple until the Revolt of Bar Kokhba (70-132), many steps were taken that were to have a decisive influence on the coherence of the nation under the contemporary conditions. The sages were able to gain control over the different groups and trends that were competing within the nation....Decisive steps were also taken to **cut off Christianity** [Messianism]....One such measure was the insertion into the *Amidah* prayer of an additional, nineteenth benediction, *Birkat Haminim* ('benediction against the heretics'), which, in its earliest Palestinian formula, was directed primarily against the Judeo-Christians, who

'shall have no hope' in their belief that the Messiah has already appeared on earth. Of the men who established and shaped the institutions of national and community leadership in Jabneh, none belonged to those circles that had formed the social *élite* in the days of the Temple. Those elements had completely vanished from public life....These sages were known by the designation 'rabbi', and from them the president of the Sanhedrin chose his executives and

<sup>52</sup>One example lies in several statements by Rabbi Shalom Lewis, which have recently been factually contradicted by archaeology. See this interesting contrast documented in our forthcoming chapter 8, "The Messiah Conspiracy Continues in the *New Old Testament*."

<sup>53</sup>If it does not, don't you think that is interesting? Something is wrong somewhere and it is not here!



emissaries....R. Joshua was one of their emissaries whose travels resulted in wide-ranging contacts with the outside world....We find him in the role of spokesman for [Yavne's newly formed rabbinical] Judaism in disputations with Christians...."<sup>54</sup>

**ALON'S TRUER RESULT—THE BHM HAD  
THE FAR-REACHING CONSEQUENCE OF  
REMOVING THE JEWISH BELIEVER FROM  
HIS PEOPLE, AS NEWER SOURCES INDICATE**

It is not our point to bore you with scholarly references. This book is for the layman as well as professors. However, in the interest of answering any rabbis who may try to take exception to our facts, we think it necessary to carefully document these new and exciting discoveries, which have helped to uncover the *Messiah Conspiracy* of the first century!

G. Alon is an expert on the subject of first century Jewish Christian activities. Concerning Rabbi Gamaliel and his fear of Jewish Christians (Messianic Jews) and assimilation, he says: "...these were sectarians who had *not* given up their Jewish identity.

In any case, it is likely that the process of intermingling between these various sects created a situation in which the Jewish Sages could no longer tell them apart; and lumping them all together, read them out of the Jewish fold. The fact remains, however, that the 'loyal' sects were never put on a par with the others.

What then was the purpose of *Birkat ha-Minim*? Most scholars believe that it was designed to keep the *Minim* away from worship in the synagogue, and they may well be right. But it is probably truer to say that that was the end result, rather than the original purpose. It is likely that the main intention was to make all Jews aware of the fact that the *Minim* were to be regarded as *apostates*, and could *no longer be called Jews*.

Whichever way we look at it, it will be seen that the Beth Din [rabbinical school which reformulated Judaism] of Rabban Gamaliel at Yavneh took a fateful step, one that was to have far-reaching historical consequences. They declared [wrongfully, with a vengeance unparalleled in religious bigotry] in unequivocal terms that the Jewish Christians could no longer be considered part of the Jewish community nor of the Jewish people."<sup>55</sup>

Professor Alon mentions some of his sources in his footnote 53, which reads: "[The study of the Jewish Christians has naturally been

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<sup>54</sup>H.H. Ben-Sasson and Shmuel Safrai, *A History of the Jewish People*, Part IV. Tel Aviv: Dvir Publishing House, © 1969, 1976, p. 325, used by permission. [ ] and bold mine.

<sup>55</sup>G. Alon, *The Jews in Their Land in the Talmudic Age*, Vol. I. Jerusalem: EJ Brill, © 1980, p. 307. [ ] is our opinion reached after years of research on this subject.

affected by the discovery of new source-materials bearing on the subject. For examples, see 'The Dead Sea Sect and Pre-Pauline Christianity,' by David Flusser, in *Scripta Hierosolymitana*, vol. IV (1958), pp. 215 ff.; and 'The Jewish Christians in the Early Centuries of Christianity According to a New Source,' by Shlomo Pines, in *Proceedings of The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities*, vol. II, no. 13]."<sup>56</sup>

### NEW DISCOVERIES IN OUR CENTURY OF THE ORIGINAL FORMULATION OF THE BHM OBLITERATE TALL TALES AND INDICATE CHRISTIANS

Chief among this recently discovered evidence of the Messiah Conspiracy was the discovery of the Genizah fragments, which contain the earliest copies to date of the **original** BHM document. This came to light in 1925. G. Alon, in his work, *The Jews in Their Land in the Talmudic Age*, documents this monumental find: "The twelfth paragraph of the 'Eighteen' Benedictions (*ve-lamal-shinin*) is referred to in Talmudic literature as '*Birkat ha-Minim*'—the prayer concerning the sectarians. The same sources inform us that this part of the liturgy dates from the Academy of Yavneh: Simeon Hapakuli arranged the Eighteen Benedictions in their proper order in the presence of Rabban Gamaliel at Yavneh. Said Rabban Gamaliel to the Sages: Is there anyone that can formulate the *Birkat ha-Minim*? Up rose Samuel the Lesser and recited it. What was the nature of this 'benediction'? As it appears in most Ashkenazic versions of the liturgy today, it says not a word about sectarians or *Minim*. But there was a time when the *Minim* were explicitly mentioned. Just who were they?

The Talmud uses the word frequently, and always in the sense of 'sectarians'—Jews whose religious beliefs and practices set them apart from the rest of the people. Some scholars hold that the term invariably refers to one or another kind of Jewish Christian...when the field is narrowed down to the *Minim* of Eighteen Benedictions, the definition becomes more plausible. For one thing, there is the evidence provided by several Church Fathers. The earliest to mention the subject is Justin Martyr, born a pagan at what is now Nablus at the end of the first century. In his 'Dialogue With Trypho', written around the year 150, he says: 'You Jews pronounce maledictions on the Christians in your synagogues'....more direct testimony comes from Epiphanius, who writes that the Jews denounce the *Nazarenēs* in their prayers three times a day. Note that he speaks only of *Jewish* Christians (Nazarenēs). And Jerome, in his Commentary on Isaiah, chapter 52, verse 4, says practically the same thing.

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<sup>56</sup>Ibid.

That was about all we knew **until 1925**, when the question was settled by the discovery of Genizah fragments containing portions of the liturgy according to the ancient Palestinian rite. In these versions, *Birkat ha-Minim* reads like this: May the apostates have no hope, unless they return to Thy Torah, and may the **Nazarenes** and the Minim disappear in a moment. May they be erased from the book of life, and not be inscribed with the righteous. The provenance of this text, which calls down wrath on...Nazarenes and *Minim*—leaves little room for doubt that **we are looking at something very close to the original formulation as laid down in the days of Rabban Gamaliel**. The wording might give the impression that Nazarenes are one thing and *Minim* another; or that *Minim* is a generic term for schismatics. But that can scarcely be true; for why would Rabban Gamaliel have reacted to any heresy except one that posed a special threat in his own time? There was nothing new about non-Pharisaic sects like the Sadducees. They and others had been numerous in Temple days.

We must therefore assume that in this liturgical fragment, *Minim* and *Notzrim* are synonymous, and that both refer to the Jewish Christians. The assumption is borne out by Jerome, who writes that in his lifetime (4th to 5th centuries) there was a sect of Jews called *Minim*—also known as Nazarenes. He says they wanted to be both Jews and Christians....<sup>57</sup>

### **ONCE THE DECEPTION WAS ACCOMPLISHED, THE NAMES WERE CHANGED TO PROTECT THE GUILTY**

It is important to realize that after the rabbis achieved their desired goal of splitting the Jews who believed in Jesus from those who did not, they changed the *Birkat ha-Minim* by removing the words Nazarene and *minim*, in an apparent attempt to cover up their plot to excommunicate the masses of Jews who believed in Jesus!

Today, many rabbis claim there were very few Jews who accepted Jesus, even though there were many. To admit it would cause the modern Jewish community to ponder the question of whether Jesus might qualify to be the Jewish Messiah! It is interesting to note that the modern Amidah prayer, which contains the *Birkat ha-Minim* benediction, contains the word “slanderers” instead of *minim* (an acronym for “believers in Jesus from Nazareth”) or Nazarene (the largest denomination of ancient Jews for Jesus).

Archaeology, like it or not, tells it like it is and shows that all is not the way many rabbis have led us to believe, no matter what the cost. Will you read on and further investigate these findings? Will you give yourself an opportunity to make a decision about your eternal destiny, based on who Jesus really is? You owe it to yourself to check it out!

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<sup>57</sup>Ibid, pp. 288-290. Bold mine.



View of Birkat ha-Minim, discovered in 1925, in the hidden chamber of the Synagogue of the Temple Mount, Jerusalem.



## THE *JERUSALEM POST* REVEALS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE GENIZA AND SOME OF ITS SECRETS

As you have read, prior to the 1925 discovery of the Cairo Geniza Birkat ha-Minim fragment, the word *Notzrim* and the true meaning of this “prayer” rabbinically contrived at Yavne, was one of the best-kept secrets of our age. However, after the archaeological find, as a result of the “bug” in the hidden synagogue chamber that lay silent and unknown to scholars for centuries, the exact words and the true reason for the creation of the Birkat ha-Minim became all too evident.

The fragment that was found, because of its early origin, shows that *minim* were really ancient Jewish Christians, contrary to some “scholarly” claims that *minim* referred merely to apostates.<sup>58</sup> I believe

<sup>58</sup>We remind you of our quote from Alon, the Jewish scholar who informed us otherwise, according to the latest findings. “That was about all we knew until 1925, when the question was settled by the discovery of Genizah fragments containing portions of the liturgy according to ancient Palestinian rite. In these versions, *Birkhat ha-Minim* reads like this: May the apostates have no hope, unless they return to Thy Torah, and may the Nazarenes and the *Minim* disappear in a moment. May they be erased from the book of life, and not be inscribed with the righteous. The provenance of this text, which calls down wrath on...Nazarenes and *Minim*—leaves little room for doubt that we are looking at something very close to the original formulation....We must therefore assume that in this liturgical

the word *notzrim* was discovered beside *minim* as a clarifying noun because the *notzrim* were the largest sect of believers in Jesus, Messianic Jews, or put more simply, Messiah followers (in English, Christ (Messiah); ians (followers)).

### CAIRO'S GENIZA WAS DIFFERENT—IT WAS NEVER EMPTIED! IT CONSTITUTED A “BUG”

We have reprinted portions of an article from the *Jerusalem Post* magazine entitled “A Leap in the Dark,” so you will be able to grasp the immense importance of this chamber found in the Ben Ezra Cairo Synagogue, called the Geniza, where the authentic Birkat ha-Minim was discovered. The subtitle of this article reads: “The Cairo Geniza constitutes a fabulous listening device, a ‘bug’ planted in the heart of time and recording for our elucidation the loftiest visions and **most intimate secrets** of the Dark Ages. But how is the scholarly puzzle being solved?”<sup>59</sup>

This article shows that even a casual, unscientific observer would be amazed to realize that this synagogue compartment has yielded secrets unknown to history for over 1000 years. The magazine devoted several pages to this feature story and even printed a full page photo of Solomon Schechter sorting out thousands of Geniza fragments. The article went into detail describing the conditions and reasons for the find; it documented the major importance of this discovery and emphasized that most of the general public is still unaware of the “knowledge of the documents.” We believe the following words from the article are ironic, since many of us are still **unaware** and **unenlightened** with regard to the Birkat ha-Minim, which we will bet you just learned about by reading this book. The article reads: “The Geniza collection stems from the Jewish practice of not destroying old prayerbooks or any other Hebrew writing on which the name of God might appear, including private letters. These are usually stored in a cupboard or other space in a synagogue until they are ceremonially buried in a cemetery.

For reasons that scholars do not understand, the *geniza* (repository) in the Ben Ezra Synagogue in old Cairo was operated differently. It became a catch-all for every kind of written document, including those in non-Hebrew languages that clearly did not bear God’s name in the holy tongue.

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fragment, *Minim* and *Notzrim* are synonymous, and that both refer to the Jewish Christians.” Ibid, pp. 289-290.

59 “A Leap in the Dark,” *Jerusalem Post* magazine, Mar. 10, 1989, © used by permission. Bold mine.

In addition, the Cairo Geniza was apparently never emptied in the course of centuries....Because of the relatively dry climate, the parchment, paper, papyrus and cloth on which these documents were written survived the centuries in remarkably good condition.

The Cairo Geniza constitutes a fabulous listening device, a scholarly ‘bug’ planted in the heart of time and recording for our titillation and elucidation the loftiest visions and most intimate secrets of an age.

These secrets began to leak last century....For the general public, the world of the Geniza is still a dark age unlit by knowledge of the documents’ revelations. In time, presumably, the knowledge of this rich world will seep into the general consciousness.”<sup>60</sup>

### **THEY DID NOT COUNT ON OUR DISCOVERY— IT WAS SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN BURIED**

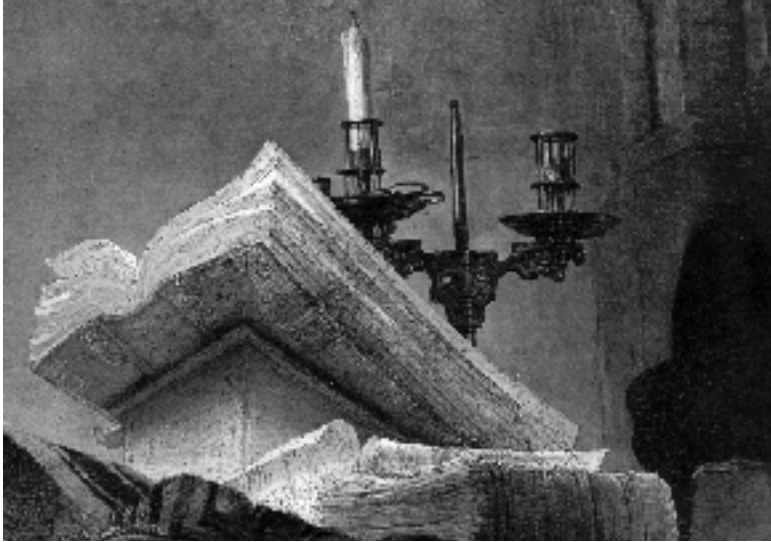
Those, whoever they may be, who concealed and perhaps destroyed previous copies of this document containing the word *notzrim*, in their attempt to cover up the evidence of its true target, did not count on this conspicuous find at the Cairo Geniza revealing their conspiracy in our time! Also, “those” in charge of the synagogue in Cairo, who stored this BHM document, did not count on and had no intention of having the twentieth century lay eyes upon this writing. Paul E. Kahle, in his book *The Cairo Geniza*, states: “...the room which is of interest to us [held]....A great number of fragments of MSS [manuscripts] and of printed books, documents and letters had been stored there for many hundreds of years. The Jews used to deposit all sorts of written and printed material in such rooms which were provided in or near their synagogues; they were **not** intended to be **kept** as in archives, but were to remain there undisturbed for a certain time. The Jews were afraid lest such writings which might contain the name of God should be profaned by misuse. So such written—and in later times also printed—matter was taken from time to time to consecrated ground and buried; thus it perished.

It was by mere chance that the Cairo Geniza was forgotten and its contents so escaped the fate of other Genizas. **These old writings have been saved quite contrary to the intention of those who stored them there.**”<sup>61</sup> As you read this “prayer” in modern Jewish prayer

<sup>60</sup>Ibid. Bold mine.

<sup>61</sup>Paul E. Kahle, *The Cairo Geniza*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, © 1959, p. 4, used by permission. Bold and [ ] mine.

books,<sup>62</sup> you will see the word slanderers remains in the place of our discovery.



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<sup>62</sup>The words Nazarenes/*minim* have been replaced by the word slanderers in modern Jewish prayer books. The authorized daily prayer book by S. Singer reads as follows: "And for slanderers let there be no hope, and let all wickedness perish as in a moment; let all thine enemies be speedily cut off, and the dominion of arrogance do thou uproot and crush, cast down and humble speedily in our days. Blessed art thou, O Lord, who breakest the enemies and humblest the arrogant." F.F. Bruce, *The Spreading Flame*, p. 267.



The discovery of the century. The word *notzrim* (“Christians” in Hebrew) is circled in this reproduction of the Birkat ha-Minim discovered in the Cairo Geniza, at the Ben Ezra Synagogue in Cairo, Egypt.



### **BARRIER, WHAT BARRIER? THERE ARE SOME WHO DENY THAT THE SAGES OF YAVNE BUILT A BARRIER BETWEEN JESUS AND THE JEWS!**

Although some scholars may attempt to disprove<sup>63</sup> what we are about to quote, it is recorded history for those who accept the Talmud. This includes Orthodox Jews, who accept it totally, and nearly all the rest of the Jews, in addition to quite a few non-Jewish Bible students. Some teach that Yavne was not a breeding ground for building a barrier around Judaism, forcing the Jew who believed in the Messiah away from the mainstream Jewish community. However, we will present evidence quite to the contrary.

Many have asked, “Why would the rabbis want to keep the people from the Messiah, if it can be genuinely and Jewishly proven that Jesus is the Messiah?” Well, *answering* this question is one of the main purposes of our work. The answer is two-fold. The priests in the time of Jesus refused to accept Him because of their self-interest and corruption. A half-century later, the rabbis at Yavne decided that they had to save the Jews as a cultural group. This “cultural salvation” was, of course, considered more important than allowing the Messiah<sup>64</sup> to save the individual souls of the people. So, in essence, the rabbis made the decision to save the body of cultural Jewish heritage, which they incorrectly assumed was in danger, even at the expense of the Jewish soul. This was nothing short of spiritual suicide performed in the name of preserving Jewish culture, which was not, and never will be lost, even to the Jew who accepts Jesus as their Messiah, based on the fulfillments of Jewish prophecies.

### **BARRIER, WHAT BARRIER? TO GET STRAIGHT TO THE POINT, CUTTING OFF JESUS FROM THE JEW!**

The point of this segment is to illustrate how some Jewish historical writings were purposely created to build a barrier against Jesus as Messiah. Here is a quote from the Talmud to prove this point, though its reproduction here may be much to the dislike of Gentile liberal scholars and orthodox rabbis, as it clearly exposes the truth.

The Talmud tells us: “Once it happened that Rabbi Eleazar ben Dama was bitten by a snake, and Jacob of Kefar [James of the New Testament] Sama came to heal him in the name of Yeshua ben Pantera [rabbinical slang of that time for Jesus’ name]. Rabbi Ishmael would not permit it, saying: ‘Ben Dama, you are not allowed!’ He

<sup>63</sup>Men like Rabbi Asher Finkel and Steven Katz, whom we will soon review.

<sup>64</sup>Truly, the Jewish people had the door slammed on them by the Jewish leaders concerning knowledge of the Messiah.

answered: ‘But I can prove to you that it is permissible for him to heal me.’ However, before he could manage to cite his proof, he died. Rabbi Ishmael exclaimed: ‘Happy are you, ben Dama, because you have departed in peace without having broken down **the barrier erected by the Sages...**’<sup>65</sup>

Rabbi Ishmael believed that “the most fundamental prohibitions...may be violated to save a life.”<sup>66</sup> Thus, when he states “without having broken down the **barrier** erected by the sages,”<sup>67</sup> we know with certainty that he is talking about the barrier erected between the Jewish believers and the newly forged rabbinic Judaism, in order to separate Jews from Jesus, forever.

### WHY DO THEY ANSWER, “BARRIER, WHAT BARRIER?” BECAUSE THEY ARE AFRAID!

If you were to inquire about the rabbinical barrier built to keep the Messianic Jews away from the new mainstream Judaism created at Yavne by the rabbinical sages of the first century, most modern rabbis would say, “Barrier, what barrier? None of our people ever believed in Jesus. He was accepted by non-Jews.”<sup>68</sup>

These rabbis are either unaware of the more than a million Jews for Jesus who existed in the first century, or they are not willing to, or at least find it hard to admit, that such a movement existed! Why? Because they are either lacking in study or are afraid that Jews will begin to investigate the Jewishness of the Messianic movement, thus breaking down the barrier that was erected by the rabbinical sages, designed to sabotage the Jewish Messianic faith, which later led to a mainly non-Jewish church.

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65G. Alon, *The Jews in Their Land in the Talmudic Age*, p. 292. [ ] and bold mine.

66Ibid. [ ] mine.

67So we see in this passage that this poor rabbi lost his life because Rabbi Ishmael was afraid that if Jacob were to miraculously heal him in Jesus’ name, he might become a believer in Him and “break down the barrier of the sages.” These “sages” were none other than a small group of desperate rabbis at Yavne attempting to reformulate Judaism, even if it meant deceiving the Jewish people out of the Jewish Messiah. Some sages, wouldn’t you say?

68Read Rabbi Kaplan’s comments in *The Real Messiah* later in this chapter to see our point, that despite the fact that many Jews believed, it is still arrogantly denied by many modern rabbis.

### **RABBINIC WATERGATE—YAVNE AND TODAY! WHY DID THEY *COVER UP* THE COVER-UP?**

We cannot overemphasize that there has been a concerted effort to disguise the cover-up, though it has been concealed and kept quiet among popular readers throughout the centuries until today. In the Ashkenazic (European and American) Jewish prayer books, the words *minim* and Nazarenes (believers in Jesus from Nazareth) have been removed and in their place the word slanderers is found, as we read in a previous footnote.

In the Sephardic prayer books (used by Jews from Arab countries), the word *minim* is intact. However, the very obvious word, Nazarenes, is no longer there. In the Western world, a sizable Christian community has flourished since that era. In the Arab countries since Mohammed's time, where Christians were massacred wholesale, there were virtually none. In the non-Arab/Sephardic countries, the Jewish leaders of that time were challenged, with respect to the BHM and its reference to Christians by the word *minim*, in order to escape the issue of the early Jewish believers and the BHM's direct reference to Jesus' followers, the prayer book was edited.

Ray Pritz, a trusted friend and author of the scholarly book, *Nazarene Jewish Christianity*, affirms: "It has long been recognized that rabbinic self-censorship of anti-Christian material was more extensive in those countries where the church controlled civil life. This was clearly the case also with the excision of the words *minim* and *notzrim* in those areas where they had been added to the Twelfth Benediction"<sup>69</sup>

In countries like the United States, where there are so many who believe in Jesus as the Jewish Messiah, there is a fear among rabbis that their Jewish flock could be affected; therefore, they do not want there to be any possibility of their congregations becoming curious about Jesus as Messiah.<sup>70</sup> If evangelicals could point to the fact that the BHM was a device used by the rabbis of the first three centuries to chase the ancient Jews for Jesus from the synagogue, many Jews today might become curious and investigate why so many Jews of Jesus' day accepted Him as Messiah, in order to find out why this formula (BHM) was needed. Thus, long ago they removed this word *minim*, and have

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<sup>69</sup>Ray A. Pritz, quoted from this author's personal facsimile received from Jerusalem on Aug. 20, 1995.

<sup>70</sup>In our opinion, this is illustrated in the recent statement of Rabbi Aron Lieberman of Synagogue Inverrary-Chabad. "Any dialogue that relates to interfaith is destructive to the Jewish community as a whole." John Levitt: "Messianic Jews in shul? The rabbi invited them." *Broward Jewish Journal*, Dec. 31, 1992. We can certainly see why he has something to fear. If Jesus fulfilled Jewish prophecies in the Scriptures, folks might be led to the truth of Judaism—the Messiah Jesus—the discovery of the ages. This is not destructive, it is constructive.

not replaced it to this day,<sup>71</sup> hoping to conceal their cover-up of Jesus as Messiah in the early centuries.

### INDIRECT EVIDENCE OF THE ASHKENAZIC COVER-UP, BY WHAT THE SEPHARDIC JEWS *DID NOT DO*

In Arab countries, where there were virtually no believers in Jesus sharing their faith in Him as Messiah, there was no need to disguise their *cover-up*. Therefore, to this day, you can pick up a Sephardic prayer book and read *minim* in bold black letters in this benediction against those ancient Jews for Jesus who—let me say it clearly, so my opposition can hear, even if they don't like it—**existed in large, large numbers**.

There is still a reason to investigate. Could it be that Jesus was really the Messiah for the Jewish people? Oh, how true were the words of Douglas Hare when he said: “The Jewish practice of excommunication during the period under consideration is **shrouded in mystery**. Despite all that has been written on the subject....”<sup>72</sup>

In our opinion, the rabbis took great care to conceal what they were doing and hoped that their Messiah Conspiracy would not be detected by future generations. Of course, as you read this book, you will find that at the end of the twentieth century, their scandal has been brought to light!

We challenge you to read on and discover for yourself if Jesus is Messiah or not! We must ask ourselves, where is our end time leading? Will He return and save the approaching troubled twenty-first century from nuclear annihilation, as predicted by the prophets of the Old Testament and as He promised in the New Testament? Or are we headed blindly for destruction from a God who couldn't care less? I challenge you to read on concerning your very own future, covered extensively in the latter chapters of this work. You will not be disappointed.

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<sup>71</sup>If you are reading this book at a later date in the twenty-first century, it probably will not be worth your time to recheck the prayer books because we do not believe there will be any change, which would be the honest thing to do. Slanderers should be changed back to the word *minim* with a footnote as to who the *minim* were. For several hundred years, Jewish leaders have been free to replace this word with *minim*, explaining that they were Nazarenes, and have not.

<sup>72</sup>Douglas Hare, *The Theme of Jewish Persecution of Christians in the Gospel According to St. Matthew*, p. 48.

### THE HEBREW WORD, NAZARENE, IS THE KEY TO UNRAVELING ATTEMPTS TO OBSCURE THE CONSPIRACY

We know now that the term **Nazarene** was used in the BHM! However, there are those who would deny its widespread use, thus carrying the 2000-year-old conspiracy of Yavne into the present day!

Rabbi Asher Finkel, in his article, “Yavneh’s Liturgy and Early Christianity,” pathetically attempts to refute the fact that the BHM of the Cairo Geniza Amidah fragment (recently discovered and published by Solomon Schechter) had anything to do with an anti-Christian plot, on the basis that the word Nazarene was more or less only mentioned in *that* fragment and not in other copies of the Amidah prayer.

Our response to Mr. Finkel’s highly questionable hypothesis is that this is why we have documented this plot against the early Jewish believers—precisely because it is mentioned in only a few obscure and *recently* discovered copies! It was played down, altered, and covered up in later copies. As you have read, the modern Ashkenazic Jewish prayer books have been edited. They delete the words *minim* and Nazarene (“Christians”) and use “slanderers” in their place.

The mention of the word *notzrim*/Christians at least once is all the more proof of a documented conspiracy. After all, how many times does it take to document an event? Once! Once is enough—too much really!<sup>73</sup> Do you remember what Simon Greenleaf said about the witness of the opposition in our Resurrection section? Well, here it is again, in a twentieth century article on the BHM. This oppositional article attests to our conviction of just such a plot against the Jewish believers in Jesus. A plot which has lasted to this day and which must be overthrown! It is our hope and prayer that this book will be instrumental in helping to accomplish this. We ask all believers to pray that the Messiah Conspiracy be toppled in our decade!

### WHAT FINKEL ATTEMPTS TO ASSERT DOES NOT LINE UP WITH CONTEMPORARY SCHOLARSHIP

Portions of Finkel’s article read: “Contemporary scholarly consensus maintains that, while these Pharisaic leaders were putting their own house in order, they also set up fences against the burgeoning influence of early Christianity. Specifically, Rabban Gamaliel II introduced, through the standardization and emendation of the public synagogal prayer, a malediction against Jewish Christians. The twelfth edited liturgical piece of Yavneh reads, in the Palestinian recension of Genizah material: ‘Let the Nazarenes [Jewish Christians] and *minim* [a catch-all word for heretics] perish swiftly.

<sup>73</sup>Actually, we wish it had never happened, but it did.

Let them be blotted out of the Book of Life and let them not be inscribed with the righteous.’ Judaism, in its quest for survival, apparently was threatened by Christianity. In its response, Yavneh not only formulated a negative view of Christianity but purposely aimed at the exclusion of Christians from Jewish services. An act of excommunication was enforced by Yavneh’s missionary activities....The consensus still favors the view that ‘Nazarenes’ were included in the original<sup>[74]</sup> liturgical text and that Yavneh meant to designate Jewish Christians in the malediction. This central argument of Davies’ thesis will be demonstrated as historically untenable.

At the outset, it should be said one cannot present a historical case from sources argued retrojectively unless there is ample evidence for such a development. Secondly, one cannot simply collect various rabbinic statements on a particular question as evidence without examining them organically....One cannot assume that a reading of a late manuscript first published by S. Schechter as a Palestinian recension was the exact reading at the time of its inception....Yavneh amended the petition on the elimination of evildoers and the ‘insolent kingdom’ by the inclusion of ‘*minim*’ only....During the Yavneh period, a test for a ‘*min*’ in time of worship was not one’s faith in the Messiah...*minim* are like the idolators, barbarians, and Zoroastrians who reject monotheistic providence....**At Yavneh, no act of excommunication was employed against these Jewish Christians...**it was simply an intra-synagogal matter. The reference to epistulary action by the rabbis (Justin, *Dialogue* 108) does not indicate that Diaspora communities should introduce anti-Christian prayer or issue a ban against Christians, as scholars wish us to infer. It simply appeals to Jews to refrain from heated discussion with Christian missionaries....The original intent and meaning of the emended ‘so called’ malediction can be studied in the context of the other eleven benedictions, which comprise the middle section of the daily Jewish Prayer....The existential petitions appear as penultimate to the last six eschatological petitions....In light of the above discussion, Yavneh did not formulate an anti-Jewish Christian prayer. Rather, it defined an eschatological hope....”<sup>75</sup>

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74Despite Rabbi Finkel’s assertion, we have not only ample, but conclusive manuscript evidence! My friend, Dr. Ray A. Pritz, who presently works at the Bible Society as its director, documents the fact that: “In subsequent years further manuscripts came to light from widely scattered provenances which would seem to prove conclusively that a very early version of the *birkat ha-minim* (if not the original of Shmuel *ha-qatan*) contained the words *nôzrîm* and *minîm*. In 1907 Marx published a text of the Siddur of R. Amram Gaon. The manuscript dates from 1426 and reads והנוצרים יכלו כרגע (‘may the *nôzrîm* and *minîm* be destroyed in a moment.’) In 1925 another Geniza fragment was published with exactly the same words at the point in question of Schechter’s fragment.” Ray A. Pritz, *Nazarene Jewish Christianity*. The Magness Press, Hebrew University, 1988, p. 104, used by permission.

**DAVIS' ARGUMENT THAT JEWISH CHRISTIANS  
WERE DESIGNATED IN THE MALEDICTION IS  
VALIDATED BY RABBI SIGAL, DESPITE  
FINKEL'S FANTASIZED ASSERTION**

The Jewish scholar Rabbi Phillip Sigal, in his book, *The Emergence of Contemporary Judaism*, in his appendix entitled, "The Impact of Christianity at Yavne," tells us: "During the last three decades of the first century CE the rabbinic academy at Jabneh issued a significant number of decisions, whose intention was to bring unity to Jewish worship and practice. If the assumption is correct that Jewish Christians were actively seeking converts to their messianic faith within the synagogue communities of Palestine and the Diaspora, it appears probable that some of the actions taken at Jabneh were directed against the Christians, whose sectarian activity threatened the unity of the Jewish community."

W. D. Davies is one of the few contemporary scholars who has made a serious attempt to assess the Christian influence at Jabneh. His section entitled 'Jamnia' in *The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount* (1964) remains unsurpassed....If a good case could be made for the view that *nosrim* did not occur in the original form of the benediction prepared by Samuel the Small but was added later and/or elsewhere than at Jabneh, or that *nosrim* refers not to Jewish Christians but to some other Jewish sect, then it could be argued that the central element in Davies' argument has been demolished. The consensus, however, still favors the view that *nosrim* was part of the original text, and that it did designate Jewish Christians."<sup>76</sup>

**DR. PRITZ AND RASHI HELP US TO QUESTION  
RABBI FINKEL'S MODERN ATTEMPT TO  
COVER UP YAVNE'S BHM CONSPIRACY**

What Rabbi Finkel infers, or rather states, is that because the original copy of the BHM (formulated at Yavne) has yet to be found, we may assume that the word Nazarene may not have been there. Thus, there was no plot against the early Jewish believers in Jesus. His defense is that the fragment found was a late one. However, the fragment is one of the earliest to be discovered,<sup>77</sup> and the fact that it was first published by Solomon Schechter in 1925 is meaningless

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<sup>75</sup>Rabbi Asher Finkel, "Yavneh's Liturgy and Early Christianity," *The Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, Spring 1981, pp. 232-233, 235, 237, 239, 241, 243-246. Bold mine.

<sup>76</sup>Phillip Sigal, *The Emergence of Contemporary Judaism*. Pittsburgh: The Pickwick Press, © 1980, pp. 297-298, used by permission.

<sup>77</sup>Dr. Pritz, whose field of study lies squarely within this area, informed me in a letter from Jerusalem in 1993, that: "The oldest dated document found in the geniza was from the mid-eighth century." This is an extremely early copy by archaeological standards.

within the context of our thesis! The fact that Solomon Schechter was actually an unbiased Jewish scholar is a point in our favor, as evidence that there was a carefully devised Jewish rabbinical conspiracy against the Jewish believers in Messiah.

All things aside, even Rashi, the highly revered rabbi of the eleventh century, admitted the reason for the BHM when he said: “They revised it at Yavne after a long time in the vicinity of the teaching of the *nôzri*...”<sup>78</sup>

I owe this piece of knowledge to a dear friend of mine, Dr. Ray A. Pritz, who is presently the director of the Bible Society in Jerusalem. In his book, *Nazarene Jewish Christianity*, Ray documented what is clearly an irrefutable proof in a comment by Rashi, in a section of the Talmud which, itself, was later covered up and censored. Ray documents: “In the first Venice printing of the Talmud we find this comment by Rashi (missing in later, censored editions) at Brachot 30a (=28b in today’s pagination): ‘They revised it’ [The ancient Jewish eighteen benediction Amidah synagogue prayer by adding a curse (No. 12) against the Jewish believers in Jesus]...at Yavne after a long time in the vicinity of the teaching of the *nôzri* [Jesus], who taught to overturn [in Rashi’s warped opinion] the ways of the living God.”<sup>79</sup>

### **RASHI EXPOSES RABBI FINKEL’S DOUBLE STANDARD WITHIN THIS CONSPIRACY**

It is also interesting that Rabbi Finkel mentions nearly a dozen Christian scholars in reference to what he calls “his widely accepted thesis.” At the same time he conveniently fails to mention some of the unbiased Jewish scholars who agree with us, many of whom are quoted in this chapter—this includes our friend, Rashi.

Now we can say without a guilty conscience, “Rabbi Finkel, you can hang it up!” Even the famed Rashi (Rabbi Shlomo Hisaki) of the eleventh century testified against you nearly, 1000 years ago.

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<sup>78</sup>Ray A. Pritz, *Nazarene Jewish Christianity*, p. 104.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid. [ ] mine. “See *Halakhot Gedolot*, ed. Hildesheimer, Berlin 5652, p. 27. The editor notes that his ms. contains a marginal note: ‘*Birkat ha-Minim* was introduced after Yeshua ben Pandera, when heretics became numerous.’” G. Alon, *The Jews in Their Land in the Talmudic Age*, p. 290. In his book *Christianity in Talmud & Midrash*, (1903), Herford documents that Yeshua ben Pandera was a derogatory and sarcastic Hebrew name for Jesus.



**DOES RABBI FINKEL ATTEMPT TO DENY THE  
CONSPIRACY SO JESUS WILL REMAIN  
CLOAKED IN “CHRISTIAN CLOTHES,” TO  
CIRCUMVENT JEWISH INTEREST?**

We ask why Rabbi Finkel has continued to deny something that even Rashi admitted nearly 1000 years ago. Well, we have seen how even that admission was concealed and censored. Why? We believe that such knowledge will arouse interest in the person of Jesus in light of His true historical Messianic Jewish acceptance. An honest investigation into this forbidden subject might prove dangerous to the rabbis’ desires to stonewall the Messianic credentials of Jesus and perpetuate the continued rejection of Him among the Jewish youth of today.

Oh, what tragedy, what shame, and what judgment lies ahead for these who would, in many cases, deliberately try to hide the truth from their own people. For what? A doctrine of ego—assimilation. Is that worth eternal life? God will certainly judge these men seriously. He warns in Proverbs: “An ungodly witness scorneth judgment: and the mouth of the wicked devoureth iniquity” (Prov. 19:28 KJV).

Jesus once said of those who would cause little children to be misled: “...‘It is inevitable that stumbling blocks should come, but woe to him through whom they come! It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea, than that he should cause one of these little ones to stumble’ ” (Luke 17:1-2 NASB).

**IS THERE ANOTHER “FINK” HIDING  
IN THE THEOLOGICAL JOURNALS?**

In 1984, Steven Katz wrote an article on Yavne entitled “Issues in the Separation of Judaism and Christianity After 70 C.E.: A Reconsideration.” In our opinion, this article is very similar to Rabbi Finkel’s in that it attempts to blatantly deny the obvious! At one point, Katz remarks: “One would expect to find a better indication of Jewish propaganda, to the extent that it existed, in the Jewish sources, namely, Mishna, Tosefta, and the Tannaitic Midrashim. However, these sources contain almost no references at all to Jesus or to early Jewish Christianity.”<sup>80</sup>

We remind our readers that almost is not all; it either does contain a mention of Jesus or it does not! If it does not, you do have a

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<sup>80</sup>Steven T. Katz, “Issues in the Separation of Judaism and Christianity After 70 C.E.: A Reconsideration,” *Journal of Biblical Literature*. Mar. 1984, Dartmouth College, © used by permission.

point. If it does contain even one mention, you **do not** have a point. So what is the use in saying “almost no mention of Jesus”? It is like saying, “I am almost a virgin.” Katz’s arguments, upon close examination, are obviously absurd; especially when you stand them up against the documentation in this book. They fall down.

When I looked up this article at the Pitts Theological Library at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, the ATLA Religion database printed out a descriptive comment under the article listing, which read: “Note: The article re-examines the main arguments that have been put forward regarding claims of official Jewish persecution of early Christians. Based on the rabbinic sources, these claims are examined and, in general, **shown to be without foundation despite the long tradition in Christian apologetic and scholarly circles to the contrary.**”<sup>81</sup> Suffice it to say that the latter comment is appreciated for its honesty in making a truthful point of scholarship for us.

### THEY SAY A CAT HAS NINE LIVES—WE URGE KATZ TO FIND TRUTH IN HIS ONE, BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE!

Katz, like his predecessor Finkel, suggestively denies that the BHM mentioned *notzrim* (“Jewish Christians”), as the recently discovered Schechter fragment has clearly indicated! Without foundation, Katz arrogantly writes: “...the rabbinic evidence suggests a concern with heretical groups and manifestations that is broader in scope than Jewish (or Gentile) Christianity. As a consequence, the tendency to see Jewish Christianity as a major or even primary concern of the sages must be tempered, even rejected....with regard to method....we should not overestimate the importance of Christianity to the sages at Yavneh and, reading backwards, impute into their age, work, and consciousness the later significance of Christianity....Our investigation justifies the conclusion that the Yavnean sages were not overly preoccupied with Jewish Christianity<sup>[82]</sup>....one can suggest with

81 Bold and Italics mine.

82 In response to Katz’s off-the-wall statement insinuating a nonchalant attitude of the Yavnean rabbis in their concern about Jewish believers in Jesus, we ask, “Were the Jewish Christians so numerous, with biblical Jewish proof of the truth of their faith, that they became a large enough threat to warrant that rabbis send out letters worldwide (containing copies of the BHM) to all synagogues in an effort to convince universal Jewry that the believer’s faith was an untrue heresy?” Douglas Hare comments: “The insertion of the *Birkath ha-Minim* into the Eighteen Benedictions is clear proof that the rabbinic authorities regarded Christianity as a threat to a beleaguered Jewry. Even without further evidence it should be assumed that notice of this liturgical innovation was transmitted to synagogues throughout the Diaspora. We are not limited to assumptions, however. We have the testimony of Justin that selected men were sent out from Jerusalem ‘into all the world’ *εἰς πᾶσαν τὴν λῆν* to report the outbreak of the Christian heresy. In addition we have the evidence of Tos. Sanh. 2:6 that letters were on

confidence that the Yavneans....text did not include an explicit reference to *Notzrim*. Instead, in all probability, it addressed itself to ‘outsiders’ (*perushim*)...and the ‘arrogant of the nations’ (*zedim*)....and as such the entire role of the *Birkat ha-Minim* in the history of Jewish-Christian relations must be rethought....there was no official anti-Christian policy at Yavneh or elsewhere before the Bar Kochba revolt and no total separation between Jews and Christians before (if immediately after?) the Bar Kochba revolt....despite strong claims to the contrary, the *Birkat ha-Minim* did *not* signal any decisive break between Jews and Jewish Christians.”<sup>83</sup>

### KATZ TRIES TO ADOPT A DIFFERENT SOLUTION TO THE ANTI-JEWISH CHRISTIAN BHM, BUT PROFESSOR ALON BRINGS HIM BACK DOWN TO EARTH

Katz further writes: “Had Justin, writing within two decades of the Bar Kochba revolt, cited the form of the *Birkat ha-Minim* that includes the term ‘Nazarenes,’ it would have provided strong grounds for a direct link of this prayer with Jewish Christianity. The lack of such a mention suggests the need for a different solution regarding the *Birkat ha-Minim*.”<sup>84</sup> We remind our readers what the scholar, G. Alon, has documented of Justin and Jerome: “...Justin Martyr, born a pagan at what is now Nablus at the end of the first century. In his ‘Dialogue With Trypho’, written around the year 150, he says: ‘You Jews pronounce maledictions on the Christians in your synagogues’....more direct testimony comes from Epiphanius, who writes that the Jews denounce the *Nazarenes* in their prayers three times a day.’ Note that he speaks only of *Jewish* Christians (Nazarenes). And Jerome, in his Commentary on Isaiah, chapter 52, verse 4, says practically the same thing.

That was about all we knew until 1925, when the question was settled by the discovery of Genizah fragments containing portions of the liturgy according to the ancient Palestinian rite. In these versions, *Birkat ha-Minim* reads like this: May the apostates have no hope, unless they return to Thy Torah, and may the Nazarenes and the Minim disappear in a moment. May they be erased from the book of life, and not be inscribed with the righteous.

The provenance of this text, which calls down wrath on...Nazarenes and *Minim*—leaves little room for doubt that we are

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at least one other occasion sent out to all the Diaspora communities on the subject of liturgical matters.” Douglas Hare, *The Theme of Jewish Persecution of Christians in the Gospel According to St. Matthew*, p. 65.

<sup>83</sup>Steven T. Katz, “Issues in the Separation of Judaism and Christianity After 70 C.E.: A Reconsideration,” *Journal of Biblical Literature*, pp. 61-62, 66, 62, 68-69, 72.

<sup>84</sup>Ibid, p. 71.

looking at something very close to the original formulation as laid down in the days of Rabban Gamaliel. The wording might give the impression that Nazarenes are one thing and *Minim* another; or that *Minim* is a generic term for schismatics. But that can scarcely be true; for why would Rabban Gamaliel have reacted to any heresy except one that posed a special threat in his own time? There was nothing new about non-Pharisaic sects like the Sadducees. They and others had been numerous in Temple days.

We must therefore assume that in this liturgical fragment, *Minim* and *Notzrim* are synonymous, and that both refer to the Jewish Christians. The assumption is borne out by Jerome, who writes that in his lifetime (4th to 5th centuries) there was a sect of Jews called *Minim*—also known as Nazarenes.<sup>85</sup>

### **IS KATZ A CO-CONSPIRATOR? WE MAY NEVER KNOW, UNTIL . . .**

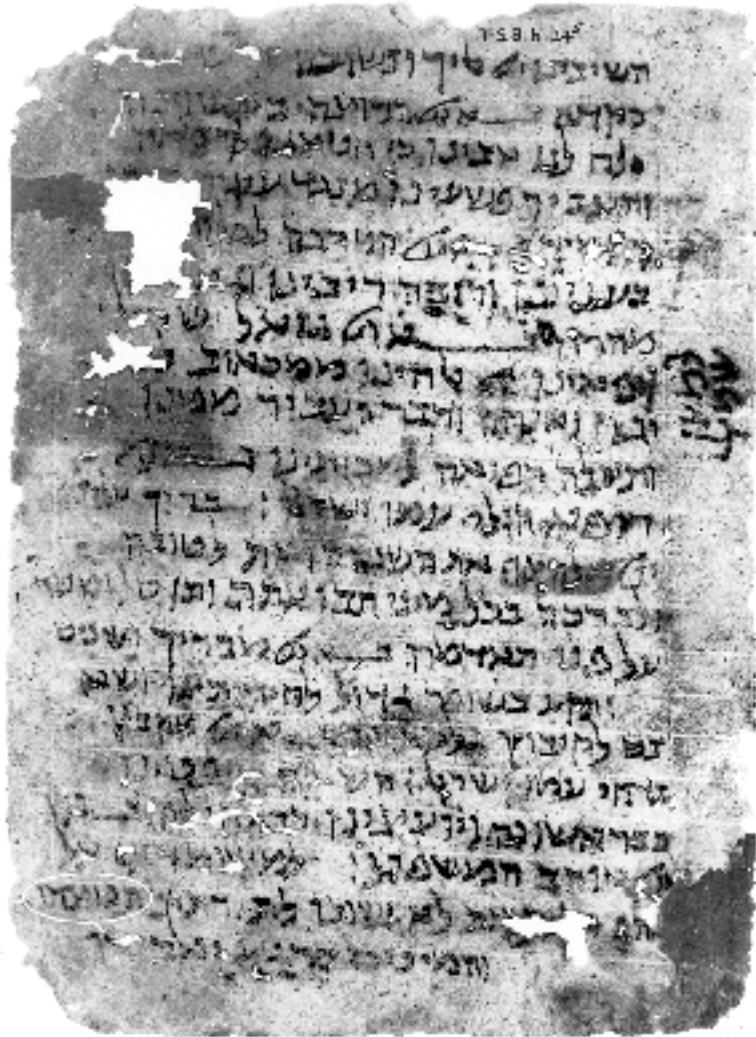
These men (Justin and Jerome), specifically alluded to the BHM in reference to Christians being cursed. The Amidah prayer containing the eighteen benedictions (the twelfth being the BHM) was recited three times a day! The blindness of Katz eludes us! And I bet it eludes you, too!

We believe he should reconsider his reconsideration! Unless, of course, he knows better, and is himself a co-conspirator in the present attempt at a Messiah Conspiracy cover-up. Could it be? You may never know! Until the return of the Messiah, of course.

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<sup>85</sup>G. Alon, *The Jews in Their Land in the Talmudic Age*, pp. 289-290.



In fragment T-S.8.H.24<sup>5</sup> of the Birkat ha-Minim, the word *notzrim*, which targets Christians, is almost unreadable, as previously illustrated. However, with the use of ultraviolet photography, this word can be clearly identified, as you see in this photograph.<sup>86</sup> This document, one of the most interesting in history, now stares its readers in the face, as we have exposed its creator's intent. The "prayer's" author is guilty before all. His true purpose is revealed; an attempt to systematically neutralize Jewish believers in Jesus as Messiah.

<sup>86</sup>Previous three photographs, courtesy of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library.

Prior to its discovery in 1925, many snickered<sup>87</sup> at the reports of Justin Martyr and other witnesses who, writing a generation after Jesus left the earth, recorded that the rabbis *sent special men out from Jerusalem into all the world*<sup>88</sup> for the attempted elimination of “Jews for Jesus,” if you please, from the synagogue.

### AN INTERESTING PARTY AROUND THE MICROFILM PROJECTOR AT THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

When I asked several individuals at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, in the Givat Ram library to translate Schechter’s fourth century BHM for me from the microfilm projector,<sup>89</sup> they were shocked. When they read the word *notzrim* (Jewish Christians), one professor asked me, “What are you studying?” Another library attendant asked, with a dumbfounded look on his face, “What are you going to do with this?” As they encircled me and the microfilm screen displaying the Cambridge Schechter fragment,<sup>90</sup> I answered, “I am going to publish it.” Then Benjamin, from the archives department, gave me an order form for the Cambridge Geniza Research Unit in England. I filled it out, and shortly thereafter received the prints of the fragment you saw.

That is how I came to retrieve this treasure for you! It was interesting and unforgettable! I might add that in all of the journals, articles, books and literature I have searched through over the past twelve years, I never once saw a photo of the Schechter fragment. You have a true rarity before you; a treat few have ever laid eyes on.

The word, “Christian” (*Notzri*), was removed from the prayer after Jewish Christians were no longer considered a threat. Today, most modern Hebrew Jewish readers have not seen this word, and most are not aware it existed in earlier copies of the synagogue prayer, just

as many are not aware of the fact that there was an incredibly large number of Jewish believers in Jesus’ Messiahship frequenting the

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<sup>87</sup>Ray A. Pritz, *Nazarene Jewish Christianity*, p. 102.

<sup>88</sup>Justin Martyr, of the late first and early second centuries, attested: “...you appointed chosen men and sent them into all the civilized world, proclaiming that ‘a certain godless and lawless sect has been raised by one Jesus of Galilee, a deceiver, whom we crucified, but His disciples stole Him by night from the tomb, where He had been laid after being unnailed from the cross, and they deceive men, saying that He is risen from the dead and has ascended into heaven’....the priests and teachers of your people have caused His name to be profaned and blasphemed throughout the whole earth.” A. Lukyn Williams, *Justin Martyr, The Dialogue With Trypho*, pp. 224, 242.

<sup>89</sup>At that time in the late 1980’s, my Hebrew was not what it is today, so I asked for assistance.

<sup>90</sup>I wish to thank my friend Shosh Basson, the librarian for the Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts, for retrieving this important BHM document we were viewing earlier that day.

synagogues in the first and second centuries.<sup>91</sup> If the rabbis would openly admit this, they would have to contend with Jews who are becoming increasingly more curious about the question of Jesus.<sup>92</sup>

### A JEWISH PROFESSOR COMES CLEAN WITH THE BIRKAT HA-MINIM

Lawrence H. Schiffman, professor of Hebrew and Judaic studies at New York University, wrote the book, *Who Was A Jew? Rabbinic and Halakhic Perspectives on the Jewish-Christian Schism*, in 1985. In his book, he attempts to tell it the way it was, with honesty, in relation to the BHM controversy. On the back cover of his work, it is written: "In recent years the issue of 'Who is a Jew?' has become predominant in the Jewish community both in America and Israel. This book masterfully explains the relationship between *halakhah* and the issue of 'Who Was a Jew,' showing that the Jewish-Christian schism was a result of the halakhic definition of Jewish identity. Using Talmudic sources, Professor Schiffman examines the *halakhah* governing the Jew by birth...and the Rabbinic reaction to the early Christians, and discusses the narratives illustrating Rabbinic contact with Jewish Christians. He concludes that the Christians were regarded initially by the Rabbis as *minim*, Jews who had heretical beliefs....This book is required reading for both historians of Judaism and Christianity and those who would seek to formulate educated views about the issue of Jewish status in contemporary times."<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>91</sup>David Chernoff, in his publication, *7 Steps to Knowing the God of Abraham, Isaac & Jacob*, noted that estimates of the number of Jewish believers in Jesus in the first century run as high as "one million Messianic Jews." His pamphlet is available through MMI Publishing Co., POB 1024, Havertown, PA, USA 19083.

<sup>92</sup>Dr. Kac notes of Professor Pinchas Lapide: "According to Lapide a 'Jesus wave' is now passing through Judaism. In proof of this he states that in the first twenty-seven years following the reconstitution of the present State of Israel 187 Hebrew books, research articles, poems, dissertations and essays have been written about Jesus. More has been written in Hebrew about Jesus in the last twenty-five years than in all the eighteen previous centuries." Arthur W. Kac, *The Messiahship of Jesus*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, © 1980, p. 76, used by permission.

<sup>93</sup>Lawrence Schiffman, *Who Was a Jew? Rabbinic and Halakhic Perspectives on the Jewish-Christian Schism*. New York: KTAV Publishing House, Inc., © 1985, p. back cover, used by permission.

**UNLIKE SOME, PROFESSOR SCHIFFMAN ADMITS  
THAT THE CAIRO GENIZA DISCOVERY ELUCIDATES THE  
IDENTIFICATION OF THE *MINIM* AS JEWISH CHRISTIANS**

Professor Schiffman tells us: “A number of tannaitic restrictions directed against *minim* clearly refer to the early Jewish Christians, as can be shown from their content and date. These regulations show how the Rabbis attempted to combat those beliefs which they regarded as outside the Jewish pale while never rejecting the Jewishness of those who held them....Indeed, this benediction probably went a long way toward making the Jewish Christians feel unwelcome in the synagogue and causing them to worship separately.

A *baraita*’ in B. Berakhot 28bf. states: Our Rabbis taught: Simeon Ha-Paqoli ordered the Eighteen Benedictions before Rabban Gamliel at Yavneh. Rabban Gamliel said to the Sages: Is there no one who knows how to compose a benediction against the *minim*? Samuel Ha-Qatan stood up and composed it. Another year (while serving as precentor), he (Samuel Ha-Qatan) forgot it and tried to recall it for two or three hours, yet they did not remove him.

Despite some ingenious claims to the contrary, the Gamliel of our *baraita*’ is Rabban Gamliel II of Yavneh in the post-destruction period. Simeon Ha-Paqoli set the Eighteen Benedictions in order before Rabban Gamliel as part of the general effort at Yavneh to fix and standardize *halakhah*. Rabban Gamliel (II) asked for a volunteer to compose the benediction against the *minim*....In a later year, he was called upon to serve as precentor. In the course of the service, he was unable to recite the benediction against the *minim*. Nonetheless, even after several hours of trying to recall it, the Rabbis did not remove him as precentor.

B. Berakhot 29a asks why he was not removed. After all, it was the purpose of this blessing to ensure that the precentor was not one of those heretics cursed in the benediction. The Talmud answers that since Samuel Ha-Qatan had himself composed it, it could be assumed that he was not a *min*.

Since the term *min* can refer at different times to various forms of heresy that threatened Rabbinic Judaism in Talmudic times, it is essential to clarify who the *minim* of this benediction are. Palestinian texts of the Eighteen Benedictions from the Cairo Genizah present us with a text of the benediction which elucidates the identification of the *minim*: For the apostates may there be no hope unless they return to Your Torah. As for the *noserim* and the *minim*, may they perish immediately. Speedily may they be erased from the Book of Life and



may they not be registered among the righteous. Blessed are You, O Lord, Who subdues the wicked.

While other specimens of the Palestinian liturgy show slight variation, the *noserim*, (usually translated ‘Christians’) and *minim* are included in the best texts of this benediction. Some may wish to debate whether the *noserim* and *minim* here mentioned are to be taken as one group or two. Yet the fact remains that the *noserim* were included with apostates and heretics in the Genizah documents.

May we assume that this version of the benediction represents the text as it was recited by Samuel Ha-Qatan before the sages of Yavneh? On the one hand, the Palestinian liturgical material found in the Cairo Genizah generally preserves the traditions of Palestinian Jewry in the amoraic period. On the other hand, there may be external evidence that this benediction was recited during the tannaitic period and that it included explicit reference to *noserim*.<sup>94</sup>

**PROFESSOR SCHIFFMAN ADMITS THAT *YOU CANNOT ESCAPE THE PRESENT EVIDENCE THAT THE PASSAGE OF THE BHM WAS ALREADY BEING RECITED IN THE SECOND CENTURY IN REFERENCE TO BELIEVERS***

Schiffman also mentions: “Three passages in the Gospel of John (9:22, 12:42, 16:2) mention the expulsion of Christians from the synagogue. The Gospel of John was most probably not composed until at least the last decade of the first century. The actual setting of the Gospel is not known, although some would place it in a Syrian or Palestinian milieu. The most we can conclude from John is that the community to which it was directed *may* have already been subject to the benediction against the *minim* when this book was composed.

Justin Martyr, writing in the middle of the second century C.E., in his Dialogue with Tryphon referred several times to the cursing of Christians in the synagogue. Justin castigates his interlocutor Trypho as follows (XVI): For you slew the just one (Jesus) and his prophets before him, and now you...dishonour those that set their hope on him, and God Almighty and Maker of the Universe that sent him, cursing in your synagogues them that believe in Christ....he appeals to the Jews in CXXXVII not to revile Jesus: As the rulers of your synagogues teach you, after the prayer.

It is difficult to escape the conclusion that these passages are a polemical and confused reflection of the recitation of the *birkat ha-minim* in the synagogues of Palestine (Justin grew up in Samaria). These passages present evidence that some version of the benediction

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<sup>94</sup>Ibid, pp. 54-56.

was already recited in the mid-second century C.E. and that it included explicit reference to the Christians.

Similar testimony comes from Origen (c. 185-c. 254 C.E.), who accuses Jews of blaspheming and cursing Jesus and in another passage says: Enter the synagogue of the Jews and see Jesus flagellated by those with the language of blasphemy....Explicit reference, however, comes from Epiphanius and Jerome. Epiphanius (c. 315-403 C.E.), speaking of the Nazoraeans, a Judaizing Christian sect, says: ...the people also stand up in the morning, at noon, and in the evening, three times a day and they pronounce curses and maledictions over them when they say their prayers in the synagogues. Three times a day they say: 'May God curse the Nazoraeans.' <sup>95</sup>

### **A RABBI WHO KNOWS HIS HISTORY AND HIS NEW TESTAMENT, PULLS BACK THE CURTAIN ON YAVNE**

In 1985, Rabbi Phillip Sigal, of Grand Rapids, Michigan, known for his great wisdom regarding Judaism and the New Testament, wrote *Judaism, The Evolution of a Faith*. This work was published three years later. In it, Sigal helps us peel away the sheath covering up the true events at Yavne in connection with the Hebrew Christian. This contradicts Rabbi Finkel and others who would have us believe that it is all "make-believe." Sigal tells us: "Yohanan's segment of the proto-rabbinic movement remained aloof from the rebellion of 66 C.E., as did Christian Jews. It attempted to still the stormy waters of a new rising tide of militancy after 73 C.E. but failed. As it failed, the position of apolitical Christian Jews became precarious. When Yohanan was deposed as leader of the academy at Yabneh, the fate of Christian Judaism as a variant form of Judaism was sealed. The irony of this particular development is that the person behind the expulsion of Christians from the synagogue was Rabbi Gamaliel II, grandson of Gamaliel I, who saved Peter from potential disaster before the Sanhedrin (Acts 5:34-35)....Yohanan ben Zakkai and his Yabnean associates did nothing less than restate the theology of Judaism....Yabneh was the center of great liturgical development. Prayers of old were brought together, recast, and joined with newly composed prayers, and a fixed form of worship was arranged....It is clear that Yohanan set in motion the mechanism of consolidation and the restatement of Judaic theology. But Yohanan was ousted from leadership sometime between 80 and 90 C.E., when the Romans saw fit to bestow government-backed authority upon Gamaliel II, naming him Nasi (president or prince) at Yabneh. This erstwhile supporter of

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<sup>95</sup>Ibid, pp. 56-57.

anti-Roman policies in the late 60s thus became presiding rabbi at Yabneh....As soon as **Gamaliel II** assumed authority he **moved against Christians**, and sometime between 90 and 100 C.E. he had the *amidah* redacted to include a paragraph that invoked God's curse upon all sectarians including *notzrim*, Christians. **This change made it impossible for a Christian to pray in a synagogue.** In addition, Gamaliel sent out letters for the expulsion of Christians from synagogues that led to the permanent fissure in Judaism between Rabbinic Judaism and Christianity....This anti-Christian clause has long been removed from the *amidah*....The major source of irritation to Gamaliel II was the Christian Jewish movement, and as noted, he saw to their exclusion."<sup>96</sup>

### RABBI SIGAL'S CREDENTIALS—IMPRESSIVE

Rabbi Sigal has admitted to a fact that many rabbis dare not! We praise him for his unbiased honesty in our quest to uncover the Messiah Conspiracy! Marilyn Schaub of Duquesne University makes an impressive comment on the back cover of Rabbi Sigal's book: "His rare qualification as both rabbinic and Christian Testament scholar makes his discussion of the relationship between Judaism and Christianity **particularly valuable**. The book should have wide appeal...."<sup>97</sup>

One comment from the cover flap of this wonderful rabbi's book states: "As both rabbi and New Testament scholar, Sigal pays particular attention to the relationship between Judaism and Christianity. His unique perspective illuminates the Jewish matrix which gave birth to Christianity, and his analysis, including some original interpretations, explores both the tensions and the ongoing interaction between the two faiths....Phillip Sigal was Rabbi of Congregation Ahavas Israel in Grand Rapids, Michigan, until his death in 1985."<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>96</sup>Phillip Sigal, *Judaism, The Evolution of a Faith*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., © 1988, pp. 67, 93-95, used by permission. Bold mine.

<sup>97</sup>Ibid, p. back cover. Bold mine.

<sup>98</sup>Ibid, p. cover flap.

### **A BRILLIANT ISRAELI PROFESSOR TAKES THE LID OFF THE BARREL OF THE CONSPIRACY AT YAVNE**

In the summer of 1987, *Immanuel*, an Israeli journal of religious thought and research, published a fascinating and revealing, albeit technical article on the subject of changes which took place at Yavne; changes which deliberately targeted Jewish Christians. This article is extremely important and most revealing because, in addition to its comments on the BHM, it mentions that the *et zemah* Davidic Messianic blessing was removed in order to stifle the Christian movement among Jews. Again, this is something only coming to light in this century, as presented by Dr. Liebes!

The article is also amazing in that it mentions hidden Christian influence in Jewish blessings as they are presently recited; a fact revealed only recently in an honest manner by its author, Yehudah Liebes, who is a Jewish Israeli professor at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Since Liebes is not a believer, these credentials provide us with an unbiased viewpoint. We found it of such interest that we will quote Liebes at length. Though it may be four pages, it will prove extremely enlightening to the uninformed Jewish readers who desire to put the last nails in the coffins of the arguments used by Rabbis Finkel and Katz. Their teachings are clearly outdated by the brilliant and enlightened Professor Liebes, who helped us remove the lid from the barrel of the Messiah Conspiracy!

### **EARLY ON, JEWS FOR JESUS AND THE REST OF THE JEWS WORSHIPPED IN THE SAME SYNOGOGUE UNTIL THE *ET ZEMAH* BLESSING CAME INTO QUESTION**

Dr. Liebes tells us: "...the earliest Christians did not separate themselves from the community of Israel, but worshipped in the same synagogues, and even served as prayer leaders. One may therefore conclude that, during the first generation following Jesus, these Jews were not yet rejected nor perceived as a danger (the above mishnah was written at a later period). Essentially, there was no disagreement between them and other Jews save that concerning the identity of the Messiah, which was the kind of question over which internal Jewish disagreement was acceptable—much as there was disagreement on this score between R. Akiba and R. Johanan ben Torta concerning the messianic claims of Bar Kokhba. True, the Christians believed that their messiah had already left this world, but this did not affect their basic hope for the coming of the Messiah and the national redemption. As we know from many documents, the essential belief of the Jewish Christians crystallized around their hope for the Second Coming of

Jesus, and through him the redemption of Israel....It was natural enough that the Jewish Christians should wish to introduce a change into that prayer dealing with the coming of the Messiah son of David namely, the blessing *Et Zemah*. What could be more natural than a Christian attempt to mention the name of Jesus within the framework of this blessing? Thus, the formula *mazmiah qeren le-David* was replaced by *mazmiah qeren yeshuah*. In so doing, the Jewish Christians did not intend to alter the original intention of this blessing, but merely to reinterpret it in light of their own views, utilizing the then-accepted option to vary the formulae of blessings. Neither did they remove David's name from the blessing entirely, but they retained the opening formula, 'the shoot of David your servant speedily cause to blossom...'; they saw no reason to eliminate this, as they considered Jesus as the Davidic messiah. Nevertheless, the name of Jesus, which they alluded to in the word *yeshuah* ('salvation') in the concluding formula, and possible also in the body of the blessing, was stressed more than that of David....<sup>99</sup>

**PROFESSOR LIEBES TELLS US THE SECRET REASON THE RABBIS REACTED AGAINST THE JEWISH BELIEVERS AT YAVNE, BY REMOVING A CRITICAL HEBREW BLESSING**

"There was also a ritual expression to this break. The Sanhedrin, convened under the leadership of Rabban Gamaliel II in Yavneh at the beginning of the second century, introduced a number of changes directed against the Christians within the text of the prayers. The most striking and best-known of these changes was the introduction of *Birkat ha-Minim* as a separate, independent blessing, which was reformulated in an anti-Christian manner. According to the text of the Palestinian liturgy discovered in the Cairo genizah, this blessing speaks explicitly against the 'apostates' and 'Christians'....But this was not the only change introduced in the prayer book at that time. At that time the blessing *et zemah* was removed from the prayer book, and from then on this blessing was no longer recited in the Palestinian ritual. This omission was not performed, as thought by some, to preserve the total number of eighteen blessings following the introduction of *Birkat ha-Minim*; such a reason would be inadequate justification for

<sup>99</sup>Yehudah Liebes, "Who Makes the Horn of Jesus to Flourish," *Immanuel*, No. 21, Summer 1987. Israel: The Ecumenical Theological Research Fraternity in Israel and The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rithin, pp. 56-58, © used by permission. Liebes' original and unabridged Hebrew article was originally published in *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought*, iii, © 1984, pp. 313-348. Professor Liebes presently teaches in the Department of Jewish Thought at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Israel.

eliminating from the prayer text an important blessing, dealing with such a central principle as the coming of the Messiah....The main motivation for the elimination of *et zemaḥ* was the same as that which led to the introduction of *Birkat ha-Minim*—namely, the distancing of Christianity. The sages knew that the Jewish Christians expressed their belief in Jesus in this blessing, and that one of its most widespread concluding formulae was even introduced by the Christians as an allusion to the name of their Messiah—as were also, possibly, the references to *yeshu'ah* in the body of the blessing. Therefore, they decided at Yavneh to eliminate this blessing entirely, with all the associations involved in it. This is not merely a theoretical conjecture, but is based upon the evidence of a midrash preserved in Numbers Rabba. This midrash states that two blessings of the Amidah—*Birkat ha-Minim* and *et zemaḥ*—are excluded from the rubric of 'Forgive all iniquity and accept that which is good (tov)' (Hosea 14:3—*Tov* in gematria equals 17, which is the number of blessings left in the Amidah after one removes the above two), as it was introduced 'after' Jesus Christ—that is, because of him or on his account. While Jesus' name is not explicitly mentioned in this midrash, it may clearly be inferred there, not only because the subject and matter and the context require it, but also because of certain exact linguistic parallels in which his name is mentioned as such, albeit not in connection with *et zemaḥ* but only in relation to *Birkat ha-Minim*.

Another anti-Christian ritual change was made at Yavneh. Following the elimination of *et zemaḥ David*, no reference to King David remained in the Amidah. This was the opposite of the intention of the rabbis of Yavneh, whose main complaint against the Christians was precisely that they had removed David's name from the conclusion of the blessing *et zemaḥ*, substituting for it the name of their messiah. Thus, those making these changes felt the need to restore David to his rightful place. But this could no longer be done in the separate blessing of *et zemaḥ*, because of its association with heresy; instead, the name of David was added to the previous blessing, concluding the blessing for Jerusalem with the formula, *Elohei David u-voney Yerushalayim* ('God of David, who rebuilds Jerusalem'). The Jerusalem Talmud, following the directive to behave thus in prayer, alludes to the political situation which brought about the institution of this version, emphasizing that the Messiah would be none other than David himself, to counter the view of those who had erased David's name from the blessing and placed that of Jesus in its stead.<sup>100</sup>

100Ibid, pp. 63-64. Bold mine.

**PROFESSOR LIEBES INFORMS US THAT JEWS HAVE  
UNKNOWINGLY BEEN RECITING A “CHRISTIAN”  
PRAYER FOR CENTURIES, WHICH IS EVIDENCE OF  
THE JEWISHNESS OF THE TRUE CHRISTIAN FAITH**

“The destiny of the concluding formula, *mazmiah qeren yeshu’ah*, was far more fortunate than that of its Jewish Christian authors. While the blessing *et zemah David*, including its ending, was abolished in the Palestinean rite, it was retained in Babylonia, where there were no Jewish Christians. Indeed, the Babylonians did not even know of them, and therefore had no reason to cast suspicions upon this formula, particularly as it was already widely accepted; they ruled in their Talmud that one should recite it. Thus, once the rulings of the Babylonian Talmud had become accepted among all Jewish communities, the entire Jewish people throughout the centuries recited the formula *mazmiah qeren yeshu’ah* three times a day, without knowing who introduced this formula or why. Indeed, they would have been unable to imagine a Christian origin for it....It should be noted that *mazmiah qeren yeshu’ah* is far more indicative of the Jewishness of Christianity in its earliest years than of Christian influence upon the text of the prayer book. There is no more impressive testimony to this than the presence of the name of the Christian Messiah in the Amidah prayer, but this is not the only evidence of such. One who examines it attentively is liable to discover many other remnants of the Jewish Christian spirit surviving in Jewish literature.”<sup>101</sup>

A portion of Professor Liebes’ footnote 28 reads: “There may be other such survivals in Jewish ritual, such as the angelic names recited between the Shofar blasts on Rosh Hashanah in some rituals, which refer to *Yeshe’a Sar ha-Panim* together with Elijah and Metatron, a combination found in other sources as well. See now my article, ‘The Angels of the Shofar and Yeshe’a Sar ha-Panim’ (Heb.) in *ha-Mistiqa ha-Yehudit ha-Qedumah [=Meqerey Yerushalayim be-Mahshevet Yisra’el vi: 1-2]* (1987), pp. 171-195.”<sup>102</sup>

**THERE ARE SOME WHO DENY THE TRUTH AND SOME  
WHO TELL THE TRUTH AS *IT IS* DOCUMENTED**

Despite the fact that Finkel, Katz and others deny that the true purpose of the BHM was to eliminate Jewish Christians from the synagogues, we provide the truth, as documented by many an authority, including some very unusual ones!

<sup>101</sup>Ibid, pp. 66-67.

<sup>102</sup>Ibid.

## IT IS DOCUMENTED BY DOCTOR KAC

The real purpose and result of the BHM has been well documented by several foremost scholars. Examples include the Jewish Christian, Arthur W. Kac, M.D., who stated: “Jewish hostility to the Hebrew Christian dates back to the first century when the Messianic movement of Jesus was still strongly Jewish. The so-called Birkat Ha-minim prayer of hate was composed before the end of the first century and was designed to separate the Hebrew Christian from his Jewish brethren.”<sup>103</sup>

## BY PFEIFFER

Robert H. Pfeiffer tells us in his book, *History of New Testament Times*: “The revolt of Bar Cocheba marks the last flaming outburst of militant Messianic hope. Normative Judaism relinquished the utopian dreams of apocalyptic writings to the Christians, and retrenched itself increasingly within the citadel of the written and the oral law, thus separating itself more and more from the Gentiles. The final break between the Christian Church and the synagogue took place at this time when the Nazarenes—a Jewish-Christian group worshiping in the synagogues but teaching that Jesus was the Messiah—were forced to become a sect, equally repudiated by the Rabbis and by the Bishops. Henceforth the teachers of the Law—scribes and Pharisees, Tannaim, Amoraim, Geonim, rabbis—became the leaders of Israel.”<sup>104</sup>

## BY FORKMAN

The scholar, Goran Forkman, in his article “The Limits of the Religious Community,” informs us: “The effect of this point in the prayer was very ingenious. It was from now on impossible for someone who knew himself to be a Christian or who in any other way deviated from the normative Judaism, to read the Eighteen Benedictions aloud or to respond with an ‘amen’....the prayer had to be read every morning, and just this must have resulted in the deviator leaving the Jewish community. *Birkat ha-minim* therefore acted as a total, definite expulsion. The level of formality was low. Without any formal decisions, without any trials and expulsion sentences, the deviator was in this way thrust out of the community. Judaism was no longer pluralistic.”<sup>105</sup>

<sup>103</sup>Arthur W. Kac, *The Messiahship of Jesus*, p. 139

<sup>104</sup>Robert Pfeiffer, *History of New Testament Times*. New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, © 1949, p. 45, used by permission.

<sup>105</sup>Göran Forkman, *The Limits of the Religious Community, Expulsion from the Religious Community Within the Qumran Sect, Within Rabbinic Judaism, and Within*



**BY PRESIDENT ROSEN**

Moishe Rosen, president of *Jews for Jesus*, comments on the purpose of the Birkat ha-Minim; to throw the believers out of the synagogues in the first and second centuries. He notes: "A Jewish Christian could hardly be expected to recite a prayer against himself; the *Birkat Haminim*, therefore, was an effective tool to dissociate the Jewish believers from the synagogue. It was not that they decided to leave—they were forced out by the leadership."<sup>106</sup>

**BY DOCTOR FRUCHTENBAUM**

In 1985, Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum, director of Ariel Ministries, informed us in the article entitled, "A Quest for a Messianic Theology": "Theology has often developed as a result of conflict and controversy. The same is true for Messianic theology. With Jewish Christianity of the first four centuries, this conflict came from....the Jewish community which, at a time when rabbinical Judaism was being developed, tended increasingly to ostracize the Jewish believers. Some time after the first Jewish revolt of 66-70 A.D., around A.D. 90, a curse formula against Jewish Christians...was introduced into the daily prayers of the synagogue (the Birkat-Ha-Minim of the Shmoneh-Esreh)...effectively separated the Jewish Christians from the synagogue."<sup>107</sup>

**BY M. AVI YONAH**

M. Avi Yonah enlightens us: "The leaders of the Jewish nation were in the end obliged to combat the Judaeo-Christian activities. In the first and second generations after the destruction of the Temple disputes with them were fairly common. Their influence was regarded as doubly dangerous because they were still living within the Jewish people, and took part in the synagogue services....The 'Blessing concerning the Minim' was therefore composed and included with the 'Eighteen Benedictions' of daily prayer. This text was composed by Rabbi Samuel ha-Katan and approved by Rabban Gamliel II and the Sanhedrin in the last quarter of the first century....An old version, which was found in the Cairo Genizah, contains the version 'the

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*Primitive Christianity*. Sweden: Studentlitteratur Lund, © 1972, pp. 91-92, used by permission.

<sup>106</sup>Moishe Rosen, *Y'shua, The Jewish Way to say Jesus*, p. 110.

<sup>107</sup>*Mishkan*, Winter 1985, No. 2. Jerusalem: Arnold Fruchtenbaum, © 1985, p. 3. Arnold Fruchtenbaum has produced many tapes and books worthy of study, which may be ordered through his ministry. Ariel, POB 3723, Tustin, CA, USA 92681. His book, *The Footsteps of the Messiah*, features a foreword by Charles Ryrie.

*Minim* and the *Notserim*' (Christians). Some scholars consider this the original version...."<sup>108</sup>

### BY JOHN KOENIG

Koenig admits: "Sometime around the year 85 C.E. the rabbinic sages at Jamnia made a critical decision. They felt compelled to draw a sharp line between themselves and that element within the Christian church which wished to consider itself Jewish. This decision to institutionalize the separation of synagogue and church took a form that was consistent with the pacifism of the rabbis. No persecutions were ordered. No edict prohibited Christians from attending synagogue services. Rather, a change was introduced into one of the chief synagogue prayers, the so-called Eighteen Benedictions. The twelfth benediction was altered so as to include Christians and other groups deemed heretical in a curse. Apparently, the theory was that wherever this new version of the Benedictions was prayed, Jewish Christians could not in good conscience participate. If a local synagogue ruler had some doubt about whether a man taking part in the service was actually praying the curse, he could have the person called up before the Torah niche to *lead* the prayer as a 'delegate of the congregation.' "<sup>109</sup>

### BY ATTORNEY W. M. CHANDLER

The famed legal authority, Walter M. Chandler, author of *The Trial of Jesus, From a Lawyer's Standpoint*, writes: "Samuel Hakaton, or *the Less*. Surnamed to distinguish him from Samuel the prophet....some time after the resurrection of Christ, composed the famous imprecation against the Christians, called 'Birchath Hamminim' (Benedictions of Infidels). The 'Birchath Hamminim,' says the Talmud, and the commentary of R. Jarchi, 'was composed by R. Samuel Hakaton at Jabneh, where the Sanhedrin had removed after the misconduct of the Nazarene, who taught a doctrine contrary to the words of the living God.' The following is the singular benediction: '*Let there be no hope for the apostates of religion, and let all heretics, whosoever they may be, perish suddenly. May the kingdom of pride be rooted out; let it be annihilated quickly, even in our days! Be blessed, O Lord, who destroyest the impious, and humblest the proud!*' As

108M. Avi Yonah, *The Jews of Palestine*, 1976, pp. 141-142.

109John Koenig, *Jews and Christians in Dialogue*. Pennsylvania: Westminster Press, © 1979, p. 122, used by permission.

soon as Samuel Hakaton had composed this malediction, it was inserted as an additional blessing in the celebrated prayer of the synagogue, the ‘Shemonah-Essara’ (the eighteen blessings). These blessings belonged to the time of Ezra—that is to say, five centuries before the Christian era; and every Jew has to recite it daily. St. Jerome was not ignorant of this strange prayer. He says: ‘*The Jews anathematize three times daily in their synagogue the name of the Christian, disguising it under the name of the Nazarene.*’ ”<sup>110</sup>

### BY KEN CARROLL, PH.D.

Kenneth L. Carroll, professor of religion at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas, tells us in his article, “The Fourth Gospel and the Exclusion of Christians from the Synagogues”: “...the bitterest assault upon these Jewish Christians took place from the turn of the first century to the middle of the second century....They were judged to be more dangerous because they were more secret. Since they did not withdraw from the community of Israel, they had to be cast out. This end was to be obtained by the various devices for the detection of the *Minim*—the Formula against the *Minim*.”

The *Birchath ha-Minim*, composed about A.D. 90 by Shemuel ha-Qaton, ‘represents the official condemnation by the Rabbis of the spurious Judaism which was growing in their midst, and at the same time furnished a means of detection’. This declaration about heretics, which was inserted into the Blessings recited daily, was so worded that Jewish Christians could not repeat it. We can not be certain of the actual wording of the original malediction; later forms only contain the word *Minim* (heretics). According to Jerome, however, it contained the express condemnation of ‘Nazarenes’.

The purpose of this malediction was to make possible the detection of the *Minim* who would inevitably omit this particular paragraph when invited to pronounce the *Eighteen Benedictions* ‘The very fact that this addition was made to the synagogue service shows that the Jewish Christians were still frequenting the synagogue service, since it needed the introduction of the formula to detect them.’ In other words, the Jewish Christians still regarded themselves as Jews at this time—no matter how much they disagreed with other Jews on the subject of whether or not the Messiah had already come.

By the end of the first century all of the synagogues of the diaspora had probably been informed of the new malediction and warned not to have any dealing with the Christians—through letters, and emissaries sent out by the Jewish Patriarch of Palestine.

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<sup>110</sup>Walter M. Chandler, *The Trial of Jesus, From a Lawyer's Standpoint*, Illustrated Edition, Vol. II, pp. 148-149.

Christians were to be excommunicated, and Jews were to avoid discussions of all kinds with the Christians. Undoubtedly these letters contained a copy of the *Birchath ha-Minim* with instructions that it was to be included in the *Eighteen Benedictions*, for the daily cursing of Christians in the synagogues is very closely associated with these letters. Jerome, Origen, and Justin all three ‘insist on the official character of these letters, and on their wide dispersion’.

At the time that Christianity and Judaism were parting company, faithful Jews were warned not to read the gospels. This shows that the Christian writings were sufficiently popular among Jewish readers to necessitate such a warning against perusing them. This in turn illustrates how very Jewish the movement of Jesus was at this time.”<sup>111</sup>

### NO MORE IDENTITY CRISES

The rabbinic formula against the *minim* has almost worked for the past 2000 years. However, present Messianic synagogue movements are making the rabbis very uneasy because the objective of the “Birkat ha-Minim,” which is to convince Jews that “you cannot be Jewish and believe in Jesus,” is being destroyed.

Jewish Christians now maintain that they are more Jewish (in understanding the meanings<sup>112</sup> of their traditions and faith) because they believe in the Jewish Messiah. You can cast the Messianic Jews out of the synagogue but you cannot prevent them from founding Messianic synagogues, which arouse interest among the Jewish community. The modern Messianic Jewish synagogue removes the identity crisis the rabbis of the first two centuries sought to create so that Jews would not accept Jesus in the Diaspora.

### TODAY’S CHURCH, SYNAGOGUE, AND MESSIANIC SYNAGOGUE VERSUS THE WAY THE MESSIAH WAS WORSHIPPED IN ANCIENT TIMES

Rabbis are becoming overly alarmed at the seemingly new (though not new at all) Messianic synagogue. They are also becoming fearful of the *Jews for Jesus*’ Passover demonstrations.

111 Kenneth L. Carroll, Ph.D., “The Fourth Gospel and the Exclusion of Christians from the Synagogues,” *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester*, 40, 1957-58, pp. 19-32.

112 I heard this explained by Eric Wittmayer in a Messianic Passover demonstration on a PTL broadcast hosted by Messianic Rabbi Robert Solomon. When the rabbi asked Eric if, after having been raised in an orthodox home, the Passover Seder had taken on more meaning since he came to know the Messiah Jesus, he replied, “Oh, so much more richness and life. The spirit of God, the *Rauch ha Kodesh*, the Holy Spirit is with us as we celebrate together....”

A Passover demonstration is an explanation of how Jesus fulfilled this Jewish holy day in all of its ritual and sacred meaning. As we have explained before, it illustrates how the first century believers in Jesus celebrated Passover as a Messianic holy day rather than Easter, which, in its name and origin, was and is pagan. Easter, which is actually the name of a pagan fertility goddess,<sup>113</sup> was added as a holiday in later years by the Roman Catholic Church and was totally unknown to the early Jewish believers in Jesus. Even Paul says in the New Testament, “Christ [Messiah] our passover [not Easter] is sacrificed for us....” (I Cor. 5:7 KJV; [ ] mine).

The rabbis are perfectly content that these false Christian holy days are still being observed by many so-called Christian organizations, since this continues to obscure the Jewish identity of the Messiah. For example, a Jew will look at these so-called Christian holidays and say, “What’s Jewish about Christmas and Easter?” One who believes in Jesus might conversely look at Hanukkah and Passover and say, “What’s Christian about these holy days?”<sup>114</sup> Of course, all we need to do is look at the New Testament, for we see Jesus and His followers both celebrating the two Jewish holidays (Matt. 26:2; John 10:22).

Why then are the rabbis so worried about *Jews for Jesus* explaining how Jesus celebrated His Passover with His disciples, and how all early believers in Jesus continued these practices until overthrown by the vicious half-pagan Roman Catholics centuries later? We will tell you why. They are worried that Jews might see the truth of Jesus’ New Testament Jewish Messianism. Then these Jews might

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113The late Reverend Alexander Hislop, author of *The Two Babylons*, shows a unique and intelligent insight into how Easter replaced Passover: “It was called Pasch, or the Passover, and though not of Apostolic institution, was very early observed by many professing Christians, in commemoration of the death and resurrection of Christ....That festival was not idolatrous, and it was preceded by no Lent....The forty days’ abstinence of Lent was directly borrowed from the worshippers of the Babylonian goddess....Such a Lent of forty days was held in spring by the Pagan Mexicans....in honour of the sun.’ Such a Lent of forty days was observed in Egypt....in commemoration of Adonis or Osiris, the great mediatorial god....‘An egg of wondrous size is said to have fallen from heaven into the river Euphrates....out came Venus, who afterwards was called the Syrian Goddess’—that is, Astarte. Hence the egg became one of the symbols of Astarte or Easter....” Reverend Alexander Hislop, *The Two Babylons*, pp. 104-105, 109. Reverend Woodrow further informs us: “The word translated ‘Easter’ here is *pascha* which is—as ALL scholars know—the Greek word for *passover* and has no connection with the English ‘Easter.’ It is well-known that ‘Easter’ is not a Christian expression—not in its *original* meaning. The word comes from the name of a pagan goddess—the goddess of the rising light of day and spring. ‘Easter’ is but a more modern form of Eostre, Ostera, Astarte, or Ishtar, the latter, according to Hislop, being pronounced as we pronounce ‘Easter’ today....How, then, did this custom come to be associated with Christianity? Apparently some sought to Christianize the egg by suggesting that as the chick comes out of the egg, so Christ came out of the tomb.” Ralph Woodrow, *Babylon Mystery Religion*, pp. 143, 145.

114Jesus celebrated the Passover in Matthew 26:2. John 10:22-23 records His attendance at the feast of Hanukkah, which is also called the Festival of Lights and the Festival of the Dedication.

become interested in it and even accept it for the truth that is contained therein.

In the *Jerusalem Times/Jewish Press* there was an article explaining the rabbis' concern about Jews returning to the original authentic Messianic faith in Jesus. In an article entitled "Beware of Missionary Forge S'Dorim [Passover Meal],"<sup>115</sup> author Aryeh Julius referred to their Passover as a "trap," and "the queerest 'Seder.'" He listed many locations to avoid in Israel, reminding Jews of their "beautifully decorated Haggadahs" and "set tables."

Rabbi Eckstein, in his book, *What Christians Should Know About Jews and Judaism*, stated his concern regarding the recent large-scale emergence of the Messianic synagogue. We know from history that the first church (group of believers, not a building or organization) met in their own synagogue buildings. In Hebrew, synagogue means "house of gathering;" literally *bait conesset*.

### **THE ANCIENT SYNAGOGUE OF THE NAZARENES THAT SOME SAY NEVER EXISTED—ARE THEY LYING?**

Jakob Jocz, author of *The Jewish People and Jesus Christ*, notes: "The formation of separate Synagogues seems to have been a feature of Jewish life in Jerusalem. Soon there was added a new Synagogue, that of the Nazarenes."<sup>116</sup> Grant Jeffrey documents: "Archaeologists in Jerusalem have discovered, in the basement of the site of the Upper Room, the remains of a first-century Judeo-Christian congregation that met in a synagogue."<sup>117</sup>

The famous Jewish authority, Abba Eban, also admits the previous existence of the Messianic Jewish synagogues! More about these synagogues will be documented in our next chapter.

### **AN ABSURD OBJECTION TO THE TRUTH, IRONICALLY, BY A RABBI WHO CLAIMS TO BE A BRIDGE BETWEEN THE JEWISH AND EVANGELICAL COMMUNITIES**

Denial of the existence of early Messianic Jews is only one aspect of the cover-up. Misinterpreting their faith is another part of the same problem. Rabbi Eckstein objects to the return of Jews to the original Jewish-Christian style of synagogue worship. He states the following in his book: " 'Messianic Jews,' or 'Hebrew Christians' as

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<sup>115</sup>Aryeh Julius, "Beware of Missionary Forge S'Dorim," *Jerusalem Times/Jewish Press*, Apr. 10-16, 1987. [ ] mine.

<sup>116</sup>Jakob Jocz, *The Jewish People and Jesus Christ*, p. 164.

<sup>117</sup>Grant R. Jeffrey, *War in the Middle East & The Road to Armageddon*. Toronto: Frontier Research Publications, © 1991, p. 264, used by permission. Available through Frontier Research, POB 129, Station "U", Toronto, Ontario, Canada M8Z 5M4.

they are sometimes known (the terms are used here interchangeably)....believe in Jesus as the Christ, while maintaining selective portions of Jewish law and tradition....the movement is bitterly resented by the Jewish community. It is a major source of potential discord between evangelical Christians, who constitute their best supporters, and Jews.

Hebrew Christians link themselves theologically with the first-century Jerusalem church, which likewise affirmed its Jewish identity while, nevertheless, believing in Jesus as the Messiah. However, the Jewish and Christian communities separated and developed beyond any sort of theological compatibility that may have existed at the time of the early Jerusalem church. Two thousand years of history have intervened....the sociological composition of the church changed and in a short time became almost entirely Gentile. The fact that Christianity severed virtually all of its links with its Jewish origins also had important, irreversible theological implications....The church, in short, made certain decisions that effectively brought about its severance with the Jewish people and faith. It must now live by those decisions.”<sup>118</sup>

Oh, must it really? “Hebrew Christians also insist that they constitute the only truly fulfilled Jews and that far from abandoning their Judaism, they are really completing it. In fact, by sprinkling their Christian lives of faith with Jewish customs and rituals taken out of their proper, historic context, they pervert Jewish symbols and make a mockery of the Jewish faith....Messianic Judaism is an anathema<sup>[119]</sup>....The very term ‘messianic Jews’ is also seen as an anomaly....What is so disturbing to Jews about the Hebrew Christian movement is....that these groups are telling the Jewish community that only through Jesus can Jews become fulfilled as Jews....these groups profess that Jews become authentically Jewish through their act of acceptance of Jesus....messianic Jewish groups appear to engage in outright deception, justifying a little duplicity for the sake of the greater good. Others are pushy, overly aggressive, conniving....There are a number of proselytizing groups using Jewish-sounding names in an attempt to lull Jews into believing that they are really legitimate Jewish groups....The fact that many of the Hebrew Christian groups give themselves Jewish-sounding names and advertise in the newspapers under the category of Jewish ‘synagogues’ rather than Christian ‘churches’ leads Jews to mistakenly believe they are Jewish houses of worship....Is it any wonder that Jews<sup>[120]</sup> are so deeply offended by such groups and tend to regard them as essentially no

118Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein, *What Christians Should Know About Jews and Judaism*. Waco, TX: Word Books Publisher, © 1984, pp. 294-296, used by permission.

119Anathema means curse. This word is used by the apostle Paul in the New Testament book of I Corinthians 16:22.

different from cults?<sup>[121]</sup>....So as not to alienate Jews from coming to Jesus they refer to him as ‘Yeshua’ and do not place crucifixes in their ‘synagogues’ but instead use only Jewish symbols. In presenting themselves to Christian audiences, on the other hand, they generally claim to be an evangelical Christian group seeking to bring Jews to Christ and meriting their funding and support....The costs Evangelicals have to bear in fostering better relations with Jews, on the other hand, are exceptionally high....they ought to abandon and denounce the

overly zealous and deceptive means usually employed by various Hebrew Christian groups.”<sup>122</sup>

### **THE RABBI’S WORDS SOUND STRANGELY FAMILIAR**

These sound like the words of the rabbis at Yavne, which we discussed earlier, don’t they? They are desperate words spoken by someone who we believe represents the desperation of many rabbis who are against the observance of Christian (Messianic) rituals in their original form, for fear that the Jewish people will see the truth. We believe the words of Israel Abrahams accurately illustrate the point we are trying to make. Mr. Abrahams, in his article “Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels” says: “The very development of Christianity from a dependent Jewish sect (*minuth*) to an independent world-religion made the new faith less obnoxious to the Synagogue.

120Rabbi Eckstein should speak for himself, for there are tens of thousands of Jews who are devoutly interested in Messianic Judaism.

121The evangelical community is highly incensed and offended at this statement! The rabbi should apologize and retract such double-talk. While it is fine for a Gentile to believe, if a Jew believes, while retaining his Jewish identity, he calls them a cult. Enough with this double standard; *it is* deceptive, not the believer!

122Ibid, pp. 295-299. The writer of these words should know that the first century Messianic Jewish community never used crucifixes in their synagogues. Crucifixes were added over three hundred years later when Constantine started his new religion known as Roman Catholicism, which deviated from the original New Testament teachings. *Yeshua* was Jesus’ authentic Hebrew name used by Jews of the first century. Why does the fact that Jews desire to return to the original form and terminology of the true first century Messianic faith in Jesus disturb Rabbi Eckstein? Why does he falsely claim that Jews who accept Messianic Judaism are “thought assimilated,” when in fact, they are more proud of their Jewish Messianic faith than ever? I believe he and other modern rabbis feel that Bible believing Jews are a threat and a challenge to their authority as rabbis. After all, Messianic Jews and their rabbis, and the “traditional” anti-Messianic Jesus rabbis cannot both be right. If one is wrong, he would have to admit it and open his mind to the Bible, accept the truth and teach otherwise, or else go home and give up being a rabbi. In other words, he would become a full-fledged hypocrite. Other reasons for not accepting the truth may stem from jealousy, envy and spiritual bigotry. The last reason, I believe, is first century Gamaliel’s fear of assimilation, which I can partly understand. However, the very fact that Messianic Jews love their Jewish identity and follow the Bible shows that their fears are unfounded.



As Inge well writes: ‘Paul, he [Tyrrell] says, ‘did not feel that he had broken with Judaism.’”<sup>123</sup>

In other words, the rabbis at that time were happy when Roman Catholicism, later Greek Orthodoxy and other organizations under the name of “Christian,” usurped and overthrew the true believers in Jesus and disposed of their original feasts and practices. It pleased them because it helped blind the Jews further in their vision of who and what the real Jesus was and had come to do in His original Jewish context, for all humanity, both Jew and Gentile. I believe the rabbis’ encouragement of misinformation concerning what is truly Christian is absolutely criminal.

Paul Liberman, a Messianic Jew and author of *The Fig Tree Blossoms*, illustrates how early Messianic believers were more or less forced to abandon their forms of worship by the Roman Catholic leaders. He says: “...with Gentile Christianity becoming established in its own right, the struggle began between Gentile and Jewish believers. The dispute essentially was over whether Jewish believers should be allowed to continue certain Jewish practices. A key conflict developed over the question of Resurrection Day and when it should be

celebrated. It was not called Easter then. Gentile Christianity began to push for a strictly Sunday celebration; Messianic Jews disagreed. They thought it should be celebrated on the 14th day of Nisan, as the Bible states.”<sup>124</sup>

### TRY IT, YOU’LL LIKE IT

Since we have spent some time explaining Messianic synagogues, both ancient and modern, we think it is only fair to provide you with a list of some of these fabulous meeting places, which are more authentically Christian and Jewish than anything called Christian or Jewish.

Jewish means those who are born Jews from the lineage of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and who truly understand all Hebrew practices and ritual holiday worship in their predicted Messianic meanings, as well as their traditional ones.

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<sup>123</sup>Israel Abrahams, “Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels” for Cambridge University. New York: KTAV Publishing House, Inc., © 1917, 1967, p. 57, used by permission.

<sup>124</sup>Paul Liberman, *The Fig Tree Blossoms: Messianic Judaism Emerges*, pp. 40-41.

If you visit a Messianic synagogue,<sup>125</sup> you will see what the liberal “Christian” and “orthodox” rabbinical fuss is all about. These synagogues are the embodiment of what both of the others claim to be. They expose both error and hypocrisy, while at the same time providing the believer with the spiritual fulfillment only the Jewish Messiah can give.

We have heard it said that every human has a Messiah-shaped void in their heart, at the core of their being. If this is true, no one can be spiritually satisfied until that void is filled, and of course, only the Messiah Jesus can fill it, when invited to do so. When you visit one of these places of worship, with so many other people who have the Messiah in their lives, you are overwhelmed with a spiritual sensation, unknown in power, intensity, and scope of understanding. Thus, we hope you can see why we recommend that you visit one of these wonderful places of worship!

### **THE ALTERNATIVE WITHIN MODERN JUDAISM OBSTRUCTS SPIRITUAL FULFILLMENT**

The rabbis of the first century surgically removed the Messiah from Judaism in a frantic attempt to prevent what they perceived as a gateway toward assimilation. Their fear of assimilation, however, was unfounded, as we presently see so many Jews who believe in Jesus and maintain their pride in being Jewish. You cannot remove the Messiah from Judaism and still have Judaism. You might create a cultural Judaism built around some Jewish tradition, but essentially that is all you have left. You do not have religious Judaism without the Messiah, the core of all true biblically based Judaism.

Today, we have true Judaism in the Messianic synagogue. The Messianic synagogue is Judaism based on Scripture. I visited many of them throughout the United States and Israel; Jesus is praised as the Messiah and Jewish traditions and prayers are enjoyed. In a beautiful way, all of the Jewish holy days have a Messianic significance and truly, if you take time to learn about the Jewish holy days you will begin to understand why the apostle Paul, also known as Rabbi Saul, wrote in I Corinthians: “...Christ [Messiah] our passover is sacrificed for us...” (I Cor. 5:7 KJV; [ ] mine).

There is historical proof that the first believers gathered in a building in Jerusalem called the Synagogue (house of gathering) of the Nazarenes (Jewish believers in Jesus). Sometimes we forget that those who believed in Jesus as Messiah (Christ) for several decades after He left for the heavens were almost all Jewish.

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<sup>125</sup>For a list of some of the Messianic congregations, including their addresses so you can visit—remember Jesus welcomes all—see our *Vol. II*, chapter 19, “Messianic Synagogues—How to Get There.” You may find the services very interesting.

Modern rabbinical Judaism is, of course, a cultural institution made up of four sects (Reformed, Conservative, Orthodox and Hasidic<sup>126</sup>). It serves to hold Jews together as a race and cultural religion. When compared to Messianic Judaism, it is seriously lacking because it is a religion with a spiritual void at its core. We say this because the Messiah, the chief cornerstone of the faith (Ps. 118:22),<sup>127</sup> was cut out and tossed aside centuries ago.

### **A MESSIANIC JEW EXPOSES THE FALSEHOODS OF “JUDAISM” VERSUS THE TRUTHS OF MESSIANIC JUDAISM**

Phillip Goble, a Messianic Jew, drives the truth of our point home when, as a Jew, he tells us: “...God’s gracious provision through his divine Word Yeshua has forced the whole world into a crisis of decision. When we look into the Jewish face of Yeshua, we are confronted eyeball to eyeball by the divine Word of God himself. We cannot obey the God of Israel nor can we receive his Holy Spirit unless we obey God’s Word become Man, Yeshua Ha Mashiach.

Therefore, the task of Messianic Judaism is to lead people to follow the Jewish Messiah Yeshua in order that they may receive the Holy Spirit. Those who really do follow Yeshua, and are not hypocrites as some of his so-called followers have been, become true spiritual Jews and love our Jewish people just as they love our Jewish Messiah.

The theology of Messianic Judaism preserves the essentials of the faith of Israel that other brands of Judaism have largely lost. For example, Messianic Judaism maintains in the death of Yeshua the Torah’s demand for blood sacrifice: ‘It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul’ (Leviticus 17:11). Messianic Judaism also preserves the true significance of such Jewish institutions as the high priesthood, the sage, and the prophet, and such Jewish doctrines as those concerning the Messiah king, the Holy Spirit, and salvation. Through the resurrection from the dead of the great high priest, sage, prophet, and Messianic King Yeshua and through the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost...all these Jewish essentials are imperishably maintained.”<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>126</sup>Hasidic Jews are those you see dressed in black, usually concentrated in New York City and Jerusalem. They call themselves Hasidic, which is Hebrew for “the righteous.” They consider themselves orthodox, and some Christians refer to them as ultra-orthodox.

<sup>127</sup>“The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief corner *stone*” (NASB).

<sup>128</sup>Phillip E. Goble, *Everything You Need to Grow a Messianic Synagogue*. S. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, © 1974, p. 5, used by permission. Available from William Carey Library, 533 Hermosa Street, South Pasadena, CA, USA 91030. Tel. (213) 799-4559.

## OBSCURE SOURCES REVEAL THE CONSEQUENCES TO THE JEWISH BELIEVERS AS A RESULT OF YAVNE

To continue our story regarding the extermination of the Jewish-Christians from the synagogue through letters, emissaries and the BHM, we will quote a few more examples. This should leave no doubt in the minds of the learned as to what was really done to the Jews who believed in Jesus 1500 to 2000 years ago. Since we have substantiated their existence against obnoxious claims that they “never were,” where did they really go?

Professor Yehudah Liebes asks: “What became of the Jewish Christians? They continued to exist throughout most of the first millennium, but they did not have an easy existence. They frequently suffered from persecutions, and were at times even forced to live an underground existence. They were considered as aliens both by the Jews, following the period of Yavneh, as well as in the eyes of the Christian Church....[Ecumenical Catholicism, much of which is still indifferent to the Messianic Jewish movement].”<sup>129</sup>

The scholar James Parkes was a man with tremendous empathy for the Jewish people. Some of his writings are even published by the Jewish Publication Society. He has said: “...the Judeo-Christians, where they formed separate Churches of their own, as in Palestine, lived a more or less peaceful life. It cannot be said that they were looked upon with favour, but they were rarely disturbed. Apart from the murder—or execution—of James in 62 no judicial action is known to have been taken against them, until their fellowship with the nascent churches of the Diaspora brought the whole matter within the scope of Jochanan ben Zakkai and the Jabne group’s policy towards all dissidents. This was in the last decades of the first century, and until then it seems that they continued to share in common worship in the synagogue with other Jews. In any case the first step towards their exclusion from this fellowship was the inclusion in synagogue worship of a new Benediction, or rather Malediction, on the ‘Nazarenes.’ As we know that the author of this Malediction was Samuel the Small, a contemporary of Gamaliel II, we can date it to the period between 80 and 100. At about the same time, or a little later, a formal condemnation of the Nazarenes was drawn up by the Sanhedrin, and circulated officially to the synagogues of the Diaspora. We have many references to this document in Christian literature from the middle of the second century onwards, and its most likely date is some time before the revolt of Bar Cochba. We have not its text, but it

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<sup>129</sup>Yehudah Liebes, “Who Makes the Horn of Jesus to Flourish,” *Immanuel*, p. 65. [ ] mine.

denounced Jesus of Nazareth as a deceiver and excommunicated his followers from membership of the synagogues.”<sup>130</sup>

**JEWISH SCHOLARLY UNBIASED TRUTH UNCOVERED,  
CONCERNING THE “LETTERS,” BY A JEWISH  
PROFESSOR FROM OVER A GENERATION AGO**

Professor H. Graetz, who published his little-known book, *History of the Jews*, in 1893, has written on this subject. He maintains: “The Synhedrion of Jamnia must have occupied itself with the question what position the Jewish Christians should occupy in the Jewish community, and whether they should in fact be considered as Jews at all....”<sup>131</sup> The Jewish professor admits: “The Christian writings were condemned, and were put on a par with books of magic. Even to enter into business relations, or to receive menial services, was strictly forbidden, especially the use of magical cures which the Christians performed on animals or men in the name of Jesus was prohibited. A form of curse (which bore the name of *Birchath ha Minim*) was likewise employed against the Minæans in the daily prayers, as also against the informers. The Patriarch, Gamaliel, confided the composition of this prayer to Samuel the Younger. This circumstance confirmed the idea that the various ordinances against the Jewish Christians, even if not proceeding direct from the Patriarch, yet had his consent. The form of curse appears to have been a sort of trial of faith in order to recognize those who secretly adhered to Christianity. For, in connection with it, it was decreed that whosoever refrained at the public prayers from pronouncing the curse, or from praying for the restoration of the Jewish State, was to be dismissed from his office of precentor. The Synhedrion published all the enactments against the Jewish Christian sects by **circular letters** to the communities....Following the natural instinct of self-preservation, they, on the one hand, shut out the Jewish Christian sects from the Jewish community....”<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>130</sup>James Parkes, *Judaism and Christianity*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, © 1948, pp. 109-110, used by permission.

<sup>131</sup>Professor H. Graetz, *History of the Jews*, Vol. II. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, © 1893, p. 379, used by permission.

<sup>132</sup>*Ibid*, pp. 379-380, 382. Bold mine.

**LETTERS, WHAT LETTERS? WERE THESE TRULY  
THE ONES DISPATCHED BY A SECRET  
PORTABLE SANHEDRIN? YES!**

These letters can be a touchy subject. Once, over ten years ago, while I was doing research at the Pitts Theological Library at Emory University, I ran into Rabbi Shapiro and asked him about these letters of excommunication. He said, “Letters, there were no letters sent out. What are you talking about?” I then showed him a couple of my sources and suddenly I noticed a puzzled look on his face.

We know conclusively that these letters are not the ones referred to in the New Testament which Paul received from the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem. Rather, they came from an exiled Sanhedrin hidden in Yavne sinking ever deeper into the masterful anti-Christian plot of two millennia to come! We know that the Sanhedrin of Jerusalem moved ten times and on its third move landed in Yavne.

Although some Christian historians (Justin, for example) have referred to it as Jerusalem because the Sanhedrin was there for such a long time, the Jewish Talmud itself records: “ ‘...the Sanhedrin wandered to ten places of banishment, as we know from tradition’, namely, from the Chamber of Hewn Stone to Hanuth, and from Hanuth to Jerusalem, and from Jerusalem to Jabneh...and from Jabneh to Usha, and from Usha [back] to Jabneh, and from Jabne [back] to Usha, and from Usha to Shefar’am, and from Shefar’am to Beth She’arim, and from Beth She’arim to Sepphoris, and from Sepphoris to Tiberias....”<sup>133</sup>

**DID MOST OF DIASPORA JEWRY BLINDLY FOLLOW  
THESE ABSURD YAVNEAN DECISIONS ABOUT THE  
MESSIANIC JEWS, TO THEIR DETRIMENT?**

The book, *History of the Jewish People*, elaborates on the attitude of the Jewish people worldwide toward decisions and instructions given from Yavne, pointing out: “The two leading Torah personalities at the end of the Second Temple period were Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai, dean of the Sanhedrin, and Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel, of the family of Hillel....Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel, in his capacity as president or *Nasi* of the Sanhedrin, participated in the central government....Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai assumed the crown of leadership over the mightiest spiritual empire on earth in its capital city—henceforth Yavneh....Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai

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<sup>133</sup> *The Babylonian Talmud*, Rosh Hashanah 31a-31b, p. 149.

reorganized the Sanhedrin....From Yavneh he sent instructions to the scattered Jewish communities in matters of law and observance, and Jews from all over the Diaspora turned to Yavneh for answers and advice. Without any formal declaration, Yavneh became the new center of the Jewish people.”<sup>134</sup>

Obviously, if this is true, it clearly shows that a great many Jewish people relied more on their rabbis than on their Bible. Since the rabbis have been shown to have intentionally altered known Messianic prophecy into false alternative interpretations (see our chapter 5, “Which Prophecies Did Jesus Fulfill?”), this was an unwise decision on their part! David has advised us in God’s words, “*It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man*” (Ps. 118:8 KJV).

These Jewish communities would have done well to have taken David’s advice! If most of the Jewish community had done this, these disastrous instructions from Yavne, including the secret letters against the Jewish-Christians that were carried to the outer limits of the world through emissaries, might have been widely disregarded and discarded. To follow Yavnean decisions on the matter of believers in Messiah would be a spiritual and ethical mistake. If the rabbis have intentionally changed the interpretation of prophecy relating to Messiah, how can we possibly trust them? Why did they do this?

The rabbis felt, no doubt, that the end justifies the means. “So what if we lie—we save our people from assimilation.” It is not too late for Christians and Messianic Jews to inform their Jewish friends about the Messiah Conspiracy orchestrated by the rabbis. They should tell their friends to use the Bible and follow David’s command to put their trust in God instead of men (Ps. 118:8).

## THE SECRET EMISSARIES

These emissaries were documented as having been sent out to “all the world” to abolish the Gospel of Jesus and His apostles. Justin Martyr, the famous second century Christian historian, recorded: “Yet not only did you not repent, when you learned that He had risen from the dead, but, as I said before, you appointed **chosen men and sent them into all the civilized world**, proclaiming that ‘a certain godless and lawless sect has been raised by one Jesus of Galilee, a deceiver, whom we crucified, but His disciples stole Him by night from the tomb, where He had been laid after being unnailed from the cross, and

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<sup>134</sup>Rabbi Hersh Goldwurm, *History of the Jewish People, The Second Temple Era*, adapted from Dr. Eliezer Ebner’s translations of Yekutiel Friedner’s “*Divrei Y’mei HaBayit HaSheini*.” Brooklyn, NY: Mesorah Publications, Ltd., © 1982, pp. 183, 185, 201, used by permission.

they deceive men, saying that He is risen from the dead and has ascended into heaven'....In addition to all this, although your city has been taken, and your land laid waste, you do not repent, but dare even to curse Him and all them that believe on Him. And, as for us, we do not hate you, nor them that because of you accept such suspicions of us, but we pray that even now you may repent and find mercy from God the Father of the universe, who is tender-hearted and full of compassion."<sup>135</sup>

### ANTI-CHRISTIAN APOSTLE AGENTS TO EFFECT ASSASSINATION

Hugo Mantel, in his work, *Studies in the History of the Sanhedrin*, documents the existence, mission and work of these counter-apostle agents mentioned by Justin, who were sent out to the ends of the earth to effect the assassination of Jewish Christianity. In his section entitled, "The Dispatch of Apostles (Shelihim)," he notes: "The Nesi'im dispatched apostles...." He tells us that in Hebrew they were called *shelihim*. He says: "Justin alleges that the apostles advised ordinary people against holding religious discussions with Christians (*Dialogues of Justin*, 38, I, pp. 74-750; 112, 4, p. 231)." Mantel mentions a very interesting passage from the Talmud concerning Rabbi Joshua's fear of these Christian-Jewish *minim*: "Thus the disciples of R. Joshua, at the deathbed of their master, were dismayed: 'How shall we maintain ourselves against the Minim?' "<sup>136</sup> He further informs us of the great distance the apostles penetrated, reaching Jewish communities throughout the world. "The apostles reached the Jewish communities throughout and beyond the Roman Empire, including Media and southern Arabia. Jewish communities considered it a privilege to act as hosts to the apostles."<sup>137</sup> Mr. Mantel proves his claim that the apostles got as far as Media, when he notes in footnote 138: "The inscription on a girl's grave in Venose states that at her funeral two apostles delivered eulogies...." (referencing Krauss, p. 381, *Die jüdischen Apostel*).

### THE EMISSARIES' DIRTY TASK—JAMES SOCKS IT TO US

The chief task of these emissaries was to deliver a letter written by Rabbi Gamaliel of Yavne, containing the Birkat ha-Minim and instructions on how it was to be used to expel Jewish Christians from

135A. Lukyn Williams, D.D., *Justin Martyr, The Dialogue With Trypho*, p. 224.

136Hugo Mantel, *Studies in the History of the Sanhedrin*, p. 191.

137Ibid, p. 195.



the synagogue. James Parkes gives us the evidence: "...Paul was converted while on an inquisitorial mission from the high priest to the Jewish community of Damascus; we are told that, fifty years later, the rabbinic authorities of Palestine sent out letters to the synagogues of the Diaspora formally rejecting the messianic claims made on behalf of Jesus of Nazareth and providing for the exclusion from the community of Jews who accepted them....It was a long process and included many incidents of which the adherents of neither religion can be proud, incidents where to a hostile Roman authority Jews denounced Christians....That the sect of the Nazarenes was attracting a number of Gentile converts was well known to the Jewish authorities....they set

out to procure a new uniformity in religion as the necessary basis for a new unity....the very thought of consciously creating and **securing national unity by means of religious uniformity was without precedent in human history**....So far as the Judeo-Christians were concerned, they introduced into the synagogal service a formula which Judeo-Christians could not pronounce. This was an **additional** clause, the *Birkath ha-Minim*....The clause stated 'and for the Nazarenes may there be no hope'. That such was its original form has recently been discovered from an Egyptian papyrus, for the present form...conceals the word *Nozrim* behind the more neutral *minim* or *meshummadim*....then **a spy could observe whether it was included** or not, for synagogal services were open to all....action taken **by the synagogal authorities was to send out 'apostles' carrying a letter to all Jewish congregations in the Diaspora**. The existence of this letter is known to us only from the constant references to it in Christian literature....Even apart from its contents or occasion it is, however, of particular interest as almost the sole example of communications passing officially by 'apostles' and in writing from the central Jewish authorities in the Land of Israel to the diaspora Jewries. If we are to take the text of Justin, then the rabbis sent out chosen and ordained men throughout all the world to proclaim that 'a godless and lawless heresy had sprung from one Jesus, a Galilean deceiver, whom we crucified, but his disciples stole him by night from the tomb where he was laid when unfastened from the cross, and now deceive men by asserting that he has risen from the dead and ascended to heaven.' Moreover, you accuse him of having taught those godless, lawless, and unholy doctrines which you mention to the condemnation of those who confess him to be Christ and a Teacher from and Son of God."<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>138</sup>James Parkes, *The Foundations of Judaism and Christianity*, pp. 106, 223, 225-226. Bold mine.

### YAVNE AND ITS CONSPIRATORS UNVEILED, IN LIGHT OF PRESENT DISHONESTY

Further evidence as to why this small coastal town in Israel was a hotbed for breeding a Messiah Conspiracy against Jewish Christians, is seen in a plot to systematically drive down the number and destroy the credibility of believers within the Jewish community. As Raymon Hanson writes, to create a “death blow to any favorable if not quasi-official relationship that might have existed between the Judeo-Christians and the Jewish community.”<sup>139</sup>

Today, one of the points a rabbi will most frequently use to verify his assertion that Jesus was not the Jewish Messiah is, “Jesus was never accepted by the Jewish people of his own day and thereafter. Thus, this is sufficient proof for us to dismiss the whole idea of his even remotely, possibly being our Messiah!” This consensus is echoed in Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan’s writings, in a book entitled *The Real Messiah*, containing statements designed to dissuade Jews from considering Jesus’ Messiahship. In the chapter entitled, “Why Aren’t We Christians?”, Kaplan writes: “Although all of Jesus’ disciples were Jews, they could not convince their fellow Jews of their teachings.... Christianity was rejected by the Jews....the Jew stood firm....and walked his own way....If Christianity made any contribution at all, it was to the non-Jewish world.”<sup>140</sup>

At the beginning of this same chapter, Kaplan explained the reason for his comment: “We hear quite a bit today about a movement called ‘Jews for Jesus.’ A small number<sup>[141]</sup> of Jews seem to be finding the teachings of Christianity very attractive.”<sup>142</sup>

Many modern rabbis are saying, in so many words, “There really weren’t very many<sup>143</sup> Jews of Jesus’ day who believed in His Messiahship.” We must answer, if this is so: 1. Why was there

139Raymon Hanson, “The Schism Between the Judeo-Christians and Mainstream Judaism,” Hebrew University, May 24, 1984. Raymon, a friend with whom I still keep in touch, became a trusted buddy when I met him in Israel in 1984. His paper on the Jewish background of Christianity was submitted to Dr. Daniel Schwartz of the Hebrew University on May 24, 1984. For additional contents of this paper, see our *Vol. II*, chapter 14, “Interesting Excerpts from ‘The Schism Between the Judeo-Christians and Mainstream Judaism,’ by Raymon Hanson.”

140Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan, *et al*, *The Real Messiah*, pp. 16-17.

141On April 14, 1989, the *Jewish Echo* newspaper of Glasgow, Scotland, quoted this “small number” to be 350,000. The same newspaper predicted the number would swell to 500,000 by the year 2000. The *Jewish Echo*’s source was the Jewish Community Relations Council of New York.

142Ibid.

143Messianic Rabbi David Chernoff, in his book, *7 Steps to Knowing the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*, documents that the estimates of first century Jews who believed in Jesus as Messiah ran as high as one million. We have also read these estimates stated by scholars, which shows us Rabbi Kaplan did not have his facts straight, or at least did not want anyone else in his day to realize such a large number of Jews believed in Jesus.

formulated a special benediction against them, which was inserted into the eighteen benediction Jewish synagogue prayer called the Amidah? 2. Why was this curse, called the BHM, then systematically circulated by emissaries in the form of a letter to virtually every synagogue in the entire world? 3. Why has the Talmud asked that there be no Orthodox Jewish contact with the *minim* and Nazarenes (believers)? 4. Why did Rabbi Akiva of the second century claim that Christians should be tortured if they did not recant and turn from Jesus?<sup>144</sup> Finally, why does *The Jewish Encyclopedia* overtly admit: “The cessation of sacrifice, in consequence of the destruction of the Temple, came, therefore, as a shock to the people. It seemed to deprive them of the divine Atonement....Joshua ben Hananiah, who cried out in despair, ‘Wo unto us! What shall atone for us?’ only expressed the sentiment of all his contemporaries (IV Esd. ix. 36: ‘We are lost on account of our sins’). It was then that Johanan b. Zakkai...declared works of benevolence to have atoning powers as great as those of sacrifice.

“This view, however, did not solve satisfactorily for all the problem of sin—the evil rooted in man from the very beginning, from the fall of Adam (IV Esd. iii. 20, viii. 118). **Hence a large number of Jews** accepted the Christian faith in the Atonement by the blood ‘shed for many for the remission of sins’ (Matt. xxvi 28; Heb. x. 12; Col. i. 20) or in Jesus as ‘the Lamb of God’ (John i. 29; Apoc. of John vii. 14, and elsewhere).”<sup>145</sup>

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144Johannes Weiss quotes Eusebius and Orosius as follows: “And indeed in the recent Jewish war, Bar-Kokhba, the leader of the uprising of the Jews, condemned the Christians alone to be led away to dreadful torture if they would not deny Jesus was Christ and blaspheme him...Kokhba, who was leader of the rebellion of the Jews, inflicted various penalties on many of the Christians, since they would not go out to battle with him against the Romans.” Johannes Weiss, *Earliest Christianity: A History of the Period A.D. 30-150*, Vol. II, p. 723.

145Isidore Singer, Ph.D, *et al*, *The Jewish Encyclopedia, A Descriptive Record of the History, Religion, Literature, and Customs of the Jewish People, from the Earliest Times to the Present Day*, Vol. II. New York: Funk and Wagnalls Company, © 1902, p. 278. Bold mine to emphasize Rabbi Kaplan’s misinformation, which is commonly echoed within the Jewish community as accurate.



Triumphal Arch of Titus, erected by Rome in commemoration of the defeat of the Jews in 70 AD. Notice the laurel-crowned Romans as they make away with the ruined temple's gold menorah and other treasures.

**SYNAGOGUE EXCOMMUNICATION—WAS IT FORESEEN  
AND IS IT WIDELY ADMITTED TODAY?**

**ORIGINAL HEBREW OF ISAIAH 66:5**

שמעו דבר יהוה הנרדמים אל דברו אמרו אחים שנאים מנדיכם למען שמי יקבד  
יהוה ונראה בשמחתכם והם יבשו: ישעיה סו:ה

**OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE TRANSLATION**

“Hear the word of the LORD, ye [Jewish-Christians] that tremble at his word; Your brethren [rabbinical sages of Yavne] that hated you, that cast you out [of the synagogue] for my name's sake, said, Let the LORD be glorified: but he [Messiah Jesus] shall appear [at His Second Coming] to your joy, and they [the sages] shall be ashamed [of themselves].”

**Predicted by the prophet Isaiah in the Jewish Bible,  
seven hundred years before the fact. Isaiah 66:5 KJV. [ ] mine.**

**DANIEL, 2600 YEARS AGO, PREDICTED THE  
MESSIAH'S SECOND COMING TO THE EARTH**

“I saw in the night visions, and, behold, *one* like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom *that* which shall not be destroyed.” **Daniel 7:13-14, 555 BC KJV**

“...the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said, ‘I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the

right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven....These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me. But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you. But now I go my way to him that sent me....’ ”

**The words of Jesus, spoken in 33 AD,  
recorded by Mark 14:61-62 and John 16:1-5 KJV**

#### **JUSTIN MARTYR, ONE HUNDRED YEARS AFTER JESUS**

“...you curse in your synagogues all who have become Christians through Him. And the other nations, who make the curse effective, are slaying them who only acknowledge that they are Christians....you appointed chosen men and sent them into all the civilized world, proclaiming that ‘a certain godless and lawless sect has been raised by one Jesus of Galilee, a deceiver, whom we crucified, but His disciples stole Him by night from the tomb, where He had been laid after being unnailed from the cross, and they deceive men, saying that He is risen from the dead and has ascended into heaven’....the priests and teachers of your people have caused His name to be profaned and blasphemed throughout the whole earth.”<sup>146</sup>

#### **AN OBJECTIVE, HONEST, MODERN SCHOLAR, DOUGLAS HARE, COMMENTS ON JUSTIN’S STATEMENT**

“...Jewish Christians, were indeed excluded from the synagogue...all personal and business contact with them was forbidden, and they were formally cursed in the *Shemoneh Esreh*....The insertion of the *Birkath ha-Minim* into the Eighteen Benedictions is clear proof that the rabbinic authorities regarded Christianity as a threat to a beleaguered Jewry....this liturgical innovation [BHM] was transmitted to synagogues throughout the Diaspora....We have the testimony of Justin that selected men were sent out from Jerusalem ‘into all the world’ *εἰς πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν* to report the outbreak of the Christian heresy.”<sup>147</sup>

***The Theme of Jewish Persecution of Christians*, by Douglas Hare. [ ] mine**

#### **A MODERN RABBINIC COVER-UP COMMENT ON THE ABOVE**

While Mr. Hare and Justin Martyr perceive and document the facts of history correctly, most of today’s rabbinical leaders ignore the record and make irresponsible statements such as: “Although all of Jesus’ disciples were Jews, they could not convince their fellow Jews of their teachings....Christianity was rejected by the Jews....the Jew stood firm....and walked his own way....If Christianity made any contribution at all, it was to the non-Jewish world.”

***The Real Messiah*, by Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan, et al, p. 16; 1976**

#### **AUTHOR’S COMMENT—EVANGELICAL CHRISTIAN POSITION**

Rabbi Kaplan’s statement, which represents common contemporary Jewish misconception, is proven untrue when we examine the above evidence. Many Jews did believe in Jesus and were treated brutally.<sup>148</sup> **Philip Moore**

146A. Lukyn Williams, *Justin Martyr, The Dialogue With Trypho*, pp. 202, 224, 242.

147Douglas Hare, *The Theme of Jewish Persecution of Christians in the Gospel According to St Matthew*, p. 65. [ ] mine.

148We need not wonder if believers were lynched in the name of religion in the first century. Many rabbis of that time felt there was nothing wrong with putting the believers’ (*minim*/Jewish Christians’) lives in jeopardy. Douglas Hare documents: “The most extreme treatment that the rabbis will countenance is that the lives of *Minim* may be endangered and not saved, Tos. B. Mezia 2:33: ‘The *Minim* and the apostates and the betrayers are cast in

**USUAL MESSIANIC INTERPRETATIVE  
STANDARDS WERE DECEPTIVELY ALTERED  
SHORTLY AFTER THE APPEARANCE OF JESUS!**

How did the rabbis get away with calling the Messianic Jewish movement (Christian faith) a “heresy,” as Justin documents, when in fact, according to their very own rabbinic interpretation of the Bible, Jesus fit the bill? Answer: They banned and changed their interpretations! These rabbis also made a new Greek translation of the Old Testament, which removed many of the Messianic prophecies fulfilled by Jesus. This fact is illustrated by the scholar, F. F. Bruce. This further proves our point that the rabbis’ actions were based on personal bias and prejudice against Jesus and His unique<sup>149</sup> claim to be the Jewish Messiah as He fulfilled the Messianic prophecies.

The new modern Judaism formed at this time at Yavne, would alter the interpretation of a formerly accepted prophetic understanding to show that the verses in question had nothing to do with the Messiah. Thus, He was not the Messiah! Dr. Bruce comments on two of the most famous prophecies concerning the Messiah (Dan. 7:13; Ps. 110:1), and documents the following interesting points: “There was a good deal of contact between orthodox Jews and Jewish Christians in Palestine in the first and second centuries, and there are frequent echoes in the rabbinical literature of controversies between the two parties, on the interpretation of messianic prophecy, for example. In a number of instances interpretations which had formerly been regarded as quite proper and respectable by orthodox Jews were ruled out as inadmissible when Christians began to use them to prove that Jesus was the Messiah.

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[to a pit] and not helped out’ (translation by R. Travers Herford, *Christianity in Talmud and Midrash* [1903], p. 94)....” Ibid, p. 39. The Jewish-Christians were persecuted to no end, while today, many who know this unbelievably try to deny they ever existed! This, to me, is as horrible as trying to say the Holocaust never happened! It is inexcusable and incomprehensible. We ask here that those who have written these things apologize and retract this false statement that Christianity was rejected by the Jews, which is a general denial of there ever having been a sizable community of Jewish-Christians in the first century. This only serves to facilitate ignorance of the existence of many thousands of Jewish Christians who suffered exclusion, persecution and even execution.

<sup>149</sup>We designate *unique* because Jesus pointed to dozens of prophecies that had been and were being fulfilled in His life, which proved from a biblical prophetic and *ancient* rabbinic standpoint, that He was the Jewish Messiah (Luke 24; John 5). None of the pseudo or false Messiahs of the past were able to do this. For example, Bar Kochba was one of the first of a long line of men claiming to be Messiah, who avalanched a twenty century-long plague of false Messianism and “Messiahs” on the Jewish people. Virtually every era has witnessed a false Jewish Messiah. Just to mention a few: Moses of Crete—fifth century; Abu Isa—eighth century; David Alroy—twelfth century; Abraham Abulafia—1240-1291; Abraham ben Samuel—circa 1300; David Reuveni—sixteenth century; Solomon Molko—sixteenth century; Hayyim Vital—1574 C.E.; Sabbatai Zevi—1626-1676; and Jacob Frank—eighteenth century.

There is one notable occasion recorded when the great Rabbi Akiba got into trouble because he favoured such an unacceptable interpretation. He and his colleagues were discussing the vision of the judgment day in Daniel 7. 9-14, where ‘one like a son of man’ appears before the Ancient of Days to receive universal and eternal sovereignty from him. ‘As I looked’, says Daniel (verse 9), ‘thrones were placed, and one that was ancient of days took his seat.’ The question was raised: Why thrones in the plural? Akiba gave the traditional answer: ‘One for God and one for David’ (i.e. for Messiah, the son of David). But Rabbi José expostulated with him: ‘Akiba, how long will you profane the Shekhinah? It is one for justice and one for righteousness.’<sup>”150</sup> Bruce notes in his footnote: “Akiba may have had in mind the divine invitation to the Messiah in Psalm 110.1: ‘Sit at my right hand, till I make your enemies your footstool’—but the fact that Jesus in his reply to the high priest at his trial had conjoined this text with Daniel 7.13 meant that its former messianic interpretation also was no longer favoured.”<sup>”151</sup>

Bruce continues: “Ever since Jesus had claimed, at his trial before the Sanhedrin, to be that Son of Man whom Daniel saw ‘coming with the clouds of heaven’ the messianic interpretation of the passage had become taboo for many Jewish teachers.

The rabbis of this period, then, were not unacquainted with the story of Jesus and the activity of his followers, vigorously as they voiced their dissent from all that he and they stood for.”<sup>”152</sup>

### **LINDSEY CONFIRMS BRUCE’S POINT THAT JESUS DARED TO FULFILL THE TWO MOST IMPORTANT PROPHECIES OF THE MESSIAH’S COMING**

Hal Lindsey, in his book *The Late Great Planet Earth*, points out just how important these two prophecies were to the Jewish religious “leaders” and Jesus Himself during the first century. “Jesus promised under oath before the high priest at His trial [concerning His future Second Coming to Earth to judge]: ‘...nevertheless I tell you, hereafter you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power [God], and coming on the clouds of heaven’ (Matthew 26:64 NASB).

This statement was the official ground of His condemnation for blasphemy and the death sentence. Jesus dared to be the One who would fulfill two of the best-known prophecies concerning the Messiah’s coming in glory to rule the earth. The first is from Psalms, predicted before 1000 B.C.: ‘The LORD [God, the Father] said unto my

150F.F. Bruce, *Jesus and Christian Origins Outside the New Testament*, pp. 64-65.

151Ibid, p. 65.

152Ibid.

Lord [God, the Son], Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool' (Psalm 110:1).

The second is from Daniel, predicted about 550 B.C.: 'I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed' (Daniel 7:13, 14 KJV).

No wonder the Jewish supreme court (the Sanhedrin) went into orbit. When Jesus made such a fantastic claim as that in one terse sentence, they either had to fall down and worship Him or kill Him. They chose the latter."<sup>153</sup>

### **A SMALL AMOUNT OF BACKLASH OCCURS, AS A RESULT OF RABBINIC REINTERPRETATION**

After the rabbis began to reinterpret Isaiah 53, due to the huge number of Jews freely accepting Jesus, and claim that it was no longer to be understood as referring to Messiah, opposition to this mutilation of rabbinic understanding, which had prevailed for centuries rose up. For example, Dr. Kac, quoting David Baron, notes: "Rabbi Moshe Cohen Iben Crispin (fourteenth century) states that those who for controversial reasons apply the prophecy of the Suffering Servant to Israel find it impossible to understand the true meaning of this prophecy, 'having forsaken the knowledge of our teachers, and inclined after the stubbornness of their own opinions.' Their misinterpretation, he declares, 'distorts the passage from its natural meaning,' for 'it was given of God as a description of the Messiah, whereby, when any should claim to be the Messiah, to judge by the resemblance or non-resemblance to it whether he were the Messiah or no.'

"Rabbi Elijah de Vidas...affirms that 'the meaning of 'He was wounded for our transgressions,...bruised for our iniquities,' is, that since the Messiah bears our iniquities....whoso will not admit that the Messiah thus suffers for our iniquities must endure and suffer for them himself'...Rabbi Moshe el Sheikh...who was chief Rabbi of Safed, makes this statement....'Our Rabbis with one voice accept and affirm the opinion that the prophet is speaking of the King Messiah, and we shall ourselves also adhere to the same view.' "<sup>154</sup>

<sup>153</sup>Hal Lindsey with C.C. Carlson, *The Late Great Planet Earth*, p. 161. First [ ] mine.

<sup>154</sup>Arthur W. Kac, *The Messianic Hope*, pp.75-76. Kac's source was David Baron, *Rays of Messiah's Glory*, Zondervan Publishing House.



**THE NEW FIXED INTERPRETIVE NOTES  
FURTHER ISOLATE THE JEWS OF ALL  
AGES FROM THEIR MESSIAH**

Dr. Bruce lends deep insight into how the rabbis altered the interpretation of the prophecies through interpretive notes. Today, many Jewish copies of the Bible in Israel have commentary footnotes explaining how certain Scriptures are to be understood! When and where did these ideas originate?

Bruce informs us: "The assiduity with which the Nazarenes appealed to the Old Testament writings, in both their Hebrew and Greek forms, led to a consideration of the various forms in which the text of the Old Testament was current at the time. Under Rabbi Akiba, about the beginning of the second century, a standard form of the consonantal Hebrew text of the Old Testament was fixed...."<sup>155</sup>

Bruce continues: "...not only the text, but its interpretation also, had to be fixed, in order especially that an authoritative explanation might be provided of those scriptures which Christians were continually invoking to support their claim that Jesus was the Messiah and Son of God. In some cases interpretations which had previously been perfectly admissible were now banned because they lent themselves too readily to Christian propaganda."<sup>156</sup>

Bruce further notes in his book, *New Testament History*: "A good example of the Christian use of the Septuagint and Jewish refusal to admit the validity of the Christian premises and arguments is provided in Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew*, a work whose dramatic date is A.D. 135, soon after the suppression of the second Jewish revolt....Lines of interpretation, too, were laid down by the rabbis of this period which carefully excluded the messianic exegesis favoured by Christians. Hence, for centuries to come, although the Hebrew scriptures in text or in translation were venerated as holy writ by Jews and Christians alike, they were read in accordance with two divergent and contradictory interpretative traditions, to a point where what should have served as a bond of union might almost have been two different bodies of literature."<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>155</sup>F.F. Bruce, *The Spreading Flame*, p. 265. Bruce explains in his footnote: "The Hebrew script originally expressed consonant-sounds only; the later system of vowel signs belongs to the eighth and ninth centuries A.D." Ibid.

<sup>156</sup>Ibid.

<sup>157</sup>F.F. Bruce, *New Testament History*, pp. 388-389.