

# **A Cancer Afflicting the Body**

**An Editorial by Rav Levi bar Ido**

**A rabbi speaks out against Anti-Semitism in the Movement!**

A subtle form of anti-Semitism, or an abhorrence for anything that may be Jewish, is a lethal cancer that is growing within the Body of the Messiah. It has even spread into the Messianics and some Nazarenes. This form of anti-Semitism is the most illogical and irrational prejudice that any Believer in the Jewish Messiah Yahshua can be guilty of in today's society. In the many centuries since Yahshua, even the Nazarenes, who were once a sect within Second Temple Judaism, have turned against the Jewish people.

The Jews have always sought to live at peace with their Gentile neighbors and friends. Despite this love for shalom, even now, especially in the USA and Europe, anti-Semitism is on the rise. What is the reason for such prejudice and hatred? Anti-Semitism is not just another form racism. Anti-Semitism is unique in its character. The Jewish people have been accused of plotting to take over the world, running the media, controlling the economy, and "killing the Christ". Blacks, Hispanics, and Asians have never had these horrible accusations made against their races.

Anti-Semitism has its roots planted deep in the soil of the world religions of Christianity and Islam. Both of these claim to be the "true" religion of the Scriptures and claim to have replaced Judaism.

Christianity, as it now exists, claims to be the "New Israel" and they claim the "New Covenant" has replaced the inferior "Old Covenant". The "New Testament" "Elohim is one of love and grace, while the Elohim of the "Old" is judgmental and shows no mercy to the sinner. The Torah is bondage and their anti-Torah teachings are called freedom in "Christ". Their Messiah came to free the Jews from the law and to put an end to their legalistic religion. According to their doctrines, Yahshua came to stop all tradition and Torah observance. In their mixed up world, the "Church" replaces Yisrael and the Jews are destined for hell-fire unless they convert to their brand of Christianity. The Christian religion claims to love the Jewish people, yet their history only proves their disdain and persecution of the Jews.

Islam also claims to be the true religion of the Scriptures. They teach that the Jews have twisted and perverted Scriptures in order to show they are the Chosen People. Islam claims that it was Ishmael, not Yitzchak that was offered on the altar by Avraham Avinu. In their eyes, all Jews are liars and should be destroyed and driven from the Land.

But what is puzzling to me is the intense detestation that modern Messianics, Yahwists, Sacred Namers, and some Nazarenes have against anything that appears "too Jewish" or too Orthodox. The Halakah of head-coverings, beards, pe'ot, rabbis, ritual, candles, the siddur, and fringes are looked upon with disdain by some as "too Jewish" and are to be rejected. Most of these types of people are truly ignorant of the Torah and the deeper levels of Torah interpretation. They have a little knowledge of the Torah, which is really dangerous. Those who claim to know a lot always act with contempt towards those who truly know more than they. They looked with disdain upon the Rabbinical Sages of Yisrael.

Some have even chosen to join the "Karaites" in their anti-rabbinic world view. They do this in ignorance, not understanding that today's Karaites have many traditions that are stricter than rabbinical Judaism. They like the idea of a community consensus in Torah interpretation and have the misguided notion that Torah observance is based upon some democratic principle of voting.

Regrettably, many of these types go into a community and act in a way that violates the communal Halakah and the result is conflict and strife. Sometimes congregations split over the Halakah that the rabbi sets to govern the synagogue. In reality, those who argue over the local customs are succumbing to their unrenowned Gentile concepts which have some form of anti-Semitism as their root. These people want to ostracize the local rabbis who study and teach Torah and Kabbalah. This conflict is between those who truly are trying to embody the spiritual connection to YHWH and those who do not. This arrogance and narrow-mindedness leads to destruction.

The Torah requires us to respect the teachers of Torah, even those with whom we have disagreement. As long as the Halakah that a rabbi teaches is based upon Torah foundations and precepts, and do not conflict with the teachings of our Master, we need to respect his teachings and his person.

This is a call for unity and an end to the anti-Semitism. A Torah community does not have to unite under ONE set of Halakah and traditions, but we do have to unite in a common cause and mutual respect. During the Second Temple period, the sages were respected for their wisdom and knowledge of the Torah. Many no longer respect those who have dedicated their lives to serving YHWH and teaching the Torah.

When those outside see the infighting, disunity, disloyalty, and lack of respect for leaders, they have no desire to unite with us in the greatest Return since the Exodus since they can experience these works of the flesh in their respective religions. It is time that we as Nazarene Yisrael become a unified people and work together to end the anti-Semitism in the Body of Messiah.