

We are told there is no name in the history of the Jewish people more capable of provoking intense rage and disgust than the Name of Jesus Christ! Spitting on the ground, clenching of fists, and the change of countenances has been the experience of many when preaching the Gospel to the Jews! But to what can we attribute this abhorrence?

Not a small number of Christian writers believe these Jewish sentiments towards Jesus is mainly due to the sufferings they have endured at the hands of so-called Christians over the centuries. They make mention of the Crusades, the persecutions in Europe during the Dark Ages, the Inquisitions, and also the alleged anti-Semitism started by the Protestant Reformer Martin Luther.

Apparently, when Luther introduced the Reformation, he was convinced the Jewish people would support him in his opposition against Rome. But when they did not react as Luther hoped, he turned on them with intense hatred and vulgarity. It is also believed Luther's hateful statements and accusations about the Jews was what stirred up Adolph Hitler later in his extermination campaign!

What can we say about all this? Is it true Jewish hostility towards the Name of Christ is due to the sufferings and massacres caused by misguided religious leaders of the Christian faith? Not at all! First, the Jewish persecutions over the centuries are a direct fulfilment of Biblical Prophecy.

In Deuteronomy chapter twenty-eight God warned He would judge their rebellion and disobedience with such treatment, and some Jews have had the honesty to admit this!

Second, a more accurate and unbiased study of history reveals it was most often at the hands of their fellow-Jews that other Jews suffered what they did. This becomes even clearer when you consider these persecutions are still going on today!

This being settled, we will turn to the true reason for the undue hostility the majority of Jewish people have had towards Christ. Messianic Jewish writer David Baron provides a more credible explanation than what many people choose to believe. He wrote:

Israel's attitude to our Lord Jesus may be gathered also from their literature. In the filthy legends about Him in the Talmud and more modern productions, the very names by which He is called are blasphemous.

The precious name *Yeshua* (Jesus, Saviour) has been changed into *Yeshu*, made up of initial letters which mean, *Let His name and His memory be blotted out.*

The Holy One who knew no sin nor was guile found in His mouth, is often styled *the transgressor*; and another term frequently in the mouth of the Jews is *Tolui* (the hanged one), which is equivalent to *the accursed one.*

There are also other hateful designations, such as *Ben Stada*, or *Ben Pandera*, which imply blasphemies not only against Him, but against her who is *blessed among women.*

And Israel's blind hatred to the Messiah does not stop short at His person, or His virgin mother, but extends to His words and works, and particularly to those of their nation who are ready to take upon them His reproach and to follow Him.

Thus His works are still ascribed to witchcraft and Beelzebub; His gospel, the *Evangelium*, is called *Aven* or *Avongillajon*, *the sinful or mischievous writing*; while Rabbinic hatred to His followers, especially from among the Jews, was not satisfied with classing them as *apostates* and *worse than heathen*, but rose to the height of instituting a daily public prayer in the most solemn part of their liturgy, that *the Nazarenes* may, together with all apostates, *be suddenly destroyed*, without hope, and be *blotted out of the book of life!*

This may be painful reading to some Christians, and the Lord knows it is far from my thoughts to write anything which might tend to foster unchristian prejudice against my people, but it is necessary to show how literally the prophetic forecast has been verified, and how deep seated and mysterious Jewish hatred has been to Him who, according to His human nature, is flesh of their flesh, and bone of their bone, and in whom is bound up all their hope and salvation.