

# *The Texts of Hate*

*From Before the Bible to the Present Day  
- an Anthology*

by

Steven Leonard Jacobs

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**by Steven Leonard Jacobs**

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## Dedication

*In memory of too many Jews murdered in too many centuries  
in too many places because of these hate-filled texts. May the  
sacred moments of their births continue to be the bright lights  
they were intended to be.*

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# Introduction<sup>1</sup>

Like most socially-constructed and socially-defined words-for example religion, gender, and even Judaism itself-antisemitism is a far more complicated term than might first appear.<sup>2</sup> Originally conceived by the German agitator and publicist Wilhelm Marr (1819-1904) in his text *Der Weg von Siege des Germanenthums über das Judenthum* ("The Way of Victory of Germanicism over Judaism", 1879), *antisemitismus* was intended to provide a more respectable, academic, and scientifically-creditable term to label the public animosity towards Jews and Judaism then current in Germany, rather than the uglier term *Judenhaas* ("Jew hatred").<sup>3</sup> Its Anglicization into antisemitism (originally hyphenated, but by and large no longer)<sup>4</sup> is now understood as the accepted term in both popular and scholarly discourse to label those activities which do harm to the Jewish people and Judaism as well. Both the London [GB] "Declaration on

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<sup>1</sup> Steven Leonard Jacobs, *The Jewish Experience; An Introduction to Jewish History and Jewish Life* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010), Chapter One "Unpacking a Definition," 1-7.

<sup>2</sup> Gavin I. Langmuir. *History, Religion, and Antisemitism, and Toward a Definition of Antisemitism*. Berkeley: University of Californian Press, 1990. Two volumes. The latest contribution to this ongoing discussion is that of Kenneth Marcus: *The Definition of Anti-Semitism* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).

<sup>3</sup> Moshe Zimmerman. *Wilhelm Marr: The Patriarch of Anti-Semitism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987. Zimmerman calls our attention to the lesser-known fact that Marr himself renounced his own antisemitism in a later essay entitled "Testament of an Antisemite". See pages 103 and 135 of Zimmerman's text.

<sup>4</sup> Shmuel Almog (1989), "What's in a Hyphen?" SICSA Report: Newsletter of the Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism, Hebrew University, Jerusalem.



Combating Antisemitism" (2009) and the Ottawa [CN] "Protocol on Combating Antisemitism" (2011), for example, affirm the somewhat lengthy European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia's (EUMC) "Working Definition of Antisemitism" (2005). The American Psychological Association, in addition, has passed its own resolution on antisemitism (2005; amended 2007). For purposes of this text, however, we begin with the following definition:

Antisemitism is defined, both individually and collectively, as the active hatred of Jews and Judaism, from its 'mildest' expressions in group segregation and discriminatory legislation to its most extreme forms in exterminatory and annihilatory activities resulting in the physical or psychological harm or murder of Jews. Desecratory activities such as synagogue burnings, graffiti defacements, and the wanton destruction of Jewish ritual objects associated with the religion of Judaism (prayer books, prayer shawls, Torah scrolls, etc.) also constitute active antisemitism.<sup>5</sup>

While this definition is intended to cover a multitude of anti-Jewish sins, it focuses on two items of significant importance: (1) that antisemitism is first and foremost a set of behaviors regardless of the thought processes behind them (i.e. that which people do rather than solely what they think), and (2) one cannot divorce such heinous acts from the religion of Judaism, whether historically or contemporarily.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> This definitional understanding formed the basis of my own text *Antisemitism: Exploring the Issues* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2020; reissued Bloomsbury Academic, 2024), especially pages xvii-xxi.

<sup>6</sup> Leon Poliakov. *The History of Anti-Semitism*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. Volume 1: *From the Time of Christ to the Court Jews* (1955/1975. Translated by Richard Howard.). Volume 11: *From Mohammed to the Marranos* (1961/1973. Translated by Natalie Gerardi). Volume III: *From Voltaire to Wagner* (1968/1975. Translated by Miriam Kochan). Volume IV: *Suicidal Europe, 1870-1933* (1977/1985. Translated by George Klin).

Indeed, even in the current situation by which the enemies of Israel oppose both the state itself and/or the national liberation movement of the Jewish people known as Zionism, be they seemingly committed Christians or Muslims or avowed secularists, the languages, concepts, and terms of religion are ever-present.

One manifestation, therefore, of this active antisemitic hatred against Jews and Judaism is the preponderance of written texts throughout history as a means of inciting both individuals and groups to inflict severe harm on their Jewish neighbors, both those known to them, including family members, and those unknown but resident in their communities even if behind ghetto walls. The ubiquitous presence of the Internet and social media have only increased the possibilities of such publications and the potential for violence as a serious consequence of such hate.

### **Why, Then, This Book?**

Many, if not all, of the texts listed in the Table of Contents have been addressed singularly and individually, but none have been anthologized collectively or in relation to each other. Even the two important volumes edited and authored by Marvin Perry and Frederick M. Schweitzer, for example-*Antisemitic Myths: A Historical and Contemporary Anthology*<sup>7</sup> and *Antisemitism: Myth and Hate From Antiquity to The Present*<sup>8</sup>--address many of these texts and others as well, but do not do so in the kind of collection presented here,

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<sup>7</sup> Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2008.

<sup>8</sup> New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002.

but, rather, under broader brushstrokes and themes such as "blood libels," "ritual murders," "conspiracy theories," and the like.<sup>9</sup>

This book is thus intended to be a resource for scholars, students, and interested others wishing to pursue further in-depth study of individual texts, as well as for professors and students in courses in Judaic studies, antisemitism, hate and prejudice, psychology and sociology, anthropology, and the Middle East conflict.

My orientation and rationale here is simple, though far from simplistic: that those antisemitic texts which have withstood the "tests of time" are those which continue to tap into the popular imagination, transcend their particular geographic and historic locales, and thus give birth to and feed into newer and more contemporary expressions of classical hatreds of Jews and Judaism. In a word, antisemitism was and is the quintessential expression of othering by which minority individuals and communities—in this case the Jews—are devalued and removed from those larger circles of human beings—governmental, communal, religious, political, economic, social—which have the power to do so. The texts included here, while encyclopedic, are not intended to be either exhaustive or all-inclusive, but are concrete examples and manifestations of this phenomenon.

Finally, an even larger set of questions: What, if anything, can be done to combat in a very real and practical way the increasing proliferation of such texts? Is the United States' commitment to free speech, including the printed word, regardless of consequence, the final say in the matter? Do various European models which curtail and set limits on such persons as Holocaust denialists both inside and outside the

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<sup>9</sup> Richard Levy's *Antisemitism in the Modern World: An Anthology of Texts* (Lexington and Toronto, 1991), while historically oriented, offers only the briefest of snippets on a number of the same texts, but only begins in the 1700s

legal arena<sup>10</sup>, provide concrete possibilities for addressing this particular venue of hate?

Using a chronological schema, both in the organization of the sections and internally within each section, we begin this journey-Section One "The Early Period" includes representative texts of the pre-Christian period (1700 BCE-300) from Egypt, Greece, and Rome. Collectively, they exhibit dimensions of antisemitism which we may categorize as either social-cultural and/or religious-theological (tropes which will appear again and again). It also includes representative texts from the Early Christian Period (300-600) as well as, noticeably, both the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament and New Testament. Section Two "The Middle Period" is predominantly Christian as Christianity itself moves from a religious tradition in formation into solidifying both its own religious-theological traditions and continuing to ally itself with the various political, governmental, military, and economic structures of the various nation-states and for whom the physical residency of the Jews in their midst remained highly problematic.

From there we move to the Middle Ages & Renaissance period (600-1600) with representative texts as manifestations of antisemitism continue to emerge. This section also moves us from the pre-Enlightenment period to the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (1650-1858) with representative texts from both Germany and France, the two

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<sup>10</sup> The case of David Irving versus Deborah Lipstadt and Penguin Books comes to mind. See, for example, Richard J. Evans, *Lying About Hitler: History, Holocaust, and the David Irving Trial* (New York: Basic Books, 2001); D. D. Guttenplan, *The Holocaust on Trial* (New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2001); Eberhard Jackel, *David Irving's Hitler: A Faulty History Dissected* (Port Angeles and Brentwood Bay: Ben-Simon Publications, 1993. Translated by H. David Kirk.); Deborah E. Lipstadt, *Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory* (New York: The Free Press, 1993); Deborah E. Lipstadt, *History on Trial: My Day in Court with David Irving* (New York: HarperCollins, 2005).

most-enlightened nation-states on the continent but who would ultimately become sites of intense antisemitism (the Dreyfus Trials, 1894-1906; and the Holocaust, 1939-1945). Section Three "The Modern Period", takes us from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century through the First World War (1850-1918) and beyond with representative texts, again, primarily from Germany and France with the important addition of the publication of The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion in Russia and which remains a staple of antisemitic organizations and websites today in a multiplicity of languages, including English and Arabic. Equally addressed is the interwar period through the end of the Second World War (1918-1945) with representative texts and expands the geography of antisemitism by also including Henry Ford's (1856-1939) four-volume *The International Jew*, and representative "contemporary" texts ranging all over the globe and all still readily available as the antisemitism of the past against Jews and Judaism continues to morph and now includes anti-Zionism and anti-State of Israel but draws no distinctions between Jews living outside of Israel and those living within the state, as all are viewed by the haters as of one mind, one orientation, and collectively supportive of all of the supposed evils attributed to them. Finally, while this Introduction "sets the stage" for what follows, the Conclusion draws all these threads together, addressing common themes, emerging trends, and what the future portends.

Thus, we enter this journey somewhat hesitatingly, and, perhaps, even a bit reluctantly.

The texts themselves make for uncomfortable reading-and worse. For many of them, their hatred of Jews and Judaism and Israel and Zionism shines through with a crystal clarity which simply cannot be dismissed. For others, this same hatred is somewhat disguised, but which, upon closer examination, equally shines forth but, perhaps,

with a somewhat lesser light. If the sports cliché "the best defense is a good offense" has any particular relevance, then defense against antisemitism—the world's oldest ongoing hatred—must begin not only with an historical accounting of the toll taken against Jews and Judaism throughout the centuries<sup>11</sup>, but with the written words of those texts which inspired others to antisemitic actions as well.

## **"Literary Toxicology"**

In the opening paragraph to his chapter on *The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion* in his 1942 text *12 Decisive Battles of the Mind: The Story of Propaganda During the Christian Era with Abridged Versions of Texts That Have Shaped History* (New York: The Greystone Press), American literary critic and academic Gorham Brockhaven Munson (1896-1969) wrote:

It is an indication of the power of the literary poison known as *The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion* that an anthologist of propaganda masterpieces hesitates to include any considerable portion of its text in his collection for fear of the harm its circulation may do, despite the recital of the convincing proofs that the *Protocols* are a monstrous forgery. Yet the

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<sup>11</sup> There are many such texts, for example, including Leon Poliakov's four volumes, *Robert Wistrich, A Lethal Obsession: Anti-Semitism from Antiquity to the Global Jihad* (New York: Random House, 2010), and Phyllis Goldstein, *A Convenient Hatred: The History of Antisemitism* (Brookline: Facing History and Ourselves, 2012). A continuously updated set of volumes (beginning in 1984) is that under the editorship of Susan Sarah Cohen, *Antisemitism: An Annotated Bibliography* produced by The Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and published by K. G. Saur Verlag in Munich, Germany, and Garland Publishing in New York. Important in this regard as well is Robert Singerman's *Antisemitic Propaganda: an annotated bibliography and research guide* (New York: Garland, 1982) and which has now been fully updated to more than 9,000 entries in an online searchable database by de Gruyter Publishers, Berlin, Germany.

Protocols - poorly and even boringly written, though they seem to be - have had so tremendous and horrible impact upon twentieth century events that they must be ranked with the other decisive documents in this book which after all is not addressed to the class of reader most likely to be susceptible to the Protocols' diabolical suggestiveness. The toxicologist cannot shrink from the analysis and study of any poison if he would train people to recognize it and if he would discover an antidote for it. His researches may be useful to the murderer but fear of this misuse of his knowledge cannot deter its spirit of inquiry. It is as literary toxicologists that we should approach the verbalized venom of the Protocols, analyze it, note its effects, and combat it.<sup>12</sup> Thus, this entire anthology of such hate-filled and venomous documents and texts may best be understood as a research effort in literary toxicology and its anthologizer as combative toxicologist.

Finally, and importantly, public appreciation must be extended to friends and colleagues who have continually supported my efforts during the more than two years of this dark journey, especially Professor Paul R. Bartrop of Melbourne, Australia, now happily retired and continuing to do important Holocaust- and genocide-related research with a publication schedule second to none; and Professor Michael Dickerman of Stockton University, Galway, New Jersey, USA, educator par excellence, always willing to listen to my frustrations and whose encouragement about the necessity this work served regularly to overcome whatever obstacles presented themselves. My wife Dr. Louanne Clayton Jacobs has been my inspiration in all of my work as have our children, their spouses, and our grandchildren. The Department of Religious Studies at The University of Alabama, Professor Steven Ramey Chair, is that place, as

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<sup>12</sup> Decisive Battles of the Mind, 160.

well as the University itself, where academic productivity is not only encouraged but supported. And lastly, the staff of the Gorgas Library at The University of Alabama, particularly its Interlibrary Loan Department, who responded promptly and graciously to my many requests for both books and articles without which I could neither have undertaken nor completed this project. Whatever errors remain are mine and mine alone and for which I bear full responsibility.



## **The Early Period**

# Agobard

## *On the Insolence of the Jews to Louis the Pious (826/827)*

Agobard (769-840) was a priest born in Spain ordained in 804 and was appointed the successor to Leidrad Bishop of Lyon, France, in 814, though not without controversy as to whether such an appointment was appropriate while his predecessor was still alive. His bishopric coincided with the rule of Louis the Pious (778-840) with whom he had a contentious relationship during the Frankish-Carolingian realm (800-887). Relevant to this compendium, his concern with the "comfortable presence" of the Jews of France religiously, politically, and economically, he penned six treatises against the Jews: (1) "On the Baptism [of the Children] of Jews"; (2) "On the Baptism of Jewish-owned Slaves"; (3) "Against an Impious Precept Concerning the Baptism of Jewish-owned Slaves"; (4) "On the Insolence of the Jews"; (5) "On the Superstitions of the Jews"; (6) "On the Necessity of Avoiding Association with Jews". His language, both vocally and in print, was consistent in his referring to the Jews as *Filii Diaboli* ("Children of the Devil").

### **On the Insolence of the Jews to Louis the Pious<sup>1</sup>**

When the Jews first arrived, they gave me a message in your name and another one to the man who rules the district of Lyon in place of the

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<sup>1</sup> 0 W. L. North, 1998. Translated by W. L. North from Agobardi Lugunesis Opera Omnia, Opusculum XI, ed. L. Van Acker, Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Medievalis 52 (Turnholt: Brepolis, 1981), 191-195. Taken from the Internet Medieval Source Book, a project of the History Department of Fordham University, NY; permission granted.

count; [this message] ordered him to offer aid to the Jews against me... The Jews began to rage with a certain odious insolence, threatening that we would be afflicted with every sort of injury by the agents whom they had obtained to take vengeance upon Christians. After them, Evrad [the master overseeing Jewish matters on behalf of Louis the Pious] arrived and repeated the same thing and said that your majesty was truly angry with me because of the Jews.

For these reasons, the Jews were made joyful beyond measure and the Christians saddened - not only those who fled or hid or were detained, but the rest as well who saw or heard. In particular, it was because of the Jews' opinion received such confirmation that they irreverently began to preach to the Christians what they ought to believe and hold, openly blaspheming the Lord God and our Savior Jesus Christ. This perversity was strengthened by the words of your agents who whispered in the ears of certain people that the Jews were not abominable, as many think, but are held dear in your eyes and because some of their people were saying that they are considered better than Christians.

We suffered these things from the Jews' supporters and for no other reason but that we preached to Christians that they should not sell Christian slaves to them; that they should not allow these Jews to sell Christians to Spain nor to possess them as paid domestics lest Christian women celebrate the Sabbath with them, work on Sundays, eat with them during Lent, and their paid servants eat meat on these days; and that no Christian should by meats sacrificed and butchered by Jews and sell them to other Christians; and that they should not drink their wine or other things like this.

That the Jews daily curse Jesus Christ and the Christians in all their prayers under the name "Nazarenes" not only the blessed Jerome attests [See Jerome of Stridon], who writes that he knew them

intimately and was inside their skin... the Jews are blasphemers and men who curse, so to speak, the Lord God Christ and his Christians, we should not be joined to them through the sharing of food or drink in accord with the rule [modus] that was given long ago and commanded by the holy fathers in their words and examples.

Most pious lord, I have mentioned only a few of the many things concerning the faithlessness of the Jews, our admonition, and the wounding of Christianity that is occurring through the supporters of the Jews, since I do not know whether [this news] can even come to your attention. Nonetheless, it is absolutely necessary that your pious solicitude know how the Christian faith is being harmed by the Jews in certain ways. For when they lie to simple Christians and boast that they are dear to you because of the patriarchs; that they enter and leave your sight with honor; that most excellent people desire their prayers and blessings and confess that they wish they had the same author of the laws as the Jews; when they say that your councilors are aroused against us for their sake, because we forbid Christians from drinking their wine; when, in trying to claim this, they boast that they have received from Christians many, many pounds of silver from the sale of wine and cannot find out, after running through the canons, why Christians should abstain from their food and drink; when they produce commands signed with golden seals in your name and containing words which, in our opinion, are not true; when they show people women's clothes as if they were sent to their wives by your kinsmen or matrons of the palaces; when they expound upon the glory of their forefathers; when they are permitted, contrary to the law, to build new synagogues - [when all this occurs] it even reaches the point when naive Christians says that the Jews preach to them better than our priests. And this was particularly true when the aforementioned agents ordered that the markets that usually occur on Saturdays should be moved lest [the Jews'] Sabbatism be impeded,

and they let [the Jews] choose on which days they had to go to market from then on, claiming that suited the utility of the Christians because of the Sunday vacation. In the end, it proved to be more useless to the Jews since those who are near, because they buy the necessary food on Saturday, spend Sunday more freely at the celebration of the Mass and at preaching, and those who come from a distance on the occasion of the market, attend the evening and morning offices after the celebration of the Mass has been performed with return home with edification.

How detestable enemies of the truth should be considered and how they are worse than all unbelievers, as divine Scripture teaches, and what unworthy things they think about God and heavenly matters.

That many Christians are sold by Christians and bought by Jews and that many unspeakable things are perpetrated by them which are too foul to write.

# Ambrose

## *Letter 40 to Emperor Theodosius*

Born 339 (died 397), Aurelius Ambrosius in what is today Trier, Germany, he would, somewhat to his surprise, be installed as Bishop of Milan, Italy, in 374, and known to us today as Saint Ambrose. A fierce opponent of division within his Roman Catholic Church (e.g., contra Arianism [i.e., denying the divinity of Christ]), he also strongly opposed both paganism and Judaism, though regarding the latter, his writings remain somewhat ambivalent, but, in the main, largely negative. (See, for example, his *Expositio evangelii secundum Lucam*/"Exegesis of the Gospel of Luke". 1) His Letter 40 to Emperor Theodosius (347-395 CE) is, however, full of that vitriol of his negativity towards Jews and Judaism.

### **Letter 40 to Emperor Theodosius**

A report was made by the military Count of the East that a synagogue had been burnt, and that this was done at the instigation of the Bishop. You gave command that the others should be punished, and the synagogue be rebuilt by the Bishop himself.

Shall, then, a place be made for the unbelief of the Jews out of the spoils of the Church, and shall the patrimony, which by the favor of Christ has been gained for Christians, be transferred to "Ambrose's Jews: The Creation of Judaism and Heterodox Christianity in Ambrose of Milan's *Expositio evangelii secundum Lucam*", *Church History*, 80(4): 749-772.

the treasures of unbelievers? ... Shall the Jews write this inscription on the front of their synagogue: "The temple of impiety, erected from the plunder of Christians"?

There is, then, no adequate cause for such a commotion, that the people should be so severely punished for the burning of a building, and much less since it is the burning of a synagogue, a home of unbelief, a house of impiety, a receptacle of folly, which God Himself has condemned.

Further, into what calumnies will they not break out, who by false witness even Christ?

Into what calumnies will not men break out who are liars, even in things belonging to God?

Will you give this triumph over the Church of God to the Jews? This trophy over Christ's people, this exultation, O Emperor, to the unbelievers? ... They will add tis solemnity in memory of their having triumphed over the people of Christ.

It is a serious matter to endanger your salvation for the Jews. Who is to avenge the Synagogue? Christ, whom they slew, whom they denied? Will God the Father avenge those who do not receive the Father, since they have not received the Son?

**Source:** Translated by H. de Romestin, E. de Romestin, and H. F. Duckworth. From *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Second Series. Vol. 10. Edited by Philip Schaff and Henry Wace. Buffalo: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1896. Revised and edited for New Advent by Kevin Knight.

# Aphrahat

## *Demonstrations*

Aphrahat (or Aphraates) was a 4<sup>th</sup> Century Syrian writer and theologian, defenders of his church and Christianity. Next to nothing is known of his identity; he was also known as the "Persian sage".

### **Demonstrations**

Author of twenty-three (23) topics of concern, they cover a wide number of topics of interest:

1. On Faith
2. On Love
3. On Fasting
4. On Prayer
5. On Wars
6. On the B'nai Qyama ('Children of the Covenant', i.e.,  
Jews/Israelites)
7. On Penitents
8. On the Resurrection of the Dead
9. On Humility
10. On the Pastors
11. On Circumcision
12. On the Pascha (Passover)
13. On the Sabbath
14. Exhortation
15. On the Distinction between Foods (kosher vs. non-kosher)
16. On the (Gentile) Peoples Who Have Taken the Place of the  
(Jewish) People



17. On Christ the Son of God
18. Against the Jews: On Virginity and on Continence
19. Against the Jews Who Say They will be Gathered Together Again
20. On the Support of the Needy
21. On the Persecution
22. On Death and the Last Times
23. On the Grape in the Cluster, in which There is a Blessing (Isaiah 65:8)

Numbers 1-10 appear primarily concerned with living the Christian life. Numbers 11-22 appear to express concern vis-a-vis Persian Christians attracted to Judaism and/or adopting Jewish practices, rather than refuting Judaism and Jewish practices directly. Historically and contextually, they were likely written at a time when the Jewish communities, rather than the Christian communities, were rather large, well-integrated, and reasonably successful, unlike, perhaps, their struggling Christian counterparts.

Jacob Neusner, in his important text *Aphrahat and Judaism: The Christian-Jewish Argument in Fourth Century Iran* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999) maintains that Aphrahat was no antisemite but, rather, one reasonably well-versed in Jewish/rabbinical knowledge, who did not attempt to either engage or refute Jews or Judaism but was concerned with those attracted to Judaism and potentially leave his church. He further argues that these Demonstrations were presented at the highest intellectual and theological levels of disagreement and should be respected as such. He does, however, summarily outline "the structure of Aphrahat's critique of Judaism" as follows: (143-144)

I, Israel is rejected because Israel rejected the Messiah.

1. Therefore

- a. Israel has no hope for future redemption.
    - 1. Proved by Isaiah's comparison of Israel's restoration to that of Sodom. The latter did not take place, and neither will the former. What they have in common is that both Jerusalem and Sodom will remain in devastation.
    - 2. The gentiles have been called to take Israel's place
      - a. Proved by Moses' reference to a "people which is no people" to anger Israel. That no-people is the church of the gentiles, which angers Israel by shaming them into desisting from idolatry and by taking Israel's blessings.
11. Judaism's particular religious practices do not have, and never did have, salvific value.
- 1. Jews do not legally observe the law: Passover
  - 2. Jews do not understand the purpose of the law: Sabbath.
    - a. It is merely a day of rest and does not serve to distinguish sinners from the righteous or bring life.
  - 3. Jews' own sins provoked that of the imposition of the law: Dietary Laws and Circumcision.
    - a. Dietary laws were necessitated by Israel's continued adherence to Egyptian idolatry; therefore, Israel was told to eat the Egyptian gods, not to eat the food they formerly ate
      - i. And to sacrifice Egyptian gods to God, though God had no need of sacrifice
    - b. Circumcision was a temporary sign of a transient covenant. Without faith circumcision cannot save. But faith obviates the need, for baptism is the true circumcision. Faith leads to the circumcision of the heart.

- i. Circumcision was not unique to Israel. Others did it, were not saved.
- ii. Circumcision merely distinguished Israelites from gentiles, was necessitated by Jews' assimilation among pagans.

Neusner then goes on to translate, perhaps for the first time in contemporary English, Demonstrations (1) XI: On Circumcision; (2) XII: On the Paschal Sacrifice; (3) XII: On the Sabbath; (4) XV: On Making Distinctions Among Foods; (5) XVI: On the Peoples Which Are in the Place of the People; (6) XVII: On the Messiah, That He Is the Son of God; (7) Against the Jews, and On Virginity and Sanctity; (8) XIX: Against the Jews, On Account of Their Saying That They Are Destined to Be Gathered Together. He also provides subtitles for the various subsections in each Demonstration (not in the original texts).

Thus the issues that are of primary concern to and rejected by Aphrahat (and Neusner's reading) - Messiah, Passover, Sabbath, Dietary Laws and Circumcision - while not in and of themselves antisemitic, this rejection of their Judaic authenticity will come to be used by later generations of Christian scholars and theologians as foundational to their rejection of Jews, Judaism and the covenantal relationships between the Jewish People and the God of Israel. Over the course of the generations, the consequences of such rejectionism will result in such dire results as ghettoization, exclusion (failed) attempts at forced conversion, and physical violence up to and including mass murder.

# Athanasius

## *On the Incarnation of the Word*

Athanasius of Alexandria [Egypt] (296/98-373) is also referred to in the literature at times as Athanasius the Great, the Confessor, the Apostolic, or Athanasius I (Pope of Alexandria). Though periodically exiled by four Roman emperors for this staunch advocacy of Trinitarianism vs. Arianism (i.e., Jesus as God's creation and, therefore, separate and distinct), his views - hardline as they appeared to be - would be venerated as the "correct" understanding of early Catholic Christianity. His opposition to Jews and Judaism is readily apparent throughout his writings especially in his Festal Letters<sup>1</sup> and

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<sup>1</sup> For whereas the grace of the Divine Image was in itself sufficient to make known God the Word, and through Him the Father; still God, knowing the weakness of men, made provision even for their carelessness: so that if they cared not to know God of themselves, they might be enabled through the works of creation to avoid ignorance of the Maker. 2. But since men's carelessness, little by little, descends to lower things, God made provision, once more, even for this weakness of theirs, by sending a law, and prophets, men such as they knew, so that even if they were not ready to look up to heaven and know their Creator, they might have their instruction from those near at hand. For men are able to learn from men more directly about higher things. 3. So it was open to them, by looking into the height of heaven, and perceiving the harmony of creation, to know its Ruler, the Word of the Father, Who, by His own providence over all things makes known the Father to all, and to this end moves all things, that through Him all may know God. 4. Or, if this were too much for them, it was possible for them to meet at least the holy men, and through them to learn of God, the Maker of all things, the Father of Christ; and that the worship of idols is godlessness, and full of all impiety. 5. Or it was open to them, by knowing the law even, to cease from all lawlessness and live a virtuous life. For neither was the law for the Jews alone, nor were the Prophets sent for them only, but, though sent to the Jews and persecuted by the Jews, they were for all the world a holy school of the knowledge of God and the conduct of the soul.

his "On the Incarnation of the Word" as the following excerpts indicate.

In his 2001 article "Jewish Flesh and Christian Spirit in Athanasius of Alexandria", David Brakke succinctly charts out the common (mis)understanding of carnal "fleshiness" (Judaism) versus "spirituality" (Christianity):

Flesh

Jews

Devotion to earthly things  
things

Diverse local practices

One nation

Individual passages of Scripture

Separated in small groups

Heretics (Christians with different

Easter practices, Arians, Melitians)<sup>2</sup>

Spirit

Christians

Devotion to heavenly

Sing universal practice

All peoples

Overall sense of

All together

Orthodox

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6. God's goodness then and loving-kindness being so great- men nevertheless, overcome by the pleasures of the moment and by the illusions and deceits sent by demons, did not raise their heads toward the truth, but loaded themselves the more with evils and sins, so as no longer to seem rational, but from their ways to be reckoned void of reason.

<sup>2</sup> But it were better, one might say, to have hidden from the designs of the Jews, that He might guard His body altogether from death. Now let such a one be told that this too was unbecoming the Lord. For as it was not fitting for the Word of God, being the Life, to inflict death Himself on His own body, so neither was it suitable to fly from death offered by others, but rather to follow it up unto destruction, for which reason He naturally neither laid aside His body of His own accord, nor, again, fled from the Jews when they took counsel against Him. 2. But this did not show weakness on the Word's part, but, on the contrary, showed Him to be Saviour and Life; in that He both awaited death to destroy it, and hastened to accomplish the death offered Him for the salvation of all. 3. And besides, the Saviour came to accomplish not His own death, but the death of men; whence He did not lay aside His body by a death of His own (John 10:17-18)-for He was Life and had none- but received that death which came from men, in

## On the Incarnation of the Word

For though man was created in grace, God, foreseeing his forgetfulness, provided also the works of creation to remind man of hint. Yet further, He ordained Law and Prophets, whose ministry was meant for all the world. Yet men heeded only their own lusts.

22. But why did He not withdraw His body from the Jews, and so guard its immortality?

(1) It became Him not to inflict death on Himself, and yet not to shun it. (2) He came to receive death as the due of others, therefore it should come to Him from without. (3) His death must be certain, to guarantee the truth of His Resurrection. Also, He could not die from infirmity, lest He should be mocked in His healing of others.

33. Unbelief of Jews and scoffing of Greeks. The former confounded by their own Scriptures.

Prophecies of His coming as God and as Man.

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order perfectly to do away with this when it met Him in His own body. 4. Again, from the following also one might see the reasonableness of the Lord's body meeting this end. The Lord was especially concerned about the resurrection of the body which He was set to accomplish. For what He was to do was to manifest it as a monument of victory over death, and to assure all of His having effected the blotting out of corruption, and of the incorruption of their bodies from thenceforward; as a gage of which and a proof of the resurrection in store for all, He has preserved His own body incorrupt. 5. If then, once more, His body had fallen sick, and the word had been sundered from it in the sight of all, it would have been unbecoming that He who healed the diseases of others should suffer his own instrument to waste in sickness. For how could His driving out the diseases of others have been believed (Matthew 27:42) in if His own temple fell sick in Him? For either He had been mocked as unable to drive away diseases, or if He could, but did not, He would be thought insensible toward others also.