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# Temple Rodeph Torah

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## ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM 5769

### Rabbi Don Weber

- 1) "Modern Jews Engage the New Testament"
  - a) *Subtitle: "Enhancing Jewish Well-Being in a Christian Environment"*
    - i) Discuss title and subtitle
- 2) Today: Torah, because we can't feel comfortable dissecting THEIR Bible until we feel comfortable doing it with our own.
  - a) *Begin: "What is the Torah?" (discuss)*
    - i) Is it the Word of God, true and eternal?
      - (1) What are the "proofs" for this idea?
      - (2) If so, on what grounds can we ever disagree with it?
    - ii) Is it a human creation?
      - (1) What are the "proofs" for this idea?
      - (2) If it is, then what is its authority?
    - iii) Is it a joint project between God and people?
  - b) *Looking at the text*
    - i) Gen 1 & 2 – two separate stories!
    - ii) Gen 6 & 7 – two *intermingled* stories!
    - iii) Gen 37: two (or three) DIFFERENT stories!
    - iv) Ex 3 & 6 – two separate "Meeting God" traditions

- v) Hand out JEPD sheets, discuss “motivations” of all four, plus Redactor.
  - vi) Job: framework story used as foundation for a completely different story.
  - c) *How can we “believe” in Torah if it’s made up of all these separate pieces?*
    - i) “holy documents” don’t need to be *perfect* to be holy –
    - ii) Just as people don’t have to be perfect to be holy, either.
    - iii) If WE can get comfortable with accepting our holy text as a human / divinely inspired work, we can accept the New Testament as the same –
    - iv) *Whether Christians will accept that it is human or not is not our problem.*
      - (1) *But when they tell us that the NT is “true,” we will be able to understand that they are reflecting their religious beliefs, not indisputable facts.*
    - v) We will be able to have discussions with those who want to discuss,
    - vi) And we will be able to understand how Judaism dares to see things differently from what is so “obvious” to them.
    - vii) And so, we will “*enhance our well-being in a Christian environment.*”
- 3) To use this book:
- a) First, *it’s difficult!* Accept that, and accept that you can’t read it 10 minutes before class.
  - b) Read the Introduction, xiii
  - c) Read, then bookmark, the “Terminology” – xviii
  - d) Assignment: read Chapter 1, page 3
- 4) Introduction**
- a) WHY do Jews shun the NT?
    - 1) Read 1<sup>st</sup> para of introduction, p. xiii
    - b) Book’s purpose: not to teach NT content, but NT dynamics.

1) Which is why it takes so much concentration to read it!

c) "Synagoga" blindness:

1) ... to what do Christians think we are blind?

2) Why do they think that?

3) ARE we blind to it?

4) *If we are not, what is our proof that they are wrong,*

*a) or at least wrong in our eyes?*

5) "[in many cases,] Synagoga's obtuseness was deemed so hopeless that patience, presumably God's, must have run out."

*a) ... these are the pictures of a dead – or murdered – Synagoga!*

*b) Worse than blindness are the images of Synagoga murdering Christ –*

*c) Thereby moving from passive resistance to the truth to active aggression against the Savior.*

6) From the Patristic (early Church fathers) writings, we see the women of Synagoga and Ecclesia as Leah and Rachel:

*a) The elder, blind and unloved;*

*b) The younger, beautiful and desirable.*

7) DW: Cook speaks of our own intentional blindness to the NT, and he is correct.

*a) But the reasoning is understandable.*

*b) e.g.: how many of us have actually read Mein Kampf?*

*1) Why not?*

*2) ... because we know how it turns out, right?*

*3) The same, we feel, goes for the NT.*

*c) But the difference is, we are DONE dealing with Mein Kampf, other than to live with its aftereffects.*

1) We are NOT done dealing with the NT.

5) NOTES ON TERMINOLOGY

- A) Any questions?
- B) Page xviii – discuss categories
- C) Mention BC/BCE AD/CE
- D) Please don't think you know what these words mean, without checking out what they mean to Christians!

1) Eg: what is an "evangelist"?

5) Chapter 1: "When the Advice of Sages Ceases to be Sage Advice"

A) "Passages in emergent rabbinic literature came to designate the Gospels as off limits for Jews" – T. Shabb. 13 – NT "defiles" as menstruation.

1) Important: the rabbis had no knowledge of Jesus – everything they knew about him, they got from the Gospels.

2) Therefore, THEY had a negative image of him, because the later Gospels were strongly anti-Jewish.

3) See printed sheet of NT texts...

- a) Matt 27:11-26
- b) John 8:31-47

4) And any "proofs" of Jesus in which Christians cite Jewish sources is not proof – they only repeated what they heard from the Gospels!

B) Jewish views of Jesus came from Jewish experience with Christians:

1) When Christians tried to convert Jews, Jesus came to be seen as one who led Jews astray.

2) When Christians began to oppress Jews because of the "blood libel," Jews saw the NT as the source of their oppression.

C) "Supersessionist theology" – that Christianity came to replace Judaism as God's Chosen people: (Show B.C. Cartoon)

1) *Cook relates how Hitler used this to justify the extermination of the Jews, who "should" have died out long ago.*

2) “Jews today who do not believe that the NT itself caused the Holocaust will likely yet insist that the Holocaust could not have occurred without it.” P. 4.

D) Cook’s exercises:

1) “What does the Cross mean to you?”

2) How should Jews respond to the film, “The Passion of the Christ”?

3) Why do Jews feel “inept” to respond to simple questions of curiosity from Christians?

4) See page 7 – How many can YOU answer to YOUR OWN satisfaction?

### 1) Chapter 2: “Results of Ignorance”

a) What do WE know about Jesus? DISCUSS!

b) Important Time Periods for JEWISH understanding of Jesus/NT:

i) #1 – Jesus’ Ministry (Ca 0 to 33)

(1) Hampered by chronology (nothing written for 1 or 2 generations)

(2) Geography (most of the Gospels not written anywhere near Israel)

(3) Demography (by the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century, most Christians were Gentiles)

(4) Ideology (anti-Jewish bias shows up early in the Gospels)

(5) THEREFORE, “It thus becomes impossible to gauge with confidence the extent to which Jesus’ Jewish contemporaries... viewed him positively or negatively, or were even aware of him at all!” p.13

ii) #2 - From Jesus’ death to the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century

(1) Josephus mentions Jesus in 2 passages; there is some indication that his “mentions” were later additions.

(a) Page 13: review Cook’s italics – his thought about what might have been added to the original text. *This will be useful to understand Cook’s methodology for the NT!*

(2) Justin Martyr’s *Dialogue with Trypho*:

(a) Cook believes that this contains genuine Jewish concerns about Christianity/Jesus. See page 14 for 6 arguments against Christianity.

iii) #3 - Early Rabbinic literature – 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> centuries

(1) Major point: “the Jesus to whom the rabbis reacted was not the historical man but the Gospels’ reconfiguration of him.” P. 15

(2) Cook notes that the rabbis even accepted Jewish responsibility for Jesus’ crucifixion – the saw him as one who would “entice and lead Israel astray,” and they were NOT sad about his death!

iv) #4 – The Middle Ages

(1) The most crucial time in fixing modern Jewish ideas about Jesus.

- (2) “Disputations”:
  - (a) Describe...
  - (b) Lose/lose situation!
- (3) *Sefer Toldot Yeshu*:
  - (a) Satire of Jesus, which will later become a staple of what Jews DID know about him!
    - (i) A product of rape, not virgin birth.
    - (ii) A sorcerer.
    - (iii) The crypt was not empty; a Jewish gardener stole the body, so people would not think he was resurrected.
    - (iv) “*Yoshke Pandera*” became part of Yiddish folklore!
- v) #5 – Early modern times (mid-1800’s to mid-1900’s)
  - (1) Cook suggests that as we came out of the ghettos, Christians engaged US in conversation to learn about “the Historical Jesus.”
  - (2) In return, WE learned about him, too.
  - (3) Began to separate Jesus from NT/Christian views.
  - (4) Began to focus on PAUL as the source of our *tsores*.
- vi) #6 – Today, in 2 parts:
  - (1) Those who don’t know and won’t learn.
  - (2) Us. :-)

## 2) Chapter 3: “Presenting the NT: Orders and Dis-Orders”

- a) Define:
  - i) “Gospel” > “good spiel,” “good story,” “good news.”
  - ii) Synoptic > to be read together, parallel stories. (Matthew, Mark & Luke)
  - iii) Catholic > “general”, universal
- b) See the 5 segments of the NT
  - i) Note that only Revelations is “apocalyptic” in nature. All the end-of-time stories come from this one book.
- c) NOTE Cook’s understanding of Matthew, Mark and Luke:
  - i) They were not independent accounts; Matthew and Luke drew from Mark, and may not even have been there to witness the events they describe.
  - ii) Further, their NAMES are later additions; as much as a century later.
    - (1) Which means we have no idea of their identities – Jewish, gentile, etc.
- d) “Our initial impression that the NT is ‘orderly’ can be quickly dispelled.” P. 23
  - i) Eg: Interest in the phases of Jesus’ life developed in reverse order:
    - (1) The END of his ministry,
    - (2) DURING his ministry next,
    - (3) Details about his birth and childhood last.
    - (4) “The Gospels are thus endings with extended beginnings.”
- e) Important point: “It was an age when theological meaning was more valued than accurate historical reportage...” << That’s the nature of ALL history!

- i) And, as we will see, it was also reported with a concern for how “Roman officialdom” might react. << This will be a major focus of this course!
- ii) In addition, the NT is made up of many stories – probably all developed independently – which were placed in the canon based on “the aesthetic and theological taste of the editors.”
- iii) Another dis-order: Biblical (OT) motifs for Jesus’ life were used to shape his image in the Gospels.
- iv) The most important dis-order: “the Jesus we see may be less as-he-was than as later Christians needed him to be to address problems in their time.”
  - (1) MAJOR POINT FOR JEWS: “The same applies to the images of Pontius Pilate, Caiaphas, Judas, the Roman centurion, and others. All these were similarly adopted to the Evangelists’ needs.” P. 24
- f) Discuss “Q” – see pp 26-7; another source is *hypothesized* – a text which Matthew and Luke drew upon, which no longer exists.
  - i) Going further – FURTHER THAN YOU AND I NEED TO GO – is the 4-document theory, page 28. Not necessary for our understanding!
  - g) Figure 3.10 on page 28 – Discuss the process of comparing documents.
    - i) We are not yet worried about WHY, but for now we need to see HOW.
  - h) HW : pp 33-51 (1 ½ chapters)
- 3) Chapter 4: “Prisms for Viewing Early Christianity”**
  - a) Two streams of early Christianity:
    - i) In Israel
      - (1) Peter or James may have led it,
      - (2) But it is gone by the year 66 –
        - (a) Was it because of the Jewish revolt against Rome?
        - (b) Or a result of James’ execution in 62?
      - (3) Conclusion: Christianity does not GROW in the land of Israel.
    - ii) In the diaspora
      - (1) Cook asserts (not all agree) that most, if not all, NT was written in the Diaspora (see chart on 33).
        - (a) “before the figure of Jesus was conveyed by the Evangelists, his image was filtered through Paul’s time and thought, as well as through the broader Diaspora ambience.” p.34
      - (2) “Two configurations” of Christianity:
        - (a) Beginning as a *Jesus* movement, basically in Israel;
        - (b) Beginning as a *Paul* movement, basically in the Diaspora.
        - (c) Cook believes they overlapped and co-existed for a time.
    - iii) Cook describe Greek “mystery” religions, which included rituals which Christianity may have adopted:
      - (1) Baptism
      - (2) Salvation through communion (eating and imbibing the deity to gain salvation).
        - (a) Cook notes that Christianity offered *more* than these Mystery religions, BUT –

- (b) “It was through careful fostering of similarities that Chr gained the entré to compete with them in the first place.” P 37
- (3) Initially, Chr denied any connection to the Mystery religions, but later claimed that they paved the way for the Gentiles to accept Jesus’ sacrifice.
- b) Chr’s appeal over Judaism and over other pagan religions:
  - i) Co-opted Judaism’s focus on ethical action, which the cults did not have;
  - ii) Adopted the synagogue structure, as opposed to the local-based cults of pagan religions;
  - iii) And preserved Judaism’s idea of one God over all, which was very different from the cults.
  - iv) At the same time it allowed entry without circumcision or dietary restrictions (which Romans did not know and did not like).
  - v) “Christianity charged a less arduous entry-fee for the relatively similar salvation” which other religions offered.
- 4) Chapter 5: Jesus and His Setting in the land of Israel**
  - a) See pp 40-42 for the geography of Galilee, Judea & Samaria.
  - b) P 43: discuss the parallel time lines...
    - i) Sanhedrin: “despite the impression given by the NT, it was consider lawfully convened only if approved by the local Roman prefect.” P. 42
      - (1) “That Mark relates a Sanhedrin trial for Jesus does not establish that Jesus actually underwent one.” P. 42
      - (2) NOTE that the Sanhedrin is reconstituted after 70, with different form and power. Don’t confuse the two, which the NT does!
    - ii) Synagogue: “Practices of the synagogue that the Evangelists present in connection with Jesus, Paul and their early followers may reflect, instead, the practices characterizing the writers’ day.” P44
  - c) You can review the “players” – Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, Activists, Priests, etc., in pp 44-45.
    - i) > Give brief description of Sadducee/Pharisee conflict in Judaism...
    - ii) “It is most important to note that the Evangelists’ bias against the Pharisees... reflects not sentiments of Jesus – most likely a Pharisee himself – but solely those of the post-70 Gospel writers themselves.” P44
    - iii) Essenes: Jews were already thinking along eschatological (end-of-days) terms, given how horrible conditions were under Rome.
    - iv) See chart p. 46 – discuss political vs. transcendental apocalypse... “it is best to envision most such adherents as falling between the extremes... with their conceptions of a Messiah varying accordingly.”
    - v) “3 Tiers of authority in Pre-70 Judea”: Cook makes clear that the High Priest (Caiaphas) was completely subservient to the Roman Governor (Pilate), although the NT portrays the reverse.
      - (1) Roman governors actually could hire & fire High Priests, so Caiaphas’ long tenure (19 years) was a sign that he was VERY cooperative with the Roman government.

- (2) “The Gospels whitewashed [Pilate], transferring *his* brutality to Caiaphas – a reversal that has fomented anti-Judaism ever since,” especially in Passion plays and films. P 47
- vi) The purpose of the (strange) chart on p. 48: to illustrate how isolated Roman rule was from Jewish life.
- vii) P.50 – READ LAST PARAGRAPH... The reformulation of the crucifixion as having been driven by Jews.

## 5) Chapter 9, pp 95-108 – Christmas stories.

- a) Basic question: “When in “the Christ’s existence does his divinity first become *manifest* to NT readers?” p 95
  - i) Cook: as we proceed chronologically thru the Gospels, the manifestation shifts *earlier*:
    - (1) Paul (50’s) – at the resurrection.
    - (2) Mark (72) – at the time of Jesus’ adult baptism.
    - (3) Mat & Luke (80’s -90’s) – at Jesus’ conception.
    - (4) John (100) – before the creation of the world, when “the word” already existed.
  - ii) As said earlier, “interest in Jesus’ life phases developed in reverse.”
    - (1) Why was there no description of the virgin conception in Paul or Mark? Because the story did not yet exist.
    - (2) SEE Mat’s and Luke’s infancy narratives, pp 97-98.
    - (3) Then SEE table of disparities between Matt and Luke, p 99
      - (a) “Some who notice them today try tracing them to a difference in informants, that is, Matthew drew on Joseph’s recall, Luke on Mary’s. But this must presume that Mary and Joseph did not inform one another of their separate experiences nor relate even their joint ones.” P 100
    - (4) Then SEE “The Christmas Composite”, p 101.
      - (a) Why are some parts chosen from one, others from another?
      - (b) To “accommodate major motifs”:
        - (i) Their trip from Nazareth to Bethlehem for the census,
        - (ii) Which allows for the inn with no vacancy,
        - (iii) Which allows for the birth in the manger.
    - (5) NOTE the need for an “invented segue”, to merge the two together... to get the family back from Bethlehem from Jerusalem, so the magi can find them and they can flee to Egypt.
      - (a) Another problem: the child in Isaiah is to be named *Immanuel*, but Jesus is not. So Matthew says at the end of his Gospel, “I am with you always.”
      - (b) And another: there is no mention, anywhere, of Herod massacring infants in Bethlehem – or anywhere.
- b) Internal conflicts:
  - i) Matthew’s geneology: completely through the males, until Joseph... who is NOT Jesus’ blood.
    - (1) What’s the purpose?
    - (2) Why no lineage for Mary, who IS Jesus’ blood?
  - ii) Luke: If Gabriel prophesied to Mary that her child will be “the Son of the Most High,” why does Mary hear from the shepherds as if for the first time?
    - (1) Cook: There were purposes in these things, even though they caused consistency problems.
      - (a) Matthew bases the manger story on Moses, and the Magi are the midwives who disobey the ruler.

- (b) And Matthew “needs” Herod to massacre the babies of Bethlehem, to mirror the slaughter of the male children of the Israelites.
- (c) Jesus goes to Egypt to have a dream, as Joseph goes to Egypt to have a dream.
- (d) Jesus comes out of Egypt to save the Israelites... as Moses did.
- iii) Luke’s census actually happened only in 6 CE, when Jesus was 10.
  - (1) And there was no need to return to your birthplace for a census, anyway – government only cares where you live, not where you came from!
  - (2) BUT, Luke “needs” “Jesus of Nazareth” to be born in Bethlehem, so he can share the birthplace of King David.
- c) Cook’s suggestions about what led to the LATER inclusion of these elements:
  - i) “Rounding out the Jesus story.” (cf: Washington and the cherry tree, Moses’ birth story)
  - ii) “Responding to rumors of Jesus’ origins.” To deal with the possibility of premarital sex or even rape.
  - iii) “Counteracting Adoptionism.” So Jesus will be understood as divine from conception, not from his adult baptism.
  - iv) “Establishing a Davidic Lineage.” Possibly to counter Jewish claims that Jesus wasn’t born in the right place or to the right line.
  - v) “Competing with other cults.” “Miraculous birth” was a prerequisite for divinity in many other traditions (as in early Judaism, too – Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Samson)
  - vi) SEE THE GOSPEL DYNAMICS, P. 106
  - vii) SEE “Correcting Jews’ Explanation of Isaiah 7:14” p 107 – as Rev. Michael Riley described.

## 6) Chapter 19, “The Christian Apocalypse”

- a) Sub-title: “Jews as God’s Odometer in End-Times Scenarios”
  - i) NOTE how this already puts a burden on the Jews!
- b) “Because pre-millennialists hold that events on earth can go only from bad to worse until Jesus personally intervenes, they are fatalistic – indeed, from now on let us term them ‘catastrophists.’” P 233
  - i) DISCUSS how this would affect people in decision-making roles:
    - (1) in government;
    - (2) in social services.
  - ii) Note, too, that MOST Christians pay no attention to the end-of-days scenarios, and even most who do know little about it and do not focus on it.
    - (1) BUT, Cook notes, that those people might be inclined to focus on it if things get sufficiently bad.
- c) “The 18 percent of American adults said to expect Jesus’ return during their lifetime should also wonder whether the Antichrist is already present, since his world rule commences seven years before Jesus’ return.” P. 235

- i) The composite: “A suave, deceptive, magnetically charismatic, oratorically seductive, politically astute and cunningly manipulative leader who precipitously rises to power and bears some association with the number 666.” P 235
- ii) (Want to guess how many web sites are tying Obama to 666?)
- d) Pages 234-6 – important words:
  - i) Antichrist/666
  - ii) Tribulation
  - iii) The Rapture:
    - (1) *Pre*-Tribulation – just before the 7 year Tribulation.
    - (2) *Mid*-Tribulation – midpoint in the 7 years.
    - (3) *Post*-Tribulation – near, or at, the end of the 7 years.
- e) Early Rapturists:
  - i) Most important concept in “Dispensationalism” is the idea that we are now living in the 6<sup>th</sup> of 7 “dispensations,” or eras.
    - (1) God can only focus on one group in each dispensation;
      - (a) #5, from the giving of the Torah through the crucifixion, dealt with the Jews – “earthly” people.
      - (b) #6, from the crucifixion through the Rapture, deals with “heavenly” people – Christians.
      - (c) #7, from the millennial kingdom to eternity, will again deal with the Jews since the Christians will all have been “raptured” to heaven.
    - (2) Note that era #5 would have continued to the Rapture, had the Jews accepted Jesus. But because they didn’t, Jesus’ ultimate purpose had to be postponed so God could work with the Church.
      - (a) So the JEWS are responsible for delaying Jesus’ work!
    - (3) A central tenet of Dispensationalism is that Israel is “ground zero” for the end of times to be played out, and that it must be in Jewish hands for this to happen.
      - (a) Therefore, the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 was a major boost to this idea,
      - (b) And they are among the strongest supporters of Israel today.
      - (c) Working at cross (!) purposes: Dispensationalists and ultra-Orthodox Jews are preparing – together! – for the establishment of the Third Temple:
        - (i) The Jews see this as preparation for the (Jewish) Messiah;
        - (ii) The Christians see this as preparation for the Antichrist!
  - ii) See page 238 for 2 paragraphs which explain all the millennialist novels...
  - iii) See page 238-9 for the description of the wars:
    - (1) God saves Israel from a confederation of “Northern” and Arab/African nations.
    - (2) Armageddon, where Jesus (2<sup>nd</sup> coming) overwhelms the Antichrist and his human allies, begins thousand-year reign.
    - (3) God’s final victory over Satan, at the end of the thousand years.

- (4) At the end of God's final victory, a "new Jerusalem" will descend from heaven, along with a FOURTH Temple (IMAGE ATTACHED), and God will live WITH US ("*Immanuel*").
- f) Critique:
- i) Most basic: "that dispensationalism not only misinterprets biblical texts but also interrelates those bearing no connection to one another." 240
  - ii) Theological anomalies:
    - (1) God is surprised that first-century Jews rejected Jesus?
    - (2) God is actually *controlled* by the Jews, unable to implement the 7<sup>th</sup> Dispensation for more than 2,000 years?
    - (3) God can only concentrate on one thing at a time? For *thousands* of years?
    - (4) "The unbridled brutality of the Tribulation... obliterates what Christianity holds to be *inspired* New Testament theology. Now God personifies not Christian Love but Boundless Wrath and Inconceivable Vengeance..." 241
    - (5) And what of Jesus, who said, "All who take the sword will perish by the sword"? Here he is "a mechanistic warrior king on a white horse... clad in a robe dipped in blood."
    - (6) Theological conflict: do the dispensationalists believe that by alleviating societal ills they are delaying the Second Coming, and are therefore doing the work of Satan?
    - (7) Darby (creator of Dispensationalism) claims that Jewish bible promises apply only to Jews, during the 7<sup>th</sup> disposition; why, then, does all of this rest so strongly on OT prophecies?
  - iii) The "Hardly Idyllic Millennial Kingdom"
    - (1) See page 242 for the list of those who will be on earth during Jesus' thousand-year reign. Doesn't sound like much of a holy kingdom!
    - (2) As for the 4<sup>th</sup> Temple, which will stand in the New Jerusalem:
      - (a) The Temple was for the sacrificial cult – which Christians believe was eliminated by Jesus' sacrifice on Calvary!
- g) Delayed- and Late-Rapturist Scenarios and paramilitary groups
- i) "These person believe that the Antichrist, bent on securing world control, will commandeer trusted agencies: international (eg: the UN, World Bank, World Council of Churches; national (the federal government, Social Security Admin, FBI and CIA); and local (the press, police, municipal courts, schools), and so forth." 244
  - ii) "The goal of the late rapturists is to remove themselves from a society that will be controlled by these soon-to-be corrupted agencies."
  - iii) THEIR paranoia fits with the already-established isolationist paramilitary cults "in private rural compounds with fallout shelters who are stockpiling food, water, energy, prescriptions and health supplies, gold, tools and weaponry." 245
  - iv) Combining the two groups, we have "the Aryan Christian heritage's last defense against the *Jewish* Antichrist."

- v) Page 246-7 describes the “seedliner” theology of Aryan vs. “mud people” lines – the Aryans coming from Eve’s *second* mating (with Adam) and all the others coming from her *first* mating, with Satan.
    - (1) What is important here is simply to see how Apocalyptic literature can be used to promote anti-Semitic activism.
  - h) More important: READ MARKED PARA ON 247.
  - i) Cook addresses the Jews who embrace Christian support for Israel: “how conflicting it is for Jews to embrace those who expect them either to convert (one-third) or be killed (two-thirds)... As for the one-third of Jews who do convert, by recognizing Jesus as the Christ they thereby cease to be Jews theologically – meaning that the *third* third is also lost.” 248
  - j) Catastrophic-millennialists appear to Jews as escapist, either vertically (to heaven, in the Rapture) or horizontally (withdrawing from society). “By contrast, at the core of modern progressive Jewish messianism is the concept of “repairing the world” – that if we hope for a more idyllic world, we have to be among its creators.” 248
- 7) Chapter 17 “The Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts”**
- a) Focus of the book: to prove that “Christianity Embodies and Continues Authentic Judaism”
    - i) “The religiosity of Jesus, his followers and Paul models the purest form of Judaism.”
    - ii) The text “improvises particulars about Jesus and his followers not found in other canonical Gospels, and particulars about Paul not found in the Epistles.” 210
    - iii) Jesus and his followers engage in mainstream Jewish practices not described anywhere else in the NT:
      - (1) Jesus:
        - (a) Circumcision;
        - (b) *Pidyon ha-ben*;
        - (c) *Pesach* in Jlem with his family;
        - (d) Studying with the sages in Jlem;
        - (e) Teaching daily in the Temple and in synagogues.
      - (2) Paul:
        - (a) Portrays Paul as a fine, upstanding member of the Jewish community, born and raised in Israel, not the Diaspora.
    - iv) “Luke intimates that the new movement, Christianity, embodies and directly perpetuates the core of authentic Judaism – rejected not by Christianity but solely by the Jews themselves.” 211
      - (1) Geography:
        - (a) Jesus appears in Jlem after his resurrection, not in Galilee;
        - (b) Paul was brought up and educated in Jlem, and fought against the early churches there (Paul’s own writings deny this).
      - (2) Downplaying tensions with Jewish institutions:
        - (a) Does not mention the money-changers in the Temple;
        - (b) Makes no mention of Jesus’ threats against the Temple;
        - (c) Says the Sanhedrin never voted against Jesus or Paul.

- (3) Demographics:
- (a) We saw in Chapter 4 (p. 33) how Israel-based Christianity never took hold, and died out by 66.
  - (b) Luke rewrites this:
    - (i) “Myriads” of Jews embraced Jesus early on (Paul’s own writings dispute this)
    - (ii) Then there is only “partial or mixed success” in the intermediate chapters;
    - (iii) Then “increasing resistance” from Jews;
    - (iv) Finally, there is a prediction of NO success: “This people... shall... never understand... never perceive.”
  - (4) Cook’s analogy of a rope which gradually has its original strands replaced with new ones...
  - (5) Paul is confident that one day, the Jews will be saved;
  - (6) Luke abandons hope of converting the Jews, and turns Christianity toward a mission directed solely at gentiles.
  - (7) “Only the obstinacy of Jews in the past can account for the reality in the present (90 CE) that Christianity – although itself an extension of authentic Judaism – is severely un-Jewish numerically.” 216
- b) Cook’s understanding of history – read para, “An Underlying reality,” 216.
- i) Show RAILROAD SIDING... This is Luke’s reading of history.
  - ii) “we are to understand that disbelieving Jews have orphaned themselves sociologically as well as spiritually from their own legacy!” 216
  - iii) “How ironic that the genuine Paul’s apprehension of Gentile attitudes toward Jews becomes fulfilled in the person of Paul’s unauthorized biographer, Luke, and in *his* makeover of Paul.
- 8) Chapter 18 “The Gospel of John.”
- a) “John has been the most popular Gospel to many Christians because of its spiritual doctrines, mysticism and reassurances to believers.” 219
    - i) But because of its popularity, his anti-Jewish views have gained widespread acceptance, too.
    - ii) The anti-Jewish texts “suggest that tensions between the writer’s community and the synagogue were heated and that John probably tells us as much or more about his community itself than about the Jesus of history.” 224
    - iii) Cook speaks about *Birkat Ha-Minim*; read the translation: “For the slanderers let there be no hope, and all the wicked shall be doomed immediately, and all Your enemies shall be swiftly cut down, and the evil ones quickly uprooted, broken, destroyed and humbled – soon, in our day. We praise You, Adonai, who breaks enemies and humbles sinners.”
    - iv) Cook: the problem with Paul’s writings – the claim that the rabbis could excommunicate people – did not exist until at least a century or two later, *if at all*.

- b) Cook: John's overwhelming focus is on *believing* (he says it exactly 100 times),
  - i) So his biggest issue with the Jews is that they are "*those who stubbornly disbelieve when it is they who ought to believe.*" 225
  - ii) Therefore, his "elastic" use of the words, "The Jews," applies to ALL who refuse to believe.
- c) "John's purpose is to advance a theological proposition, which is the need for the belief in Christ. In so doing he needs two role models : one of choosing disbelief, to be eschewed by his readers; and the second, of choosing proper belief, to be emulated by his readers." 226
  - i) "In sum, the disciples' model those who believe despite all discouragement,
  - ii) While the Jews model those who disbelieve in the face of all compelling evidence." 226
- d) Cook: John's conflict is NOT between Jesus and the Jews; it is between the Jews and the Disciples. 226
- e) "John's paramount concern is not anti-Judaism but rather challenging unbelievers to become believers." 227
- f) "John's anti-Judaism is essentially a by-product of other concerns." 228
  - i) The Doubting Thomas, who needs to see Jesus (wounds and all) to believe: "Jesus said..., 'Have you believed because you have seen me? *Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe.*"
  - ii) Cook: "to what degree does the story reflect John's own day, when those who can believe are limited to doing so without seeing?" 228
- g) "John has imputed his theology to God personally, thereby in effect making God appear anti-Jewish!... READ BOTTOM PARA ON 228-229.
- h) **DW: It's fine that Cook shows John's true intent, but what happens when Christians over the centuries take it as anti-Jewish? Do we suffer any less knowing that it's not what he intended?**
- 9) **Chapter 10 – "Can we right what's wrong with church 'seders'?"**
  - a) Reading Jesus' life (and death, and resurrection) into the seder – see p. 109, plus HANDOUT (Christian view of seder rituals as Christian)
    - i) Central elements:
      - (1) Jesus' death at or near Passover was seen as a sign;
      - (2) Jesus IS the Passover offering, the "lamb" which saves.
  - b) Item #1 – the seder as we know it was a *rabbinic* creation, not Biblical, and did not exist in Jesus' time.
    - i) Cook's hypothesis: Gamliel structured the seder specifically as an anti-Christian polemic.
      - (1) "Whoever does not explain these three things... Paschal lamb, matzah, maror... has not fulfilled the obligation"
      - (2) These three are not mentioned in the earliest Gospels,
      - (3) And neither is any connection to the Exodus from Egypt.
      - (4) Additional note: Gamliel is associated with the introduction of *Birkat Ha-Minim* (see prev. chapter), so we know he was concerned about "heretics" in the midst of the Jewish people.

- c) History: “Red Friday” – a bad, bad time for Jews throughout the Middle Ages...
  - i) SO, when Christians start expressing an interest in our seders, it’s an easy response to run to help them!
  - ii) BUT, there is only ONE reference to a Passover seder in the Gospels – Mark 14:12-16.
  - iii) Paul (mid-50’s) describes it as an ordinary meal with ordinary bread,
  - iv) and John says the Last Supper was the day BEFORE Passover (so Jesus’ death could BE the Paschal offering, which had to be prepared before the Passover meal).
  - v) “The 2 options (Passover meal or Passover lamb) were mutually exclusive, so only 1 could be incorporated by any Evangelist.” 117
- d) Cook: The “seder” was a later, crude insertion into the text!
  - i) Pp 115-17 – 5 “anomalies” which point to this insertion.
  - ii) Most important: #5, which puts the Sanhedrin trial on Day I of Pesach (the day after the Last Supper).
  - iii) Modern church responses: to understand the need to leave Pesach as a Jewish holiday. READ top para on 118.
  - iv) “Mark’s action here was an entirely appropriate and acceptable thing for him to do because he was not intending to write history, but *theology*.” 118
- e) Conclusion: We can, together, understand the seder as “a model of liberation” for past and future. We can all agree on the concept of God’s redemption, and not worry about the details of how that would come about. We all see a world in need of saving, and we can work on it together.

### 10) Chapter 11 – Good Friday: Responding to Blame for Jesus’ Death

- a) Charges of the Jews as “Christ-Killers” involve three ideas:
  - i) The Jews were to blame for Jesus’ death;
  - ii) The involvement requires that Jews, as a people, be held responsible;
  - iii) Such “corporate” responsibility is transmissible to all future generations.
- b) Cook: “my purpose is informational, not adversarial” 122
  - i) REVIEW EACH OF THE “DEFENSES” AND REJOINDERS ON 122-4.
  - ii) “What Jews most need is an in-depth knowledge of how Passion traditions came into being.”
  - iii) Cook: we need to focus on the *theological* as much as the *historical*, because that is where the battle will be waged.
- c) “I endorse the view that Jesus saw himself as God’s last envoy before God’s imminent intervention in human history, which would purify the world of the evilness resulting from human misbehavior and achieve a place of acceptance for the poor, outcast and lowly.” 124
  - i) “The evangelists’ ill-disposition toward those Jews who, in the writers’ own day [40-70 years after Jesus], rejected Jesus, magnified any role that they presumed Jews had played in Jesus’ death.” 125
- d) Why the Evangelists would tend to demonize the Jews:

- i) Wariness of Rome – not wanting to be associated with the rebellious Jews.
- ii) Rancor toward (non-Christian) Jews –
  - (1) As Jews rejected the Christians in the Evangelists' day, it was easy to read that rejection back onto the Jews of Jesus' day.
  - (2) AND, if Jesus hadn't done anything seditious toward Rome, why was he killed? They needed a new party to blame.
  - (3) In both cases, the result was to ally Christians with Rome while presenting Jews as enemies of both.
- iii) Christian reliance on Jewish Scripture – using the Prophets to “speak about Jesus” pins blame on the Jews for things unrelated to Jesus.
- iv) Blasphemy, not Sedition – Reading “the King of the Jews” as a threat to JEWS, rather than a threat to ROME.
- e) Resolving the “Hybrid Riddle” (Cook's term) – see box, p 128.
  - i) Cook: No one blamed the Jews for at least 20 years after Jesus' death!
    - (1) “Blame” arises when “Christians become significantly more fearful of Rome beginning in the 60's...” starting with Nero's scapegoating and torture of Christians in the 64 CE, then the revolt in 66-70 CE.
    - (2) “for Christians still to appear associated with Jewish insurgents would court danger since christians' “founder” was a Jew known to have been crucified in a land now infamous for rebellion.” 128
    - (3) As more Gentile-Christians entered the fold, it became easier to blame the *Jewish people* for the “crime.”
    - (4) “The ‘benefit’ became accepted in Christianity during the 30's and onward; the ‘blame’ of the Jews only entered belatedly, due to the events of the 60's.” 129
  - f) Conclusions:
    - i) HISTORY: We will never be able to rid ourselves of the charge that we did it by saying, “Rome did it.” We need more knowledge (of Gospel Dynamics, Cook suggests) to make our case.
    - ii) THEOLOGY: Even if the most convincing historical argument were made, nothing would convince most Christians of it since it is the core of their belief system.
    - iii) SUMMARY: “Neither Jews nor their Christian supporters should be lulled into believing that the decide issue is put to rest. It can and will flare up on no notice.” 131

### **11) Chapter 12 – Good Friday (Extended): “Did the Sanhedrin and Barabbas Episodes Actually Occur?”**

- a) Discuss the concept of a “framework” for a story:
  - i) JOB
    - (1) Early, short story known by all – “the tested servant.”
    - (2) Keeping the framework – 1<sup>st</sup> and last chapters – and writing a new, complex middle.
    - (3) How do we know? Because of the “seams”; the middle story doesn't match the two ends.
    - (4) The original authors would not recognize the current story!

- ii) Cook's suggestion that this MIGHT apply to the Passion – an original framework, with later embellishment.
    - (1) His questions: do the two most injurious parts of the story appear to be original, or added in Mark's post-70 writing?
      - (a) The "delivery" texts –
        - (i) Cook believes the Sanhedrin trial was added later, to increase the culpability of the WHOLE Jewish people.
        - (ii) Page 136, he identifies FIVE "accruing layers." No need to go thru that unless there are questions.
        - (iii) Conclusion: "the Sanhedrin account seems to be not *reported* but *created* history, less science than art." 137
          - 1. Goals of the created history:
          - 2. "replacing Rome with the Jews as the villains of the piece;
          - 3. replacing Pilate with the high priest as determiner of Jesus' death;
          - 4. and replacing a verdict of sedition (a crime of great concern to Rome) with blasphemy (a crime of no concern to Rome.)
      - (b) NOTE: As from the original "Jesus Project," the question is, what remains of the original text when we're done disassembling it?
        - (i) In other words, even if his suggestion is correct, all that's left is the basic framework: Jesus lived, he died and he was resurrected.
        - (ii) That's not enough for Christianity!
- b) The Barabbas Story
  - i) FILLED with problems, textually and for the Jews!
    - (1) NO other record of such a custom in Rome (releasing a prisoner before Pesach.
    - (2) WHY would Pilate free ANY criminal, just for the fun of it?
    - (3) IF the Jewish authorities wanted Jesus arrested, why would they do it right before Pesach, when he would be a prime candidate for release?
    - (4) And why does the crowd, which welcomed Jesus to J'lem so effusively just a few days earlier, suddenly want him killed?
  - ii) See "why, then" para middle 141 for possible reasons for Mark's including this story.
    - (1) MOST telling: to defuse the "king of the Jews" accusation, which, Cook says, probably *was* on Jesus' cross:
      - (a) To change it from a *subversive* accusation against him by Rome,
      - (b) To a philosophical/Messianic accusation by the Sanhedrin.
- c) Conclusion: What remains?
  - i) See p. 143 – the "residue" after the later additions are removed.
    - (1) Cook notes that this is only 11% of the text.

- (2) Read last sentence (long one!) at the bottom of 143 onto 144, “And if so...”
- d) In the section, “A Reverse Thrust to Mark’s Editing,” the first para (mid 144) has an important message: Mark is not out to hurt the Jews; he is out to protect Christians by exculpating Rome.
- i) Read that para...
  - ii) He really doesn’t care about the Jews either way. But he needs someone to deflect the story as it exists ONTO, and the Jews are the only ones available.

## 12)Chapter 13: Easter – The Empty Tomb Enigmas

- a) Cook describes how the story builds upon itself from one book to the next:
  - i) Isaiah is buried in the tomb of a wealthy man; suddenly, Matthew adds that to Mark’s original text.
  - ii) And the tomb had to be empty (both before and after), so Matthew describes a brand-new, unused tomb.
  - iii) Luke sees that Joseph (who buried him) was “good and righteous”; therefore, he could not have consented to the verdict. Even though Mark himself says that ALL who heard the trial voted to convict him!
- b) Cook: Mark creates (or serves as the sole source) for half a dozen “bit players.”
  - i) Cook’s theory is that they are all of one character:
    - (1) They are people “who need not have done so came through for Jesus in ways in which his *designated* supporters failed him.” 153
    - (2) See 153 for the list and description of how they did right, when the disciples did wrong.
- c) “The Empty Tomb Tradition”
  - i) Cook clearly believes that this is a late invention.
    - (1) Mark (earliest) barely mentions it, but Matthew goes into much more detail.
      - (a) Why?
      - (b) Cook: Mark either *invents* it, or describes something *recently invented*;
      - (c) He does not counter the “theft” possibility, because *he has never heard it!*
      - (d) Yet, such a charge would arise almost immediately after non-believers heard of the empty tomb.
    - (2) John, writing later, avoids the problem by having the resurrected Jesus converse with Mary Magdalene.
  - ii) Mark ends his Gospel by describing the women who saw the empty tomb and “said nothing to anyone for they were afraid.”
    - (1) Matthew doesn’t think that is plausible, so HE describes them running to tell the disciples, thereby eliminating the problem.
    - (2) Cook: But Matthew ignored the reason for Mark’s inclusion: responding to the question of why no one ever heard of the empty tomb until now.
  - iii) Paul – never mentions the empty tomb story:

- (1) Cook: he would not have shied away from addressing such a problem,
- (2) IF he knew it existed.
- (3) But in the 50's, the story did not yet exist.
- d) The early Kerygma:
  - i) The basic proclamation of early religious truths.
  - ii) "...that Christ dies for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas [Peter], then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles."
  - iii) NOTHING in this requires – or mentions – the empty tomb!
- e) Cook: the empty tomb story arises when Jews and other non-believers are questioning the basic tenet of Christianity: Jesus' resurrection.
  - i) Now, years later, and after the complete destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, these stories cannot be disproved.
  - ii) So they serve to strengthen the claim of the resurrection.
  - iii) Therefore, "whatever the reasons earliest Christians had for believing that Jesus was resurrected are beyond historical reconstruction." 158
  - iv) BUT, what should matter for Jews is the understanding that resurrection has no place in the Jewish story/prophesy/description of the messiah,
    - (1) So whether or not it happened does not determine – at least, for Jews – whether Jesus was the Messiah.

### 13) "The Passion of the Christ"

- a) Show movie, distribute material from M Cook for discussion next time.
- b) Discuss "Gibson Dynamics," to accompany "Gospel Dynamics" –
  - i) What did Gibson include from the 19<sup>th</sup> Century work of a German nun?
  - ii) What did he include from his own imagination?
  - iii) Gibson had the characters speak in Aramaic, to increase the historical accuracy of the movie,
    - (1) Yet they are all *white*, which no residents of the Middle East were!
    - (2) What other *inaccuracies* are presented under the claim of historical accuracy?

### 14) Chapter 20 – "Neutralizing Missionary Encroachment"

- a) "There will always be attempts to convince Jews to join Christian ranks."
  - i) "Many a Christian is simply baffled that Jews appear to forgo what they have always most wanted: salvation from the Messiah who came expressly for *them!*" p 251
  - ii) "Were Jews to accept Jesus as the *Christian* definition of who the Messiah was supposed to be, many Christians would not gloat but feel thrilled." << DISCUSS THIS! Jews see it as LOSING, but many Christians are not playing to "win."
  - iii) "Lack of awareness by most Jews concerning the talents and tactics of these operatives only facilitates missionary advances." P. 251

- iv) “Most Christians have no interest in converting Jews.”
  - (1) Discuss “two-covenant theology” – J and C existing side by side in God’s eyes.
  - (2) Is it anti-Semitic to try to convert Jews? “not to those who contend that ‘failure to preach... to the Jewish people would be a form of anti-Semitism, depriving this ... community of its right to hear the Gospel.’”
- b) Cook’s major theory: “a group’s missionizing fervor may be a function of – that is, generated by – its members publicly sustaining humiliating disappointment of cherished expectations.” P. 253
  - i) Discuss/explain “cognitive dissonance”:
    - (1) Two items of knowledge (‘cognition’) are dissonant with each other if they do not fit together.
    - (2) Pp 252-3 – discuss the 4 dissonances.
    - (3) P 253 – discuss the criteria which lead to groups launching efforts to convert others to their already-discredited beliefs;
    - (4) Then p 254 – application to the early Jesus movement.
    - (5) Then p 254-5 – read para of Cook’s vision of how early Christianity followed this paradigm.
  - ii) “YET, every time modern Jews say that Jesus’ death shows that he was not that Messiah, the dissonance returns. *So it remains the Jews above all who must be converted!*” p 255
- c) Proof texting
  - i) “many of those Jews who have converted to Christianity pinpoint proof-texting as having been *the* determining factor.” P 256
  - ii) BUT, it is unrealistic to expect Jews to know the counter-arguments against each Biblical “proof.”
  - iii) More important: “the false underlying premise is that missionaries are actually interested in hearing Jewish responses. They want conversion, not conversation.” P 256
  - iv) Instead – tools that work
    - (1) “The Bull’s-Eye Approach”
      - (a) “The Jews’ task is to reveal that, often, so-called predictions from Jewish scripture are ‘arrows shot first,’ with Jesus’ Gospel image a bull’s-eye made to surround each one.”
    - (2) The Circumvention Approach
      - (a) (IMO less convincing)
      - (b) Help Jews to understand that Judaism is much more than the Bible; the past 2,000 years of our experience are “proof” of Jesus’ not being our Messiah.
    - (3) The “Bibliolatry” Approach
      - (a) Instead of arguing about whether the Bible identifies a certain person as the Messiah,
      - (b) The response can be, “If the Bible says that, it’s wrong.”
      - (c) This completely undermines the missionaries’ argument.
    - (4) The “Configurations” Approach

- (a) Basically, the Christian messiah isn't the Jewish messiah.
  - (b) The Jewish messiah doesn't save those who "believe in him,"
  - (c) Nor does the death of a Jewish messiah accomplish anything for "believers."
  - (d) In other words, creating a Christian messiah, then saying the Jewish bible proves he is the one, is not acceptable.
  - v) Creating Answer Sheets for dealing with Missionaries
    - (1) See 259-60; review the questions and answers.
    - (2) Jews for Jesus
      - (a) See top 261; important distinction between the organization and the participants.
        - (i) "Initiates may be sincere, yet it is possible to be both sincere and deceitful.' 263
      - (b) Major points:
        - (i) Look at how Jews for Jesus defines itself for its Christian donors – they are an evangelical organization, furthering Christian theology.
        - (ii) They are ritually inconsistent, embracing Jewish rituals which developed during rabbinic times, after the split from Christianity. (How can the seder, or Bar Mitzvah, be connected to Jesus?)
        - (iii) They are *not* the modern continuation of a 2,000-year old tradition of "Judaizers"; they are a modern creation, funded beginning in the 1970's.
        - (iv) DW: since when do churches fund Jewish institutions?
        - (v) Cook: "Jews today who join these messianic groups are probably the only people in the world who take on the beliefs of another religion yet deny that they have converted to that religion!"
        - (vi) DISCUSS THIS – How does Jewish guilt play into the J for J game plan?
        - (vii) Bottom line: if you accept Jesus you're a Christian, and to be a Jew you can't.
          - 1. So Jews who accept Jesus HAVE become Christians,
          - 2. and Christians who profess to accept Judaism fail to acknowledge that, to do so, they must forgo believe in Jesus' divinity. 263
  - d) Cook's "Five Workable Ground Rules," 263-4
    - i) Read now.
    - ii) Problem: are missionaries willing to live by these rules?
  - e) Page 264 – "Advice validated by experience" – worth remembering.
- 15)Chapter 22 – "Is the New Testament Antisemitic?"**
- a) A summary of the material we've discussed all year
    - i) 278 – list of 10 themes Jews fear
    - ii) "These anti-Jewish themes also pose a serious dilemma for Christians committed to improving interfaith discourse."

- (1) “What to do when the sacred repository of their cherished teachings also seems to generate such intensely anti-Jewish sentiment?”
- b) Christian approaches:
- i) “Steadfast denial that the NT is itself anti-Jewish”
    - (1) See chart, 282-3, for claims and reactions
  - ii) “Anti-Jewishness is acknowledged, but mainly in terms that minimize its importance or otherwise explain it away.”
    - (1) See chart, 284-5, for claims and reactions.
  - iii) “The NT’s anti-Jewishness is openly recognized as a serious problem that requires full confrontation.”
    - (1) Maybe it had to be, to establish its separateness from its “mother religion.”
    - (2) Judaism in this case would not be without value, but valued as the foundation on which Christianity would build and improve.
    - (3) This requires holding in tension 3 positions simultaneously:
      - (a) Judaism is good;
      - (b) Christianity is better;
      - (c) Therefore Christianity becomes anti-Jew(ish)...
        - (i) Or more accurately, anti-JEW;
        - (ii) For the ancient religion was good,
        - (iii) But those Jews who refuse to see that Christianity is better are the ones who are myopic.
- c) Coping with NT Anti-Jewishness Today
- i) Cook: Many Christians today are willing to overlook objectionable ideas, both in OT and NT; it should be possible for those who wish to do the same with anti-Jewish ideas.
  - ii) Cook: “Is it not incumbent on interpreters of Christian values to declare anti-Jewish passages *devalued*?” 287
  - iii) But Cook’s highest hope, mid p. 287, is that Christians will come to recognize the role of Gospel Dynamics in their own sacred work:
    - (1) “The anti-Jewish Jesus who emerges from the Gospels is thus the product of writers *who simply made the figure of Jesus in their texts the spokesperson for their own anti-Jewish orientation*, which was in turn often a function of whatever such views were current among their own constituencies.”
    - (2) COOK’S OWN FOCUS:
      - (a) “When we are told that ‘Jesus said’ anything about the Jewish people or to the Jewish people, we should substitute: *‘the Gospel writer says that Jesus said.’ Whatever the Evangelists put into the mouth of Jesus constitutes no evidence that Jesus himself said this.*”
    - (3) MY FINAL COMMENT:
      - (a) It is truly important that we understand Cook’s central thesis, and understand Gospel Dynamics.
      - (b) BUT, we must also recognize that much of our history has been formed by Christians making us “their problem.”

- (c) Finding a way to move forward, to improve relations, is of tremendous importance in our society today, but for those who don't want to hear, only to tell, we have to protect ourselves, too.
- (d) Read Chapter 23 – a good summation.