

**HOW THE HOLOCAUST HAS INFLUENCED  
MY UNDERSTANDING OF THE BIBLE  
AND THE EXPRESSION OF MY CHRISTIAN FAITH.**

By

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Presented as part of

**HOW THE HOLOCAUST  
HAS INFLUENCED OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE BIBLE:  
AN INTERFAITH SYMPOSIUM.**

February 6, 1994. 2:00-4:00pm

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The following is a first draft of some of my thoughts on this topic. Much more study and thought is absolutely necessary.

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My name is Walter Ludwig Michel.

Michel comes from the longer Greek form of *mega*, namely, *megalo*. Cf. e.g., “megalo-polis,” and the name of the beer “Michelob,” which consists of the word “michel” and the German word “Lob,” i.e., English, “praise.” The meaning, therefore, of Michelob is, “much praise.” Note that

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the letter “l” does *double duty* for the end of the word “Michel” and for the beginning of the word “Lob.” Cf. also the English proverb: “many a little makes a michel.”

My point is: words mean something. Words can kill and words can make alive.

I grew up in a very pious, Christian, Lutheran family. My father, an Austrian from Vienna, was a pastor for German congregations in Yugoslavia during the 1930ies.

In 1938 my country, Austria, became part of the German Third Reich. In 1941 Yugoslavia was occupied by the German Army. I was told that from now on I had to greet everyone with “Heil Hitler,” and not with “Grüss Gott” or “Guten Tag.” I was a pious little boy and I knew that my Lord was Jesus Christ and not Adolf Hitler. Every time I said “Heil Hitler” I was horrified that Jesus would do something dreadful to me and punish me for my high treason.

At the end of December 1942 we were forced to leave Yugoslavia because of the deadly danger from Tito and his people. We spent January to March in Austria.

Then my father accepted a desperate call from several German congregations in occupied Poland. At the end of March 1943 my father began his duties in Słupza/Grenzhausen near Konin.

Of course, I had to participate in the “German Youth” (which included boys from 9-13 years of age. So, I was too young for the real “Hitler Youth,” i.e., from 14 years of age until old enough for military service).

Once a meeting was scheduled for a Sunday morning. My father went to the authorities and told them: “I have little power to prevent you from having my son during the week, but on Sunday he belongs to the church. You can not have him on Sundays.” Similar incidents occurred and in the Fall of 1943 my father was sent to the Russian front.

During the Summer of 1944 (I was 12 years of age) I was sent to a “Führer-ertüchtigungs-lager,” a leader-tougheng-up-camp, in Łódź/Lidzmannsstadt.

Among the terrible experiences one stands out:

One day our immediate leader (a boy of about 16 years of age) pointed to some of us and said: “You, you, and you, follow me.” Of course, without raising any objections we followed him. He marched us to a tram station. We boarded the tram. After some time the doors to the tram were locked and a deadly silence fell upon all in the tram. I was horribly afraid, because I could not understand what was happening. But, of course, I also did not say a thing or even asked any questions. Then I saw and put two and two together. What I saw was terrible. Half starved, dirty people with yellow stars on their clothing. I was shocked. No one had prepared me for this moment. No one. Not my parents and not my leaders in the camp. No one had ever talked to me about what I was now witnessing. Soon the horror was over for me, but the effect on me stayed with me all of my life. The doors to the tram were unlocked and normal chatter filled the tram. None of us said anything about what we had just witnessed. No one asked questions and neither did I.

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In the Summer of 1990 I was browsing in Powell's Book Store (1501 E. 57th Street, Chicago, Illinois) and came across the book *The Chronicle of the Łódź Ghetto 1941-1944* (Edited by Lucjan Dobroszycki. Translated by Richard Lourie, Joachim Neugroschel, and others. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1984). For the next couple of days time stood still for me as I read and cried through the book.

Only on January 20, 1945 did my mother, my brother and I flee from Poland. For a few days we were in Dresden and then, somehow, we arrived in Vienna, Austria, where we suffered the bombing of the city (by the Americans) and then the occupation of the city by the Soviet Army. Of course, I have been scarred for life.

I survived the war. I grew up. I became an adult and I became obsessed with my studies of Judaism, Christianity, the Bible (in Hebrew and in Greek), and Holocaust literature. I also became a student of ancient Hebrew and other Semitic languages.

I needed to know the truth.

I needed understanding. I needed freedom from any religious and ideological stupidity, hypocrisy and oppression.

My citizenship is Austrian. I am very much aware of the fact that many individuals of my parent's generation participated in or tolerated the murder of Jewish people.

My religion is Christian and I am very much aware of the fact that many Christians throughout the centuries participated in or tolerated the murder of Jewish people because of *their* way of reading and interpreting the Jewish Scriptures, the Tanakh, as an "Old Testament" and their own Christian writings as the "New Testament." Many Christians assumed that the "New Israel" had now substituted the "Old Israel" and that there was really no more use for the "Old Israel." Jews (not Romans) had killed their own Messiah, their "Christ." Actually they had killed God.

My particular community in the Christian Church is the Protestant community (which formed in the 16th century as a protest movement inside of the Roman Catholic Church) and, furthermore, my community is the Evangelical Lutheran Church. I am very much aware of the fact that many Lutherans participated in and tolerated the murder of Jewish people.

My profession, since 1960, has been parish pastor and university pastor in the Lutheran Church.

Since 1972 my profession is Professor of Old Testament and I am very much aware of the fact that a certain type of Christian teaching and preaching and a certain type of Christian reading of the Jewish Scriptures (for almost 2,000 years) has contributed to the misery and death of millions of Jewish people and, finally, it has contributed to the intellectual and spiritual climate in which the HOLOCAUST (הֵלֶעַת, *ḥēlēt*, "whole burnt offering"), ... the SHOAH (הַשׂוֹאָה, *šō'āh*, "destruction, ruin, disaster, cataclysm, utter ruin, trouble, mistreatment," from the root שׂוֹ, *šw'*, Hiphil, "treat badly"), ... HURBAN (הִרְבָּן, *hūrbān*, "destruction"), ... the FINAL SOLUTION, the

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“ENDLÖSUNG,” i.e., the attempted annihilation of the Jewish people (during the National Socialist German Reich) became a reality.

How is it possible to continue to be a serious Christian, a Protestant, a Lutheran after becoming aware of the horrors of the Shoah and the state of mind of millions of people (including some Americans even in the government), which made such horrors possible? How is it possible to confess to be a Christian after becoming aware of the role which Christian teachings have had in establishing a climate in which pogroms (throughout the “Christian” centuries) and, finally, the Shoah became possible?

There is only one way. There *must* be a total, a *final* repentance, a Teshuvah (תְּשׁוּבָה, *těšûbāh*), a turning away from anything and everything which even vaguely smells of antisemitism and anti-Jewish feelings, attitudes, teachings and beliefs.

But this *must* be done not for the sake of the Jewish people, but for the sake of the survival of the Christian faith--if that is at all possible after the Shoah. If this is not possible and Christianity is, at its root, anti-Jewish, *then* I can no longer be a Christian.

Surely the Shoah was a deep and profound tragedy for the Jewish people--if words are even possible to express this tragedy.

But, at the same time, the Shoah was also a *final* disaster for the Christian faith and proved the wrongheaded (and even demonic) way in which Christians have read the Jewish Scriptures, the Tanach.

The Shoah signals the end of the Christian faith as we have known it for almost 2,000 years. The Shoah signals the end of the so-called “Christian Era.” It shows that the Christian faith, if it needs to be anti-Jewish, is bankrupt and even demonic. *If* the Christian faith could allow and encourage the murder of Jewish and other peoples not only during the Shoah, but during much of the history of Christianity, *then* it should, finally, be clear to everyone that Christianity, as we have known it, is bankrupt and not worthy of allegiance from even one human being.

Is *Teshuvah* (תְּשׁוּבָה, *těšûbāh*), repentance, forgiveness and newness of life, even possible for the Christian Church? *If* this is possible *then* it *must* begin with a re-reading of the Scriptures in the light which is cast from the fires of the Shoah.

Such a duty is especially serious for Lutherans. We *must* re-read, re-hear, re-interpret our Christian Scriptures and also our dogmas, our confessions, our festivals, our liturgies, our hymns, our prayers, our beautiful music ... in the light which is cast from the fires of the Shoah.

We Lutherans have a special problem because of Martin Luther and his particular way of expressing the Christian faith which, on the one hand, is very beautiful, but on the other hand, led him to a terrifying attitude toward the Jewish people. Luther made a horrifying mistake towards the end of his life. (He lived from 1483 to 1546)

In 1523 (as a 40 year old priest) he wrote a treatise entitled “That Jesus Christ Was Born a Jew.” The first paragraph reads:

I will ... show by means of the Bible the causes which induce me to believe that Christ was a Jew ... Perhaps I will attract some of the Jews to the Christian Faith. For our fools--the popes, bishops, sophist, and monks--the coarse blockheads! have until this time so treated the Jews that to be a good Christian one would have to become a Jew. And if I had been a Jew and had seen such idiots and blockheads ruling and teaching the Christian religion, I would rather have been a sow than a Christian. (Quoted from Talmage, F. E., ed., *Disputation and Dialogue: Reading in the Jewish-Christian Encounter* [New York: KTAV and Anti-Defamation League of B'nei B'rith, 1975] 33).

But, in 1543, as a 59 year old, after even *his* way of stating the Christian faith, was, of course, also not acceptable to Jewish people, he wrote a devastating treatise entitled, “Concerning the Jews and Their Lies.” He begins by writing:

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

First, their synagogues or churches should be set on fire, and whatever does not burn up should be covered over with dirt so that no one may ever be able to see a cinder or stone of it. And this ought to be done for the honor of God and of Christianity ...” (Quoted from Talmage, *Disputation*, 34f.).

Luther then goes on with six more points in this diatribe and it is extremely unpleasant to read.

How can I be a believing Christian, and a Lutheran at that, after becoming aware of the demonic streak in Christianity and in Luther which paved the road to Auschwitz?

There is only one way to handle these statements by Luther. They MUST be repudiated. Each one of them. And loudly and clearly.

The anti-Jewish way of reading the Scriptures and of stating the Christian faith *must* stop not for the sake of the Jewish people, but for the sake of the survival of Christianity.

But is *Teshuvah* (תשובה, *těšûbāh*), repentance, forgiveness and newness of life, a total, a *final* turning away from the sin of anti-Jewish statements and deeds even possible for Christians and for Lutherans?

Even if repentance is possible will God then be allowed to accept our *Teshuvah*? Is the biblical God (our Jewish and Christian deity) bound to accept repentance? What do our Scriptures say?

In Amos 5:15 we hear Amos address the people (and, I think, also us):

15     *śin ũ-rā' wě'ehēbū tōb*  
           *wěhaššîgû bašša'ar mišpāt*  
           *ŪLAY yeḥenan yhwh/ădônāy*  
           - *ělōhē šēbā'ôt - šě'ērît yōsep*

15     Hate evil and love good,  
           and establish justice in the gate (court);  
           **IT MAY BE** that the LORD will be gracious  
           - the God of Hosts - to the remnant of Joseph.

ŪLAY, “perhaps.” Even repentance does not guarantee, does not force God to accept us back into a safe haven into the fold of the “People of God.”

And, the Jew, Jesus of Nazareth (or, at least, Matthew, who speaks about Jesus), is even harsher than Amos.

In Matthew 25:1-13 we read:

1       Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this.  
           Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom.  
 2       Five of them were foolish and five were wise.  
 3       When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them;  
 4       but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps.  
 5       As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept.  
 6       But at midnight there was a shout, ‘Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.’  
 7       Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps.  
 8       The foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’  
 9       But the wise replied, ‘No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.’  
 10      And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; **and the door was shut.**  
 11      Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open to us.’  
 12      But he replied, ‘Truly I tell you, **I do not know you.**’  
 13      Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

The Shoah came upon us and we Christians, we Lutherans had no oil, no light. Does God say to us: “The Door is closed. I do not know you.”

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I am a Christian. Why? During my teens and twenties I rejected everything the Bible and the Church said to me. Then I studied. Knowledge is not faith. But, knowledge made it possible for me to remove the stumbling blocks to even being able to hear the invitation to faith. I have accepted that invitation.

I am now a Christian by choice and by conviction. I believe that I, as a gentile, have access to the God of the Jewish Scriptures through the life, death and resurrection of the Jew, Jesus of Nazareth. Through Jesus I, like a wild olive branch, am grafted on the superbly cultivated olive tree (i.e., the people of God, the Jewish people), whom God tends and keeps and prunes, and waters with the spiritual power and revelation through the Torah. (Romans 11:17f.) I too, now have the sap, the blood, the spiritual life of the olive tree pulsing through my body, brain and heart. Jesus functions for me like a grafting point, like a valve, like a door (cf. John 10:7). And “door” in Semitic languages is a designation for a teacher, an instructor. For me, a Christian, Jesus functions like the Torah does for the Jewish people. And the word Torah refers to the teaching, the instruction, the word (in Hebrew *dābār* and in Greek *λογος*), the Divine Communication from God.

And like a biblical prophet, the Jew Jesus, does not only challenge me, but also all wayward Christians, Jews and, I believe, all humans.

Was Jesus the Messiah? No, not during his life-time. But, I agree with all Christians that the Jew, Jesus, is the *resurrected*, the *coming* Messiah, the Anointed King of the End-time. And the End-time is now. Every time I, or anyone else, even an atheist, actually *does* the will of God then the “Kingdom of God” breaks into my life, the door opens and I enter into the heavenly banquet.

Yes, this is mythic, poetic language. How else can one express these things?

According to my limited understanding, I believe, that we Jewish and Christian peoples are *not* far apart at all. We are both messianic peoples living in the glow of God’s revelation and God’s constant invitation to live our lives according to God’s vision for our human lives. Jewish people hear this invitation through the Torah. Christian people hear this invitation through Jesus, whom we accept as the Door to the heart of God.

This is the kind of Christianity which I have taught and preached for thirty seven years. Nothing in this teaching reflects any anti-Jewish attitudes as far as I know. If some Jewish person does not accept me, the wild olive branch, then that is not my problem. My problem is to live my faith in daily *deeds* in such a way that it could not be interpreted as anti-Jewish or anti-human by anyone.

Am I wrong to express and live my Christian faith in this manner? Some Christians would certainly not accept my brief interpretation of what it means to be a Christian. But, for centuries, Christian teachers and preachers have portrayed the Christian faith as anti-Jewish at its root--and this I do not believe.

But, *if* it turns out that Christianity is at its root anti-Jewish *then* I can no longer be a Christian. And if I would then remain in the Christian fold I would be as guilty as all of those who were

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responsible for the Shoah and the light, the fire, which is cast upon me and all Christians, will surely destroy me.

The Shoah came upon us and we Christians, we Lutherans, had no oil, no light. Does God say to us: "The Door is closed. I do not know you."

We Christians had almost 2,000 years to repent. Yes, some Christians did many good things, but are not all of those good deeds negated by our attitude of superiority and our intellectual and spiritual responsibility in the preparation of a climate in which the Shoah could take place?

What must be done?

What *must* be the evidence that we Christians, and especially we Lutherans, have begun a serious and total *těšûbāh*, repentance?

The list is very long.

I will simply list some of my suggestions until my allocated time runs out. In the following I am thinking mainly, of the leaders, teachers, preachers, pastors and students (who want to be pastors in the Christian churches). The list is not arranged according to priorities. What is needed?

1. A thorough ACQUAINTANCE WITH THE SHOAH and the causes which led to it. I would make the following (and similar) books compulsory reading: Flannery, Edward H., *The Anguish of the Jews: Twenty-three Centuries of Anti-Semitism*. Revised and Updated. A Stimulus Book. New York/Mahwah, 1985 (Preface by John M. Oesterreicher. Quest Books. First edition: New York and London: Collier and MacMillan, 1965). Nicholls, William, *Christian Antisemitism: A History of Hate*. Northvale, New Jersey/London: Jason Aronson, 1993.  
     There must be no more silence in Christian seminaries and from Christian pulpits about the Shoah and how it came about.
2. A VISIT TO A HOLOCAUST MUSEUM, e.g., Yad VaShem, in Jerusalem, or the Holocaust Museum in Washington.
3. Knowledge of, at least, ELEMENTARY HEBREW AND GREEK in order to be able to read the Jewish Scriptures and also the Christian Scriptures in the original languages.
4. STUDY IN ISRAEL, at least, three months if not six months.
5. Study of the JEWISH SCRIPTURES, i.e., the TANAKH (Torah, Nevi'im, Ketubim, i.e., Torah, Prophets, Writings) and the SEPTUAGINT (the oldest Jewish translation of Jewish writings into Greek) and the TARGUMIM (translation of Jewish writings into Aramaic), together with Jewish students and professors.
6. A CHANGE OF TERMINOLOGY for the Christian Scriptures is mandatory, I think.

Instead of “Old Testament” for the Tanakh and instead of “New Testament” for the early Jewish and Gentile Christian writings a new terminology must be found. A number of suggestions have been made in this area, but I am not happy with any of the recommendations. Maybe we should say JEWISH SCRIPTURES (and mean the Tanach and the Septuagint) and APOSTOLIC SCRIPTURES (and mean the “New Testament” as a midrash of the Tanach and the Septuagint). When we Christians want to refer to the so-called “Old Testament” and the so-called “New Testament” then we, probably, should say CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURES.

The term “New Testament” goes back to the Bible. The word “testament” comes from the Latin *testamentum*, which translates the Hebrew תִּירַב, *bĕrît* and the Greek *diathēkē*, which means “contract, agreement, treaty, covenant” and even “last will.”

In Jeremiah 31:31-34, we read the famous passages concerning the new covenant which God will make with God’s people.

31:31 (Heb 30)

Look, days are coming,  
 - utterance of YHWH -  
 when I will cut (ratify) with the House of Israel  
 and with the House of Judah,  
 a new (renewed) covenant;

31:32 (Heb 31)

not according to the covenant  
 which I cut (ratified) with their fathers,  
 in (the) day that I seized them by their hand  
 to bring them out from the land of Egypt,  
 which they broke - My covenant,  
 although I, yes I, was the Lord for them.  
 - utterance of YHWH.

31:33 (Heb 32)

for this is the covenant  
 which I will cut (ratify) with the House of Israel,  
 after those days,  
 - utterance of YHWH -  
 I will put My Instruction into their inward parts (consciousness),  
 and upon their hearts (minds)  
 I will certainly write (incise) it,  
 and I will (again) become their God,  
 and they will (again) become, for me, my people;

31:34 (Heb 33)

and they will not teach any longer  
 one his neighbor,  
 and another his brother, saying (as follows),  
 “Know YHWH,”  
 because, all of them, they will know Me,

from (the) smallest of them  
and unto (the) greatest of them,  
- utterance of YHWH -  
because I will forgive their iniquity,  
and their sin I will not remember any more.

In the Christian writings, especially in 2 Corinthians 3:5-18, “testament” is interpreted as the announcement of a new future which is fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Therefore, because through Jesus the “new covenant” has been given, therefore, the term “old covenant” was applied to the history of God’s people with God before Jesus.

But, is it true that this “New Covenant” has come? Do we Jewish and Christian people live in such a way that we actually *do* the will of God in every instance. Is it true that there are no more tears, no more wars, no more sufferings, no more ...?

But, it is very hard, if not impossible, to blame the early Jewish and Gentile Christians that they thought, in their enthusiasm, that through Jesus the “New Covenant” had actually come.

The Jewish Christians died out because Jesus, quite obviously, did not return as the expected Messiah.

But, the Gentile Christians did not give up. They really *had* tasted something new. They understood themselves to part of the people of God through Jesus. This *was* something new. The belief in the resurrection, fervently held by the Maccabees three hundred years before, was something new for these Gentiles. The belief in the resurrection of Jesus was something new as the beginning of a new era in the relationship with God.

7. The SELECTION OF THE WEEKLY SUNDAY READINGS from the Jewish Scriptures must be rethought by Christians in order to reflect a much broader understanding of Jesus. They must be read and interpreted not as being superseded by the Apostolic Writings or by Christian interpretation.
8. THE WEEKLY READING SHOULD BE STUDIED TOGETHER WITH JEWISH PEOPLE.
9. THE JEWISH WEEKLY READINGS should become known to Christians.
10. INTERPRETATION AND HERMENEUTICS. Christians must be made aware of the fact that there are quite a number of ways to interpret the Biblical texts and that there are distinct Jewish ways of interpreting the Jewish Scriptures. We Christians must read the Jewish Scriptures not as a foil for our particular Christian claims. We must listen for the Word of God, for the Revelation of God in all of Scripture. There must no longer be any defensive midrash or interpretation of the Scriptures.

The Shoah shows, as no other crime in human history, that those who interpret the Scriptures and those who construct theologies can become sinners, can commit *פשע*, *peša*; a willful rebellion against God.

Augustian and Lutheran anti-Jewish understanding of the Jewish Scriptures has almost cut off the Christian Church, especially Lutherans, from the full effect of the

breath of the Holy Spirit, which blows through the Scriptures and enthuses us. This must be remedied for the sake of all Christians and especially for the sake of Lutherans.

11. THE ROLE OF TORAH as Instruction, Teaching, Guide, Revelation, in the Bible and in Judaism must be understood by Christians and, especially, by Lutherans, who have a special problem here, because they make a distinction between “Law and Gospel.”
12. PREACHING FROM THE JEWISH SCRIPTURES. Christian pastors should be studying together with rabbis when it comes to preaching from the Jewish Scriptures. Of course, Christians have a right and a duty to add their Christian perspectives, but, it can not be an anti-Jewish perspective.
13. THE CHRISTIAN FEASTS throughout the Christian year must not reflect any anti-Jewish sentiments. Especially the worship services during the week before Easter, during which Christians remember the suffering and death of Jesus, and the Easter services must not reflect any anti-Jewish sentiments.
14. Christians must develop NEW FESTIVALS AND COMMEMORATIONS, e.g., (1) A HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY (during this commemoration Christian responsibility for the pogroms and the Shoah should be remembered); (2) A THANKSGIVING FOR THE JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURES; (3) A CELEBRATION OF THE GLORY OF THE CREATION (during which the goodness of minerals, plants, animals and humans could be celebrated).
15. CHRISTIAN WORSHIP, THE LITURGY, THE PRAYERS, THE HYMNS, THE CONFESSIONS, etc., must not reflect any anti-Jewish sentiments.
16. Christians must rethink what they mean by “THE GOOD NEWS,” “THE GOSPEL.” Is this “Good News” -- no matter how interpreted -- really good news to anyone? Was it “Good News” to the obedient religious Jewish people from the first century on until today? Would Apostle Paul’s, and the early Christian’s “Good News,” be good news for Jesus of Nazareth, his mother and the disciples?
17. THE DIVISION OF TIME INTO B.C (Before Christ) AND A.D. (Anno Domini, i.e., the year of the Lord) must cease.

A much more appropriate division of time might be BEFORE THE SHOAH (B.S.) and AFTER THE SHOAH (A.S.) - as a signal to ALL humans of THE INSANITY OF ANY MURDER OF ANY HUMAN BEING FOR WHATEVER REASON. We must stop murdering each other for religious or ideological reasons.

ETC. ...

A final thought. Is it important for Jewish people what Christians will decide and how they will read the Bible and celebrate their feasts after the Shoah?

In my opinion, Jewish people no longer need to fear what Christians think or do in their relationship to the Jewish people. The Jewish people not only suffered the Shoah, but they also experienced the re-birth of the State of Israel ... another miracle in the long line of miracles. The Jewish people now have the joy and the burden of the state and of the Israeli Defense Force. There are no more "Christian" armies. Praise God!

It is no longer important for the Jewish people how we Christians read the Scriptures. But it is important for Christian survival.

But, an even more sobering thought (at least for me). Does the world care how we Jews and Christians read our Scriptures--from the most orthodox to the most liberal (whatever these terms mean)?

Is it God's will that we should mistreat or destroy even one other human being, an animal, or any thing in this world, because of our particular religious or ideological convictions?

Are we (Jews and Christians) "the light to the world," as OUR Scriptures claim (e.g., Isaiah 42:6; Matthew 5:14)? If not then, both, Jewish and Christian believers have much work to do and they would do well to do this work together.

Thank you for your attention.

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