BIBLE REVIEW JOURNAL

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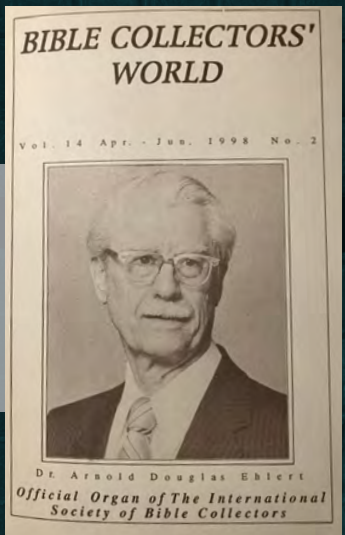
Covers of the BRJ (page 24)









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BIBLE REVIEW JOURNAL

Vol. 12 Fall 2025 No. 2

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INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF BIBLE COLLECTORS

President Carl V. Johnson, *carl.isbc@usfamily.net*
Secretary & Webmaster Stephen Ricketts, *stephen.isbc@gmail.com*
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Founder and First President (1964-1987) Arnold D. Ehlert
Vice President Emeritus William J. Chamberlin, Sr.

CONTACT

General	Checks	Regarding BRJ
Carl Johnson PO Box 26654, Minneapolis, MN 55426	ISBC PO Box 20695, Houston, TX 77225	Michael Kuykendall 7535 Cason Circle, Gladstone, OR 97027

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BIBLE REVIEW JOURNAL

Chief Editor Mike Kuykendall, *mikek.isbc@gmail.com*
Distribution Supervisor Lola Bowen
Graphic Designer Jenna Figgers*, Jennafiggers@gmail.com*

Bible Review Journal is the official semiannual journal of the ISBC. The purpose of the Society is to exchange information and to encourage interaction between all those interested in discoveries and developments about the background and history of all Bible versions, including their translation, publication, preservation, display, and distribution.

BACK ISSUES

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3rd Vol. 1-14	*Bible Editions & Versions*	2000-13	(56 issues) $110	$5 + postage
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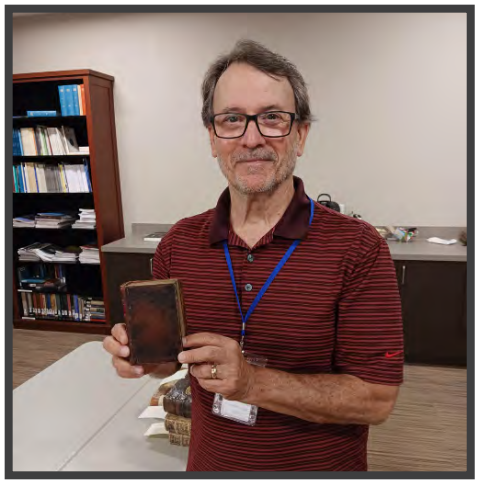
FROM THE EDITOR

By Michael Kuykendall

The Kuykendall Bible Collection

This edition of "From the Editor" is pretty personal! I look forward to seeing many of you this November 13-15 at Gateway Seminary in Ontario, California, for ISBC's annual convention. Attendees will have the opportunity to look over some of the Bibles in the Kuykendall Bible Collection. In 2024, Terry and Michael Kuykendall donated their personal Bible collections to Gateway Seminary, in Ontario, California. Both brothers have collected Bibles for numerous years. Terry's collection accented rare and scarce items. Michael's collection supplemented with an emphasis on modern Bibles. The reason for Michael's donation was personal. He served as a professor of New Testament Studies for Gateway Seminary for thirty-three years. This was an opportunity to give back to the school for its investment in his academic career. Terry's donation was just as personal. He thoroughly enjoyed collecting these rare Bibles, but few people had the opportunity to view them since they sat on bookshelves in his home. Thus, his donation now allows a multitude of people who visit Gateway Seminary the opportunity to view rare Bibles. Together, there is a total of 1,500 pieces in the Kuykendall Bible Collection, not counting leaves, fragments, and pictures. A recent appraisal of the collection came to $750,000.



Mike Kuykendall with 1526 Koepfel Greek Septuagint



Jonathan McCormick (Director of Library Services), Terry Kuykendall, and Lee Biondi, rare book appraiser

Sad News

The International Society of Bible Collectors has just learned of the passing of William Chamberlin. Bill was a member of the ISBC for many years and served in a variety of roles, including Vice President Emeritus. Please offer your thoughts and prayers for the Chamberlin family. The next issue of Bible Review Journal will include a tribute.

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF BIBLE COLLECTORS ANNUAL CONVENTION

November 13-15, 2025
Gateway Seminary in Ontario, California

SPEAKERS INCLUDE:

Dr. Jeffrey Cate
Dr. Michael Kuykendall
Dr. Allan Loder
Dr. Robb Torseth
Dr. Gregg Watson



Gateway Seminary houses the Terry and Mike Kuykendall Bible Collection
Gateway Seminary is very close to Ontario International Airport

Several local hotels will have a special ISBC rate!

- Huntington Library in San Marino is 35 miles away. It houses a Gutenberg Bible
- Disneyland in Anaheim is 35 miles away
- Knotts Berry Farm in Buena Park is 35 miles away
- Universal Studios in Hollywood is 50 miles away
- Getty Museum in Los Angeles is 60 miles away. It houses several old Bibles
- Six Flags Magic Mountain in Valencia is 70 miles away

Contact Carl Johnson at 2swedes@usfamily.net

TEN PROBLEMS WITH SACRED NAME BIBLES (PART TWO)

By Izzy Avraham

Welcome to this second conversation about Sacred Name Bibles and the teachings behind them. In a previous article (*Bible Review Journal*, Spring 2025, 17-33), I introduced Sacred Name Bibles and some of their teachings. I then tackled five of the ten problems that I have discovered concerning Sacred Name Bibles:

1. Sacred Name teachings don't follow Yeshua's example
2. Sacred Name teachings don't follow the example of Yeshua's apostles
3. Sacred Name teachings are based on misinterpretations of Scripture
4. Sacred Name teachings are based on a misunderstanding of language
5. Sacred Name teachings make false accusations against Jews and Christians

In this article, I present the final five problems with Sacred Name Bibles. More can be found on my site holylanguage.com/bibles

The Second Five Problems with Sacred Name Teachings

If possible, please review the first five problems in the Spring issue of *Bible Review Journal*. On Bible quotes, I will use NIV unless otherwise noted. Bolded text comes from me. Here then are the final five problems with Sacred Name teachings.

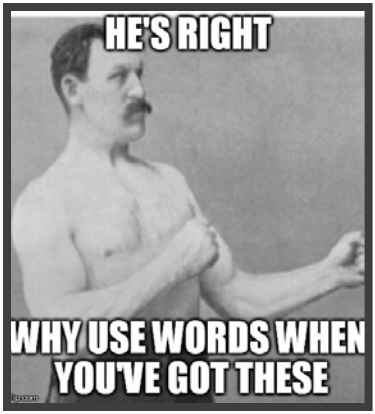
6. Sacred Name teachings cause unnecessary fights and divisions

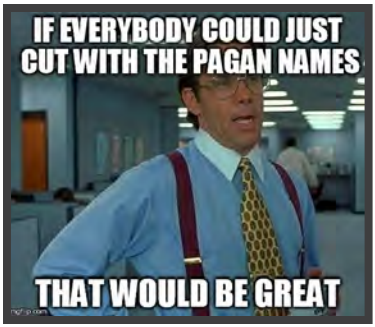
Sacred Name teachings always cause trouble. The same goes for when you have somebody in a congregation who starts using a Sacred Name Bible. I've seen this happen many times on both a local fellowship level, and on a movement level. In fact, if I could pick one phrase to sum up the fruit of Sacred Name teachings, I'd say "fights about words."

What's crazy about this is that Messiah explicitly commanded us through his apostle not to fight about words!

Keep reminding God's people of these things. ***Warn them before God against quarreling about words***; it is of no value, and only ruins those who listen (2 Timothy 2:14).

If anyone passes on a different teaching and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah, and with the instruction in keeping with godliness, he is prideful, understanding nothing. ***Instead he is obsessed with arguments and disputes about word*s**—out of which come envy, strife, slander, evil suspicions, and constant friction between people corrupted in mind and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain (1 Timothy 6:3-5 TLV)







Manly man may not get it, but let's take this to heart. We are commanded in Scripture not to argue and fight about words. Scripture says these arguments are useless and destructive. It also states that people who want to fight about these things are unhealthy, arrogant, lacking in understanding, and always causing trouble.

Based on this Scripture passage, it's my belief that we should have zero tolerance for Sacred Name teachings, and for Sacred Name Bibles.

You may be wondering why these kinds of arguments caused so much trouble two thousand years ago, and why they still do today. I've wondered about this too, and have identified at least three reasons.

First, it's because this is a black and white issue. Sacred Name teachings are either right or they are wrong. If they are right, then everybody in the group should start using the "true names" and cut with all the fake names. If they are wrong, then they are spreading false teachings and they should be confronted and stopped.

Second, it's because this is a very "in your face" issue. God gets lots of airtime at religious gatherings, and you need to call him something when you're talking about him. The same goes for public Bible reading—you can't usually read far before you hit upon God's name. And the same goes for prayer.

As a side note, it gets old fast when everybody in the room is saying God's name differently. And let's face it, it makes your group look bad too. New people visit, and the first thing they notice is that you can't even agree on what you call your God. Really, would you expect a group like that to have anything else figured out? Would you really want to join? Most people don't find confusion attractive, actually.

The third reason Sacred Name teachings are so disruptive is because they're Satanic. Scripture says that some teachings are "doctrines of demons." In other words, they're Satanically inspired. If the enemy wanted to ruin a fellowship or hijack a whole movement, wouldn't it make sense to use something so close to the truth, but with a twist?

I mean, we're talking about the Hebrew language and the Bible here. These are good things!



Please understand, when I say that Sacred Name teachings are Satanic, it doesn't mean there aren't sincere believers in the Sacred Name movement. The same goes for people who use Sacred Name Bibles. If you use one, you've probably even had some beautiful times of fellowship with the Father reading it. That's the scariest thing about deception—you can have the best intentions and the sweetest spirit in the world, and still be deceived. Thankfully, the Father still loves us and relates to us, in spite of our deceptions!



But none of that negates the fact that the whole Sacred Name world is based on historical misinformation and scriptural misinterpretation. In other words, it's based on lies, and we know who the "father of lies" is. It also doesn't negate the fact that the Sacred Name movement resounds with accusations against our Jewish and Christian brethren. And the "accuser of the brethren" isn't the good guy in the story! Hopefully, you can see why I believe that Sacred Name teachings are Satanic.

Yes, this is some heavy stuff. Thankfully, the answer is simple. If you've been following Sacred Name teachings, now that you know better, just drop the misinformation. If you have a Sacred Name Bible, exchange it for a Messianic Jewish Bible, or a regular Christian one. Develop a zero tolerance policy towards fights about words in your fellowship. Let the truth of the Messiah, and his peace, reign in your hearts, and in your group. You'll be so glad you did. Maybe you're breathing a sigh of relief already, just hearing me say that.

I mentioned getting a Messianic Jewish Bible. The last four points in this article are going to be about the Jewish people, and your relationship with them. I do hope you'll stay with me for those, because this is something I'm very passionate about, and something that I believe is very close to the heart of Yeshua also.

7. Sacred Name teachings will destroy your witness to the Jewish community

This is definitely the one that's closest to my heart. I know it's very close to the heart of Yeshua also, because it's about his relationship with his flesh and blood family, the Jewish people. Scripture explicitly says that the Gospel is first for the Jew. That means that when it comes to our mission to tell the story of Yeshua and represent him to the world, the Jewish people deserve to be our first priority. Not that the rest of humanity doesn't matter, but God has a strategic order, and this is what it is.

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: ***first to the Jew***, then to the Gentile (Romans 1:16).

God also tells us through Scripture that he has a deep love for the Jewish people, an unconditional love. In other words, the Jewish community has a special place in his heart.

As far as the gospel is concerned, they are enemies for your sake; ***but as far as election is concerned, they are loved on account of the patriarchs,*** for God's gifts and his call are irrevocable (Romans 11:28-29).

We also know that the Jewish people are Yeshua's own flesh and blood family. Here's an example of how he has identified himself so closely with them—look at the title that mysteriously came up at his birth, and death. It's like this was what he was born for, and what he died for.

Now after Yeshua was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of King Herod, magi from the east came to Jerusalem, 2 saying, "Where is ***the One who has been born King of the Jews?*** For we saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him" (Matthew 2:1-2 TLV)

Above his head they placed the written notice stating the charge against him, ***THIS IS YESHUA THE KING OF THE JEWS*** (Matthew 27:37 CJB)

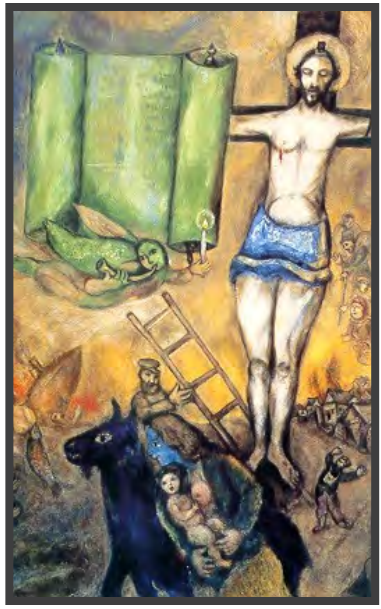
I think the artist who has best depicted Yeshua as the crucified King of the Jews is Marc Chagall. Born Moishe Shagal in 1887 in Belarus, Chagall lived for almost a hundred years, and was described by art historian Michael J. Lewis as "the last survivor of the first generation of European modernists" and by art critic Robert Hughes as "the quintessential Jewish artist of the twentieth century." Pablo Picasso said that he would be "the only painter left who understands what colour really is." (quotes can be found on the "Marc Chagall," Wikipedia page)



Here's Chagall on his paintings of Jesus: "For me, Christ has always symbolized the true type of the Jewish martyr. That is how I understood him in 1908 when I used this figure for the first time. It was under the influence of the pogroms. Then I painted and drew him in pictures about ghettos, surrounded by Jewish troubles, by Jewish mothers, running terrified with little children in their arms." (*America Magazine* March 3, 2014 issue "Child, Martyr, Everyman: Chagall's Jewish Jesus" Karen Sue Smith)

In 1944, Chagall said "after two thousand years of "Christianity" in the world—say whatever you like—but, with few exceptions, their hearts are silent... I see the artists in Christian nations sit still—who has heard them speak up?

They are not worried about themselves, and our Jewish life doesn't concern them." (*Open Letters Monthly* "Marc Chagall: Between Paris and Vitebsk" 2013 Ivan Kenneally)



Chillingly, most of these paintings of the suffering Jewish Christ were done between 1941 and 1945. Were they a prophetic expression of the deep groanings of the heart of Christ for his people? I think so. There is not enough room to display Chagall's paintings, but a web search will bring up many. Here are two:

So here's where the rubber meets the road. There are things you can do that will help you represent this Yeshua in a beautiful way to his Jewish people. There are also things you can do that will wreck your testimony and turn Jewish people off to the Messiah you represent. Here are three general principles that will help you be a good witness. Notice these are all straight from Scripture.

First, you need to speak their language. Otherwise they won't understand what you're saying, duh. But on a deeper level, if they see you as a "foreigner" then they'll see your message as foreign, and will fail to see how it relates to them and their world.

> Undoubtedly there are all sorts of languages in the world, yet none of them is without meaning. ***If then I do not grasp the meaning of what someone is saying, I am a foreigner to the speaker***, and the speaker is a foreigner to me (1 Corinthians 14:10-11).

Yeshua was our best example of this. God sent him to the human race with a message, and what did he do? He entered our world, he became one of us. The Word himself learned to speak our language.

> "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. . ." (John 1:14).

Remember that Jewish people grow up reading the Bible and praying in Hebrew, and that most of our deepest beliefs are expressed in Hebrew terms.

This is a reality that often escapes the notice of well-meaning Christians when it comes to Jewish people. Just because we speak English doesn't mean English words are the ones we most deeply resonate with. Remember that Jewish people grow up reading the Bible and praying in Hebrew, and that most of our deepest beliefs are expressed in Hebrew terms. So really, even though Christians and Jews both speak English, when it comes to our spiritual language, they're two worlds apart. Can you see why I'm so passionate about introducing Christians to the heart and soul of the Hebrew language?

This reminds me of a short interchange between Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Pope Francis during a papal visit to Israel in May of 2014, and reported in several news outlets:

> Netanyahu: "Jesus was here, in this land. He spoke Hebrew."
>
> Pope: "Aramaic."
>
> Netanyahu: "He spoke Aramaic, but he knew Hebrew."

In my opinion, this was a prime example of how Christians haven't bothered to connect with the Jewish people through taking a positive attitude towards their heart language.

The second thing you need to do is put yourself in their sandals of the person you're trying to reach. Again, as Yeshua's emissary to the non-Jewish world, Paul was an excellent example of this.

> To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. . . . ***I have become all things to all people*** so that by all possible means I might save some (1 Corinthians 9:20-22).

And again, Yeshua was *the* most excellent example. He literally put himself in our sandals by becoming one of us!

> ***The Word became flesh*** and made his dwelling among us. . . (John 1:14).

The third thing you need to do—and this one is way too often overlooked— is actually something you shouldn't do. Don't offend them! Again, guess who was a prime example of this? The guy Mashiach sent to the nations to represent him! Surprise!

> ***Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God***— even as I try to please everyone in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved (1 Corinthians 10:32-33).

> ***We put no stumbling block in anyone's path*****,** so that our ministry will not be discredited (2 Corinthians 6:3).

Of course, I'm giving you these three tips assuming you want to be a good witness for Messiah. Just for fun, I'll also give you some tips on how to be a bad witness for Messiah. I hope these make you laugh, but I hope they also terrify you. Because this is pretty much a description of the Sacred Name movement.

So, first, if you were hoping to be a bad witness for Messiah, be sure to use God's name. And the more, the better. If you could imagine the reaction a fundamentalist preacher would succeed in getting if he walked up to his pulpit on Sunday morning, wearing a skimpy dress and heavy makeup, that's pretty much the reaction you'll be able to get from Jewish people if they hear you trying to pronounce God's name. So this advice definitely comes with my highest recommendations if you were hoping to offend Jewish people.

If you were hoping to offend them seventy times seven like the Bible says, I'd also suggest that you don't just use God's name in Scripture reading and conversation. Be sure to also learn some of the traditional Jewish prayers, and then wherever they would "Adonai", you can use your favourite pronunciation of God's name there, too. So for instance, instead of saying "Baruch atah Adonai ", say "Baruch atah Y*****h". You'll find this little tip to be incredibly helpful in making the Jewish people you're trying to reach even more unreachable.

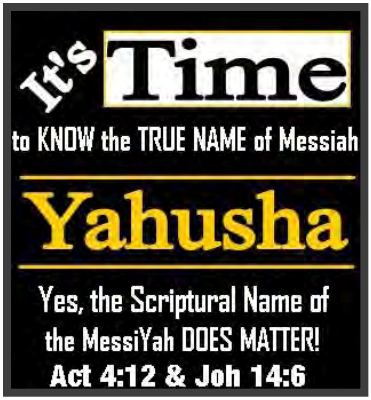


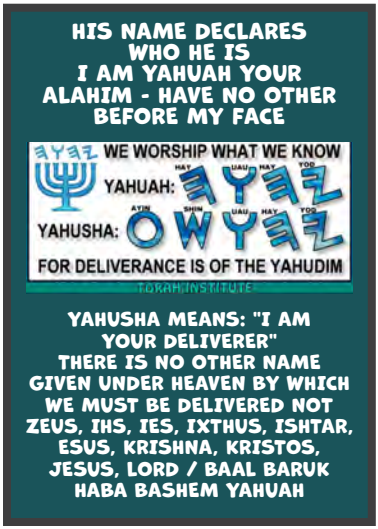
My second piece of advice is to make up your own version of Hebrew. Hebrew is very special to the Jewish people, it's like their sacred tongue. So if you wanted to push Jewish people away in order to bring them closer, one the most effective ways you could do that is by making up your own version of Hebrew, instead of learning to say stuff the way Jewish people do. It wouldn't hurt to throw in some conspiracy theories about the evil Rabbis in there, too.



You have to remember that your job is to make the Jews jealous. And what better way to make them jealous than to take something that's theirs? And what's theirs, more than their own language? I'll show you how to do this for yourself in my reviews of specific Sacred Name Bibles on my website. Several of them are really good at making up their own version of Hebrew.

My third piece of wisdom for you is to make up your own version of Yeshua's name. The Sacred Name movement has done a great job making up all kinds of creative new versions of Yeshua's name. They usually call these "true names." There's Yahshua, Yahushua, Yahusha, and Yahawashi, to name a few. You could pick one of these, or you could use your Strong's concordance and make up your own (as some have done). The important thing is to be sure to put "Yah" in there somewhere or it doesn't count. Another option would be to take a true name somebody else made up, and capitalize some of the letters to make it even more true. For instance, you can write Yahusha as YaHuSHa.







There are pros and cons to making up your own true name. One of the pros is that, if it becomes popular, you'll get hipster points for using it before it was cool. You might even get prophet status for restoring the true name. If it doesn't become popular, that can be a pro, too. It feels really set-apart to use your own true name and know that no one else is using it. One of the cons is that your true name won't have a Sacred Name Bible with your true spelling, unless you're planning to publish one of your own. All the most popular true names do have their own Sacred Name Bibles. But don't be discouraged if you aren't able to publish a Bible. You can at least make some graphics with the true name on them.

Either way, regardless of whether you make up your own true name or use somebody else's, one of the greatest things about this tip is that you'll be accomplishing two things at once, like a double-edged sword. Here's what I mean. Let's say you're talking with a Jewish person, and you wait for that perfect moment, and then casually drop the true name. If it's paleo enough and if you do it right, there's a good chance they won't even realize you're talking about Jesus, and will probably assume you're talking about some Japanese guy. If you're able to achieve this, you've truly reached the heights of set-apartness.

Even if you fail on that one and they're able to figure out who you're talking about, you'll still probably succeed at offending them, so don't be discouraged. And if they know their stuff, you might even be able to get them to laugh at you. If you're blessed enough for this to happen, you'll be able to brush the dust off your sandals as you walk away, and it'll earn you many persecution points. I also hope you don't feel discouraged if you don't have many conversations with real Jewish people, because that's why there's the internet.

As a side note, the reason I say "if they know their stuff" is because actually the Hebrew name of Jesus actually is "Yeshua," like in all the Jewish and Christian writings from that time period. There isn't actually anything that says his Hebrew name was anything other than "Yeshua." But you shouldn't let this fact threaten you and the true name you discovered.

I recommend shaking it off as a conspiracy theory. You should also go back to what you figured out from Strong's concordance because, obviously, it's impossible for anything to be stronger than Strong's. It can also be comforting to imagine all the manuscripts with the true name that are hidden somewhere in the Vatican.

There is one more bonus to using a true name that I haven't told you about yet. If you use a true name, it will help keep you safe from contact with the Jewish community, which can be very stressful, not to mention corrupting. It will also guard you from possibly falling into a relationship with them. It's almost magical that way, actually. True names also work well against the Messianic Jewish community. You have to remember that even though they believe in Messiah, they don't use his true name, so it's best to keep a healthy distance there.

Okay, I hope I got my satirical point across in a way that made you laugh and think at the same time. There is one more way you can mortify Jewish people, but I'm going to talk about this one in a more normal way. In the Jewish tradition, if a book contains God's Hebrew name, it's considered a holy book. Jewish people handle holy books very reverently, and have developed some special traditions to reflect this. For instance, we never put a holy book on the floor or put anything on top of it, except for another holy book. We also try not to put it facedown, or upside down. And we don't take holy books into the bathroom, or throw them in the garbage.

In the Jewish tradition, if a book contains God's Hebrew name, it's considered a holy book. Jewish people handle holy books very reverently, and have developed some special traditions to reflect this.

The Sacred Name movement doesn't bother to teach people how to handle holy books in a respectful manner, effectively spitting on Jewish sensibilities and despising the example of the apostle Paul. I know, these are strong words, but this is such an important issue. We're talking about Jewish individuals seeing Yeshua for who he really is. We're talking about a movement that is horrifically misrepresenting Messiah to his own people, precious people for whom he suffered and died. I personally have witnessed people putting their Sacred Name Bibles containing God's holy name on the ground on multiple occasions. Can you see how this type of behavior would cause a Jewish person undue distress, even trauma? Can you see how it's slamming the door to the kingdom in their faces, possibly forever? This is a big deal!

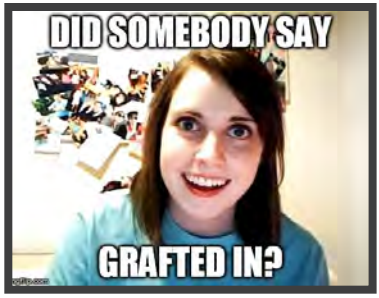
So, let's sum this point up. God has a special love for the Jewish people, Yeshua is passionate for them, and we are called to prioritize accurately representing Messiah to his own flesh and blood family. We can do this by speaking their language, putting ourselves in their sandals, and trying not to offend them. The Sacred Name movement rejects all this and destroys the testimony they could have for Messiah by using God's name in public settings, making up their own version of Hebrew, perverting the name of Yeshua, and handling holy books in flippant ways. That's how Sacred Name teachings will destroy your witness for Messiah, probably without you even realizing it. . . until now.

8. Sacred Name teachings are a new form of Replacement Theology

Here is another way that Sacred Name teachings can wreck your testimony to the Jewish community, probably without you even realizing it. Replacement theology is a pernicious mindset that has infected certain sectors of the Church, and is now taking a new form in the Sacred Name and Hebrew Roots movements.

Replacement theology is basically the belief that the Church has replaced Israel. Or that *you* have replaced the Jewish people. Like assuming you're not Jewish. According to this viewpoint, God used to be in a relationship with the Jewish people, but then they dumped Jesus so God dumped them and now he has a new girlfriend. In the replacement theology construct, the nation of Israel has been rejected by God forever, and all the blessings and promises in the Old Testament now belong to the church. Well, in a spiritual sense, anyway. Most Christians don't really want to move to the middle east.

There are several glaring problems with replacement theology. For one thing, it's not in the Bible. The apostle Paul repeatedly stated in Romans 9-11 that God didn't reject Israel. He listed the things that continued to belong to the physical Jewish people, including the covenants and the promises. And he spoke with overwhelming hope of a future fulfillment and acceptance of the Jewish people—a time when all Israel would be saved, after the fullness of the nations had come in. If you come from a Reformed background, it may surprise you to realize that the main point of Romans 9-11 wasn't predestination.



As a side note, the apostle Paul didn't teach replacement theology. But he did teach inclusion theology—not that the Church replaced Israel, but rather that Christians had been "brought near" to the Jewish community, "grafted in" along with the Jewish people, and co-heirs with them. Through the Messiah, believers from the nations were included in the commonwealth of Israel, and counted among the children of Abraham. Can you see the difference?

Another glaring problem with replacement theology is that you need to have your head buried in the sand to believe it. Like, it's hard to believe that God is done with the Jewish people when they're still around after an exile that lasted almost two thousand years. Not to mention that Hebrew came back from the dead and the nation of Israel was kind of born again and it was all kind of a miracle. If God decided he was finished with the Jewish people and that he wasn't going to help them anymore, he didn't do a very good job not helping them anymore.

One more problem with replacement theology is that it's antisemitic. Let's face it, if you're the new girlfriend, it's going to be hard for you not to hate the old girlfriend—or at least not feel threatened by her. If you really believe that your God rejected the Jewish people, you're going to reject them too. And when it comes to rejection and hatred, you can't have one without the other.

Replacement theology teaches that the Church is the new Israel, the true Israel, which sounds wonderful until you look at the flip side of the coin. This is usually left unsaid, because it sounds like Darth Vader. Replacement theology teaches that the Jews are the old Israel, the fake Israel. The unavoidable conclusion to this assertion is that the Jewish people don't really have a legitimate identity anymore. In other words, the Jewish people don't really have a right to exist—at least not as Jews. I'm sure you can see the problem there.

Most of us would agree that replacement theology is evil. And that includes the vast majority of sincere believers who use Sacred Name Bibles. But we may not realize how deep the rabbit hole goes. Most of us grew up in churches that were anything but anti-Semitic. They were probably even supportive of Israel, and that's a good thing! But if you grew up in the Protestant world, you need to realize that your world, historically speaking, came out of the Roman Catholic world, and it was steeped in replacement theology.

Here's an example of subtle replacement theology. Jeremiah 29:11, the famous "I know the plans I have for you" verse. I love this Scripture. My grandparents used to write it in the cards they sent me, and I treasure that. But have you *ever* heard *anybody* mention that this a promise to the Jewish community? That's replacement theology in action. It's not bad to apply these words of hope for ourselves. But if we forget that in context God spoke these words to Israel in exile and we just think they're about us, then somewhere deep in our minds, we just replaced them.

Here's another example. How many sermons have you heard about how to have a good relationship with the Jewish community? Or how to share the gospel with them? Or just how to respect them, and not be a jerk and offend them? I grew up in Baptist, Alliance, and Pentecostal churches. My dad and my grandpa were both pastors. And I never heard *anything* about *any* of that. The Jewish people weren't even on the radar. It was like they didn't exist, as if we had replaced them or something. Never mind that Paul said the gospel is first for the Jewish people, and never mind that the Jewish people are still around. Like almost all of us have a Jewish neighbour or friend or co-worker or relative. That, my friends, is replacement theology in action.

Here's the problem. You have this movement of believers who grew up with this stuff, and now they're learning about the Jewish roots of Christianity. This is great, but too often they don't realize how deeply replacement theology has affected them. So now they're learning Hebrew or keeping a little more of the Torah. But they're carrying this replacement theology baggage with them, and it basically just takes on a new form, kind of like changing the software on a computer, but keeping the same defunct operating system.

We already talked about some of the ways this new "Messianic" replacement theology expresses itself through Sacred Name practices. For instance, when people make up their own version of Hebrew, instead of learning to write and pronounce it the way the Jewish people do, they're ignoring the fact that Hebrew is the language of the Jewish people, and are acting as if they have replaced them. Never mind the Scriptures actually call Hebrew "Yehudit" in a couple places, which translates roughly as "Jewish."

Or when Sacred Name publishers don't bother teaching people how to handle holy books in a way that is respectful to Jewish sensitivities. Through their silence, they're saying that the Jewish people don't matter—essentially, that they've been replaced—and they're teaching their followers to say likewise through their actions.

The same point goes for people who make up alternate spellings and pronunciations for the name of Yeshua. What they're really saying is that they know better than the Messianic Jewish community—that they're the new replacement.

Now this last example is probably the biggest point. When people insist on using the name of God and reject the Jewish tradition of saying "Adonai" or "Lord," what they're really saying is that the Torah wasn't given to the Jewish people, and that it's no longer their *place* to interpret it. Why? Because they've been *re*placed. But that's not what Scripture teaches. Romans 3:2 states that the Torah has been entrusted to the Jewish community. Moreover, Romans 9:4 confirms this by saying that the giving of the Torah belongs, in the present, to physical Israel.

I know, these are strong words. Thank you for hearing me out so far. Now that we've looked at the negative side—the roots and the fruits of replacement theology—let's finish by looking at the positive side. What can we do to be cleansed of these deeply stained ways of thinking?

First, let's cultivate an attitude of respect and honor towards the Jewish people, towards traditional Judaism, and towards the Messianic Jewish movement. And let's be fiercely uncompromising on this.

Second, let's acknowledge loudly and often God's ongoing relationship with Israel, and the fact that the Jewish community has been entrusted with the Torah and its interpretation.

And third, remember that Paul said we've been "brought near" to the Jewish community. Let's take that seriously, and do what we can to nurture that relationship and come a little closer. Maybe call up the Rabbi of your local synagogue and ask if you could come for services sometime, or ask that Jewish person in your life to tell you about what it's like to be Jewish. What coming a little closer looks like is going to be different for each of us. But for all of us, I guarantee it will be a beautiful experience, because one small step towards the Jewish people is one giant leap away from replacement theology.

9. Sacred Name teachings claim to be Messianic when they are not

Thank you for hanging in there while I lambasted replacement theology. Now I want to tell you about the histories of three movements—Messianic Judaism, Sacred Name, and Hebrew Roots—and explain how the term "Messianic" has been hijacked.

It may surprise you to hear that the label "Messianic" is being increasingly misapplied. I would even say it's being hijacked. Originally, if you were Messianic it meant you were a Messianic Jew, or at least closely involved with a Messianic Jewish synagogue. If something was Messianic, it meant it was Messianic *Jewish*.

In the past few decades, however, the term "Messianic" has been co-opted by the Hebrew Roots and Sacred Name movements. This wouldn't be such a bad thing if these movements weren't rife with so many *un*-Jewish notions, and *anti*-Jewish attitudes. But they are, and the result is that the real Messianic movement is becoming misrepresented. Let's talk about the history of these three movements.

Here's the story of the Messianic Jewish movement. In the 1800s, the number of Jewish people coming to faith in Yeshua began to increase. They called themselves "Hebrew Christians" and formed several alliances starting with the Hebrew Christian Alliance of Great Britain in 1866, and culminating in the International Hebrew Christian Alliance (IHCA) in 1925. The following were the stated aims of the IHCA. As you can see, they were both powerful and prophetic in their time:

1. To foster a spirit of fellowship and co-operation among Hebrew Christians throughout the world.
    i. By the establishment of local Alliances wherever possible.
    ii. By watching over the spiritual development and general welfare of converts, and encouraging them to be witnesses for Christ among Israel in every sphere of life, and thus to set up again under Divine guidance "the candlestick" of witness within Jewery.
2. To present a united witness on behalf of Christ, not only to the Jewish people, but to the world.
3. To interpret the spirit of the Jewish people to the Christian world, and the spirit of the Christian Gospel to the Jews.
4. To make it possible for Hebrew Christians, who may desire to do so, to share in the activities of Zionism, and to claim for them equal rights in terms of the Balfour Declaration.
5. To aid Churches and Societies in their selection of Hebrew Christian candidates offering themselves forth Ministry, and supplying them with information regarding Converts as occasion may arise.
6. To identify Hebrew Christians with the Jewish People in the defence of their just rights in countries in which these rights are denied them, and, when necessary, to protest against the spirit of Anti-Semitism.

QUICK READS...

F. Crawford Burkitt's *Four Gospels.* F. Crawford Burkitt (1864-1935) was a textual critic and professor at Cambridge University. He produced a two-volume translation of the Gospels from the Curetonian Syriac manuscript together with marginal readings from the Sinaitic manuscript. It bore the title Evangelion Da-Mepharreeshe, The Curetonian Version of the Four Gospels (Cambridge, 1904). Burkitt also authored Ecclesiastes Rendered into English Verse (Toronto, 1922) which included the amusing translation of "Bubble of bubbles! All things are a Bubble! What is the use of all Man's toil and trouble?" Taken from William E. Paul, *English Language Bible Translators* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland Books, 2003), 41-42.

Here are a couple pictures from that era. This publication is from the newly formed Alliance in Great Britain.

HEBREW-CHRISTIAN ALLIANCE.

BY THE EDITOR.

MANY meetings are held in London in the month of May, which are long before made known to the Christian public, every effort being used to secure a large attendance; and we wish them all God-speed, inasmuch as they promote the glory of Christ. On the 23d of May a meeting was held in the plain school-room of Trinity Chapel, John Street, Edgware Road, which had not before been advertised, was altogether of a private character; and yet we believe that our readers will agree with us, after they have learnt its import, when we say, that such a meeting has not taken place since the Apostolic age.

There exists a Jewish and an Evangelical Alliance, and both of them do a great and a good work in their sphere; but the need has been felt of yet another institution of somewhat similar character. It was thought desirable also to establish *a Bond of Union between those Hebrews who have found peace and joy in Jesus Christ.* In consequence thereof, several brethren issued a circular inviting Hebrew Christians belonging to different denominations — clergymen, laymen, physicians, tradesmen — to meet together on Wednesday, the 23rd, for prayer and consultation, in order to consider together whether a Hebrew-Christian Alliance could and should be formed, to define its object, and to fix as far as possible its organization and management.

Eighty brethren met on the day appointed, and the Rev. A. M. Meyer moved, and Dr. Ginsburg seconded, that Dr. Schwartz take the chair, which was accordingly done. He addressed the assembled brethren in the language of their fathers: שלום עליכם "Peace be with you"; and then again ברוכים הבאים בשם יהוה "Blessed are they that come in the name of the Lord," as he knew they had assembled in the name of the God of their fathers. After the singing of the 100th Psalm, the reading of Isaiah lxii., and prayer, the Chairman pointed out the object of the meeting, which he described to be: a profession of our *faith* before our *Jewish*, a maintaining of the *hope* of Israel before our Gentile Christian, brethren, and a strengthening of *love* among ourselves, *Hebrew Christians.* It would be made manifest that we have not abandoned the faith professed by Moses and the Prophets. It is highly important to declare to our Christian brethren that we have not forsaken the hope of Israel, nor are in any way ashamed of our Jewish origin. But then it is good that we meet together as Hebrews and Christians, and build up each other in our holy faith. We who have assembled here this morning belong to many different countries, and have been born in the most opposite parts of Europe, and we are a true specimen of THE SCATTERED NATION. But we have now been gathered by and in Christ. What is seen in us, as the first-fruits, will certainly be seen in our whole nation, when He who scattered Israel will gather it; all Israel shall bow before Him, and delight in the majesty of Him who is their glory.

The Rev. A. M. Meyer introduced the subject of the desirability of a Hebrew-Christian Alliance, which, if ever established, ought to be allied to the Most High. *Sympathy* is a sweet savour, and the converted Jew stands greatly in need of it. It is no small matter to be separated from those who gave to us birth; with whom we spent the early days



Another landmark was the founding of the first Hebrew Christian Church in New York city, in 1885. This was America's first Messianic congregation! Here's a fuzzy picture of their synagogue.



The Hebrew Christian movement continued to grow. Then the 1960s struck. Israel recaptured Jerusalem, and suddenly it was groovy to be Jewish. The Jesus people movement broke out, and a ton of Jewish kids got turned on to Jesus. The Hebrew Christian Alliance of America voted, and changed their name to become the *Messianic Jewish* Alliance of America (MJAA; see mjaa.org). It was more than just a name change. The movement shifted from a scattering of mostly assimilated Jews to a core of congregations that were unapologetically Messianic, and unapologetically Jewish. That was the beginning of the Messianic Jewish movement as such, which has grown to hundreds of congregations worshipping together as "Jew and Gentile, one in Messiah."

In the 1990s, a new movement began to emerge. Christians were increasingly feeling drawn to learn about the Hebraic roots of their faith. This awakening was characterized by a love for Israel, the usage of the name Yeshua and some other Hebrew keywords, and a return to keeping a little more of the Torah, mostly what I call the three "f"s—food, feasts, and fringes.

Whenever I hear the phrase "Hebrew roots" I think of literal vegetable roots, so let's go with that metaphor for a moment. The main ingredient in this newly emerging salad was Christians coming from traditional churches, or from Messianic Jewish congregations. It also included a pinch of Worldwide Church of God people looking for the "true church" after their previous true church fell apart. There was also a dash of Seventh Day Adventists who felt ripped off because they weren't allowed to celebrate any of the feasts except the Sabbath, and were tired of grape juice and wanted real wine. Okay, I may be reading into motives a little here for the sake of humor. But that was the general recipe. The most influential teachers in this movement have generally come from these backgrounds.



The Hebrew Roots movement is very fluid, and has changed considerably in the last couple of decades. It started out closer to the Messianic Jewish movement, and in a way was birthed by it. Unfortunately, three teachings were embraced by this movement that distanced it from the Messianic Jewish community, and got most of its teachers banned from Messianic Jewish congregations and conferences.

The first teaching to damage the relationship significantly was the "Two House" teaching (aka Ephraimite movement). This basically states that Gentile believers are the lost ten tribes of Israel, spiritually and figuratively speaking. (Another offshoot of this is British Israelism that stated that British people were actually physically the descendants of the ten tribes!)

The second controversial teaching was the "One Law" teaching. This basically says that Jewish and Gentile believers are both equally obligated to keep the whole Torah—including adult male circumcision. The third divisive teaching was the Sacred Name teaching. This leads us to the question of where these teachings came from.

Before we discuss the history of the Sacred Name movement, I want to say that this influx of other teachings into the Hebrew Roots movement reminds me of a confluence. A confluence is a geographical point where one river flows into another. Unfortunately, in this case, the rivers flowing in were dirty, and only served to muddy the waters. So, speaking of dirty influences. The Sacred Name movement is just as diverse as the Hebrew Roots movement, and almost as grassroots. Most historians would trace its beginnings back to the 1920s, when a number of teachers and groups began emphasizing the usage of the Hebrew names of God and Jesus, which they referred to as the "true names." The Jehovah's Witnesses movement was also gaining traction at this time, and it may have added fuel to this fire, or even sparked it. Herbert Armstrong was also part of this early melting pot, before going on to start the Worldwide Church of God.

These pioneer Sacred Name teachers felt strongly about using the true names of the Father and the Son, but it took them awhile to figure out what they were. After running through dozens of variations, by the 1950s many had settled on "Yahweh" for the Father and "Yahshua" for the Son. In 1950, a New Testament was published, followed up by a complete Bible in 1963. It was based on the King James text but used the names "Yahweh" and "Yahshua," and also had "Elohim" for God (see the previous issue of *Bible Review Journal*: "The First Sacred Name Bible"). This version brought a little more uniformity to the movement, but there were still dozens of splinter sects, each with their own "true names," and this continues to be the case today. The Sacred Name movement may be famous for many things, but unity is not one of them.

So that's a quick overview of these three movements. As you can see, they're very different, but because they all use the Hebrew name of Jesus they can be confused at first glance. This is exactly what has happened. Sincere Christians want to study the Jewish roots of their faith, and then they see a Sacred Name Bible with some Hebrew in it, and before you know it they've been sucked into the Sacred Name vortex. Or they visit a Messianic Jewish congregation, experience a spiritual awakening, and then slide into the Hebrew Roots world where they absorb all sorts of anti-Jewish venom.

What doesn't help is that many Hebrew Roots teachers say they're Messianic when they're not. In fact, they're totally out of relationship with the Messianic Jewish community, and have even been banned from Messianic congregations and conferences. It also doesn't help that some Sacred Name publishers use the term "Messianic" in their Bibles, when they are so not Messianic. Co-opting the Messianic label like this isn't just misleading and insulting. It's a direct attack on the Messianic Jewish community.

The bottom line is that everyone is welcome to join the Messianic Jewish movement, but if you don't have a positive relationship with the leaders of the Messianic Jewish community, or if you're teaching stuff that the scholars of Messianic Judaism have rejected, you shouldn't call yourself Messianic. The words "Messianic" and "Jewish" are like Siamese twins. Try to separate them, and you'll kill them both. Now you know why I say that the term "Messianic" has been hijacked, and why I call Sacred Name Bibles "pseudo-Messianic." The dynamics of the previous few points prepare us for my final point. A fertile breeding ground for a new antisemitism has been created that you probably never imagined.

10. Sacred Name teachings breed unconscious antisemitism

Antisemitism is a loaded word. It conjures up horrible images in our memories and imaginations. The vast majority of people would never say they're anti-Semitic—it would be like saying that you worship Satan, or that you practice cannibalism, or that you listen to Justin Bieber. So you may be experiencing strong emotions in response to hearing me equate Sacred Name teachings with antisemitism and with the music of Justin Bieber.



If that's you, please hear me out and consider what I'm about to say, because it's coming from a heart of love for the Jewish people, and for you. I'm talking about these things because I care. (Oh, and Justin Bieber cares, too. He even has a Hebrew tattoo of the name "Yeshua!").

But back to me, I've spent most of my adult life around the Messianic movement and around the Jewish community. I've spent literally thousands of hours studying the Scriptures and history, and have come to the realization that some things don't add up. I have to say also that I feel a deep sense of urgency about this message. Ask anyone who knows me well and they'll tell you that I hate conflict. I'll avoid disagreements and friction at almost any cost. It's actually a weakness of mine. But I see a train wreck coming, and this is my effort at getting as many people off the Sacred Name train as possible before the crash. That's where I'm coming from with these words.

Having said that, let's talk about antisemitism. It's important to understand that there are different kinds of antisemitism, almost like strains of a disease. Some are more open and in your face, like cancer when it's metastasized. Other kinds are quieter and more subtle, but that doesn't mean they don't affect you. Think of someone you know who's outright aggressive versus someone you know who's passive-aggressive. They're both dangerous and can drive you crazy, they just do it in different ways. Antisemitism can lie dormant, undetected for years, until something happens to trigger it, and it suddenly flares up.

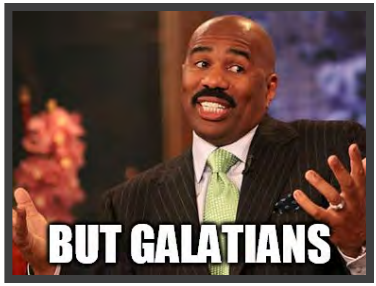
For the sake of understanding, let's call these two strains conscious and unconscious antisemitism. Conscious antisemites hate the Jews, and they know they hate the Jews, and they'll tell you they hate the Jews. They may have adopted conspiracy theories or ethnic myths to justify their hatred, but the bottom line is that they hate the Jews, *as Jews*. Unconscious antisemites, on the other hand, don't hate the Jews, but they don't care about them either. There's a coldness there, an indifference. Unconscious antisemitism may not scream "death to the Jews," but neither is it interested in doing life with the Jews in any way, shape, or form. It ignores them, treats them as irrelevant, and is closed to even learning about them.

Remember that ultimately love is a verb, and so is hate.

Remember that ultimately love is a verb, and so is hate. Sometimes all you need to do to hate the Jews, is nothing. Think of the millions of Europeans during the Second World War who just went about their lives while their Jewish neighbors were being rounded up and carted off. Their lack of action was caused by their implicit antisemitism. It paralyzed them, and made them complicit with the explicit antisemitism of the Nazis.

That's why it's often easier to detect unconscious antisemitism by watching for what isn't there, than for what is there. For instance, why do some preachers never talk about the Jewish people? Why doesn't praying for the peace of Jerusalem happen in some churches? And how can seminaries crank out graduates who never learned a sniff about Judaism? These are all possible symptoms of unconscious antisemitism.

You can't tell for sure though until a potential trigger event happens. Someone in the church wants to host a Passover seder. A family member starts keeping the feasts. A seat of Jewish studies is proposed. At that point, if there's unconscious antisemitism it begins pushing back, usually masking itself behind Bible verses quoted out of context, or sometimes by criticism of the modern state of Israel.



Sociologists have recognized several different types of antisemitism. Of particular note are the categories of "racial antisemitism" and "religious antisemitism." Racial antisemitism is plain, old-fashioned, Jew-hatred. The Nazis are probably the best example of this. Religious antisemitism, on the other hand, is *Judaism*-hatred. And I'm sorry to say this, but Christianity in its darker chapters has probably been the best example of this.



It's extremely important to understand this about antisemitism, namely, *hatred of Judaism is hatred of Jews.* Think about it for a moment. Without Judaism, there would be no Jewish people, because it's our religion that makes us Jews. So if you say you love us *as Jews*, then you must also love our Judaism. Conversely, if you hate Judaism, then you also hate us *as Jews*. . . which is antisemitism. What I said about the words "Messianic" and "Jewish" also apply here. Jews and their Judaism are also like Siamese twins—take one from the other, and you'll kill them both.



So let's bring this discussion home. Hopefully you're beginning to see how the Sacred Name world is a breeding ground for antisemitism. Sacred Name teachings may not promote conscious racial antisemitism, but they *are* infecting people with religious antisemitism—a hatred of Judaism which is sometimes unconscious, but in many cases is very conscious.

The bottom line is that teaching people to use God's name in flagrant disregard for Jewish sensitivities is antisemitic. Making up your own version of Hebrew instead of learning to pronounce it the Jewish way is antisemitic. The same goes for Messiah's name—coming up with variant forms instead of respecting the Messianic Jewish movement and our usage of the name "Yeshua" is antisemitic. And, not bothering to learn how to handle holy books and ignoring Jewish feelings on this matter is antisemitic.

This is also true of replacement theology. Anything that causes people to think or act as if God gave the Torah to them, instead of the Jewish community, is antisemitic. Likewise, any way of thinking or acting that displaces the centrality of national Israel's ongoing relationship with God, is antisemitic.

I know, these are strong words, and I'm not saying this to accuse anyone or make them feel bad. If you use a Sacred Name Bible you may feel shocked at the suggestion that some of your practices are antisemitic. You have a good heart, you're sincerely trying to follow the Father, and you may even have a genuine love for Israel. You're obviously not an evil person, so how could anyone accuse you of antisemitism? If that's you, I do hope you'll consider the possibility that you may have inadvertently absorbed some teachings that were tainted with religious antisemitism, even though your heart was in the right place and you had good intentions.

Please spend time prayerfully contemplating this question. Is it possible you could have picked up some practices that are actually antisemitic, and you weren't even aware of it? If that's what happened, don't feel bad. Just respond to this invitation to let go of those things, and step into a new relationship of love, respect, and understanding towards the Jewish people.

Conclusion

What are some practical things you can do to take that positive step? Begin by reverently calling God "Adonai" or "Lord," instead of insisting on using his name every chance you get. Call our Messiah "Yeshua" instead of using some version that isn't even real Hebrew. Handle books containing God's name reverently, and be careful not to put them on the ground or put stuff on top of them. Retire your Sacred Name Bible, and start using a Messianic Jewish Bible, or even a regular Christian Bible. If you're not sure which version fits best for you, my translation review series at holylanguage.com can help you find the Bible that's right for you.

These are a few concrete things you can do, but the most important thing is the heart. If you're doing what you can to actively cultivate an attitude of love towards the Jewish people and respect towards their Judaism, then the next step will be revealed to you. Follow that leading. I guarantee it will be a beautiful journey, and the Father's name will truly be set apart through your life.



Izzy Avraham
Izzy Avraham is the founder and director of the Holy Language Institute (holylanguage.com). He is the author of Yeshua First-Person: Messiah's Story, in His Own Words *(Holy Language Institute, 2023). Avraham teaches Mussar, an ancient Jewish discipline of inner work and character development, through the Mussar Center (mussar.org). For followers of Yeshua, this is a biblical way of becoming more like him. He is from Saskatchewan, Canada, and resides with his family in New Mexico.*