The Rejection of Israel

1. **The Jewishness of the early Church**
    a. Jewish Messiah, Jewish apostles and prophets, maintaining Jewish worship practices, HQ'd in Jerusalem, All scripture written by Jews, Jewish patriarchs, promises of God made to Jews first etc…
    b. Early believers are all Jews—3000 at Shavuot (Pentecost) are Jews. Priests (Acts 6:7), Pharisees (Acts 15:5), and "tens of thousands of believers were zealous for the Torah" (Acts 21:20).
    c. Christianity is the fulfilment of Judaism. It is a sect of Judaism—an outgrowth from it declaring that one of the Jewish Rabbis is the Messiah and the only way to have forgiveness before a Holy God.
    d. Gentiles come to Christ in Acts 10.

2. **How did the early Church lose its Jewishness?**
    a. Jewish apostles die out
    b. High gentile conversion rate
    c. Jerusalem sacked in AD 70
    d. Jews scattered and persecuted—"God is done with the Jews"
    e. Harmonization of the gospel with Greco-Roman culture
    f. Disobedience to the warning in Rom 11

3. **Anti-Semitism of the early church fathers**
    a. **Ignatius of Antioch** (50-117 AD) Taught that those who partake in Passover are partakers of those who killed Jesus
    b. **Justin Martyr** (100-165 AD) Claimed God's Covenant with Israel was no longer valid and that the gentiles had replaced the Jews.
    c. **Irenaeus** (130-202 AD) Declared that the Jews were disinherited from the grace of God
    d. **Tertullian** (155- 230 AD) Blamed the Jews for the death of Christ and argued that they had been permanently rejected by God
    e. **Origen** (185- 254 AD) Responsible for much anti-Semitism, all of which stemmed from his assertion that the Jews killed Christ.
    f. **Eusebius** (275- 339 AD) Taught that the promises in the OT were meant for the gentile church and the curses were meant for Israel. Taught that the church was the "true Israel".

g. **John Chrysostom** (349- 407 AD) Preached a series of sermons against the Jews in which he stated, "The synagogue is not only a brothel and a theater, it is also a den of robbers and lodging place for wild beasts ... Jews are inveterate murderers possessed by the Devil. Their debauchery and drunkenness gives the manners of a pig." He denied that Jews could ever receive forgiveness. He claimed it was a Christian duty to hate Jews. He claimed that Jews worshiped Satan. And this man was canonized a saint.

h. **Jerome** (ca 347-420 AD) - Described the Jews as "... serpents wearing the image of Judas. Their psalms and prayers are the braying of donkeys … They are incapable of understanding Scripture"

i. **St. Augustine** (354-430 AD) - Asserted that the Jews deserved death but were destined to wander the earth to witness the victory of the Church over the synagogue."

4. **Martin Luther and Hitler**

a. **Luther** publishes "Concerning Jews and their Lies" in 1543

b. **Luther** describes the Jews as "A miserable and accursed people" "Stupid fools" "Miserable, blind and senseless" "Thieves and robbers" "The great vermin of humanity" " Lazy rogues" " Blind and venomous"

c. **Luther's** suggestions for how to treat Jews?

- burn schools and synagogues
- destroy Jewish homes
- Confiscate the Talmud and prevent Rabbis from teaching
- Take Jewish money and property
- Place Jews into forced labor

d. **Hitler** publishes "Mein Kampf" in 1925 and refers to Luther as a "great warrior, true statesman, and great reformer"

e. In 1924, during a Christian rally, **Hitler** said the following: *"I believe that today I am acting in accordance with the will of Almighty God as I announce the most important work that Christians could undertake - and that is to be against the Jews and get rid of them once and for all."*

f. **Hitle**r again on Luther: *"Martin Luther has been the greatest encouragement of my life. Luther was a great man. He was a giant. With one blow he heralded the coming of the new dawn and the new age. He saw clearly that the Jews need to be destroyed, and we're only beginning to see that we need to carry this work on."*

g. **Julius Streicher** (Nazi leader) at the Nuremberg trials defended himself by saying *"I have never said anything that Martin Luther did not say."*

h. Not throwing the baby out with bath water-- God used **Martin Luther** and the church fathers, but we must not gloss over their negative beliefs, their disobedience to direct scripture and their influences on the shaping of doctrines of the church

h. Not going to cover the crusades, the inquisition, Christian pogroms against the Jews, the removal of the Jews from numerous Christian nations, forced abandonment of Jewish practices

- Quotes from the church fathers, Luther and Hitler quoted from the online article "Anti-Semitism: Its Roots and Perseverance" by Dr. David Reagan, first published in the September 2007 issue of *The Lamplighter*- For more on historical and modern anti-Semitism, please go to www.becomingjewish.org/anti_semitism.html

5. The Church of the State

a. Constantine "converts" to Christianity and makes it the state religion of Rome

b. Evidence suggests that Constantine believed Jesus to be a manifestation of the Sun God "Mithras" and he takes holidays, shrines, and worship practices focused on pagan deities and calls them Christian

c. Constantine mandates that believers now meet in official church buildings and no longer in homes (Acts 2:44-47)

d. He mandates that Christians sever all worship practices from the Jewish root, and that Christians celebrate Easter in place of Passover (which had been practiced and celebrated by Jewish and gentile believers widely until 325 AD when Constantine outlawed Passover at the Council of Nicea)

e. The church fathers continue to meet and legislate out all Jewish practices from the church through various councils and edicts (Council of Nicea 325 AD; Council of Antioch 345 AD; Council of Laodicea 365 AD; Council of Agde France 506 AD; Council of Toledo X (7th Century); and the Council of Nicea II 787 AD)

6. The Marriage of Christianity and Paganism

a. The early believers celebrated the Sabbath on the 7th day (sundown Friday through sundown Saturday) and also historically met on Sunday for worship

b. Constantine mandated worship to occur on Sunday-- named by the emperor for "Mithras" the Sun god

c. Biblically there was no feast centered on Messiah's birthday-- but the Romans had long celebrated the birth of Mithras on the 25th of Dec-- so Constantine called the celebration "Christmas" and kept the festival much the same
d. Constantine mandated the celebration of Easter in place of Passover at the Council of Nicea
e. Easter is named for a fertility goddess Ishtar (or Estre)
f. Constantine kept many pagan shrines as they were (including some of the priests) and changed the names of the deities to Christian saints and heroes
g. The predominant theme of Constantine's influence in Christianity is mixture with Greco-Roman philosophy, pagan worship, and severing the ties between the Church and its Hebraic root
h. The Culdees of Iona, the Waldenisians, the Abyssinian (Ethiopian) church, the church in India, and the church in Persia all display evidence of Jewish worship practices (Fri-Sat Sabbath and keeping the feasts and festivals). This was found up until approx. 800 AD.

7. What did we lose when we lost our Hebraic heritage?

a. We lost the Hebraic approach to God
b. We lost a Hebraic attitude towards Scripture
c. We lost the Hebraic emphasis on the home
d. We lost the Hebraic understanding of life

8. The Hebraic Approach to God

a. God is to be obeyed, not analyzed
b. Greek philosophy is centered on man's ability to know and understand his reality; the Hebraic philosophy is on knowing how to walk with and please God-whether we understand reality or not

9. The Hebraic Attitude Toward Scripture

a. The Hebrews revered the Word of God-- starting to read and write Hebrew at age 3
b. Boys and girls would have most of the Old Testament memorized by age 13

10. The Hebraic Emphasis on the Home

a. The Sabbath, feasts, and much of biblical Judaism would be practiced in the home
b. The father was expected to teach, train, and equip his family in the ways of

God, and as the priest in his home he bore the responsibility for his children's development

c. Leaders were in abundance in the early church as the Jewish people would have known the scriptures from their youth and therefore many homes were equipped to meet and care for the needs of the Body as it grew rapidly (Acts 2:44-47)

11. The Hebraic Understanding of Life

a. With the marriage of paganism and Greek philosophy with the church, Hebraic thought began to be removed

b. Asceticism (the physical world is evil), Epicureanism (licentiousness) and stoicism infiltrated the thinking of believers

c. To the Jewish believers, life was a gift from God to be enjoyed, celebrated, grieved, and given thanks for

d. The Hebraic worldview is centered on revelation (truth) coming from God; the Greeks believe man arrives at truth through reason and understanding

12. Some Helpful Books

a. "Your People Shall Be My People" by Don Finto

b. "Our Hands are Stained with Blood" by Dr. Michael Brown

c. "Messianic Church Arising!" by Dr. Robert Heidler

d. "Copernicus and the Jews" by Daniel Gruber

e. "Israel in the New Testament" by David Pawson

f. "From Iraq to Armageddon" by Asher (Keith) Intrater