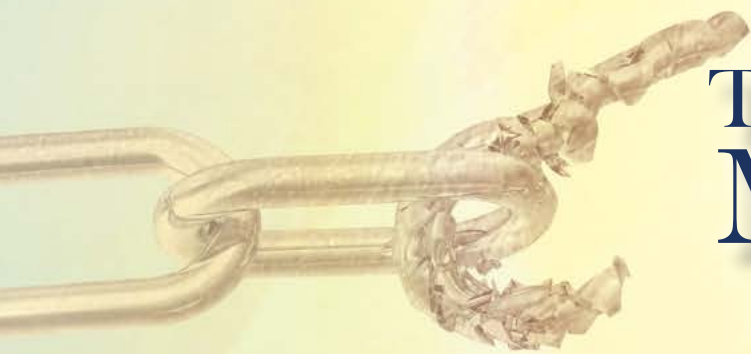




The Missing Link in Christianity?

Sharon Sanders

Ben Rubin in his book, *What is Repentance?* sums it up. He writes, ***"The Church is guilty of willingly choosing blindness toward the Jewish people. It pretends to exist without the 'natural olive tree. Without Israel there is no church.' It is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you."*** (Romans 11:18).

It is a bona fide fact that "a chain is only as strong as its weakest link," a figurative phrase coined around the 18th century. Christianity's root system requires strong, healthy growth to be developed. Staying attached to the part of the tree that attaches it to the ground--supporting from underground--helps retain the spiritual richness of its origin. Christendom may not be as strong as it looks in view of the fact that it has a missing link in its tenets of faith. The chain of faith was broken and then of course it became disconnected over the centuries. Followers of Jesus, need Israel because Israel is the root; we are only the branches. I do not believe Jesus ever wanted His Disciples to disconnect from His Brethren. We are indeed, in need of another reformation to ascend to our fullness. Israel needs revelation in order to come into her fullness.

The truth about our Hebraic foundations has been omitted from our Christian Education courses. Reality needs to be faced, and the error corrected. Conviction is good but we must accept all that God has shown us. Reading, and understanding all of Romans Chapters 9, 10 and 11 helps us to come to grips with what we are missing.

If someone bakes bread, but leaves out the flour, it is missing a main ingredient. Our salvific faith in Israel's Messiah, requires a highly valued component for validity to be the Savior of the world, His need to be born of Jewish stock (in the flesh). Without Israel, we have no bedrock understructure to support our claims. It was the Jewish Scriptures, aka the "Old" Testament or Torah/Tanach that predicted Messiah was to come. Israel is

the genesis and fountainhead of our faith because everything we have was given to us by the Jewish people. Basic knowledge reveals that Jesus in-the-flesh, was and will always be: a Jew. He reminds us about that in Revelation 22:16. He brought a Jewish message about the coming Kingdom to Israel, and His Jewish disciples revealed it to the world of non-Jews. Jesus made it clear His message was for Israel--to the Jews first.

This truth has been covered up with the cloaks of neglect for centuries. It seems many choose to believe "whatever they've been taught" rather than to gain insight. It is only when they really study that they realize something is missing. ***"Brethren, do not be children in understanding; however, in malice babes, but in understanding be mature"*** (1 Corinthians 14:20, NASB). A large portion of churches are still trying to continue to ignore the missing link. For a Gentile woman to understand Him, He felt it important to tell her that ***"...salvation is of the Jews"*** (John 4:22). The Jewish people, and the monumentally important role they will play in the redemption of the world cannot be repudiated by playing it down. Because of this lack of understanding, many Christians are unable to comprehend the importance of the Israel of modern times. Until the link is reattached, the fullness of the Church will never be complete. Its abridged form of teaching diminishes the beautiful love story between the Almighty, a Chosen People, and the ultimate one new humanity that will emerge, once Messiah has returned to Jerusalem.

The revelation has been hidden for centuries. Think about it! How can we read Jewish Scriptures, believe in Jewish prophets, Jewish Psalmists and trust in a Jewish Messiah as Savior of our world, and not include His People? Christians have been victims of an insufficient Christian education program which includes our heritage in Israel. The Bible says we are to rejoice with Israel in that God's Word is being fulfilled as He said it would be. ***"Rejoice ye Gentiles, with my people."***



“...hear the instruction of thy father,
and forsake not the law of thy mother:
for they shall be an ornament of grace
unto thy head, and chains about thy neck”

Proverbs 1:8, 9.

(Romans 15:10). Who are the “Gentiles” told to rejoice, if not Christians? We are the only ones who came out of the soil of Israel.

The task of taking this journey of understanding requires that we understand that the spirit of deception was firmly rooted in the heretical sermons of our forefathers. When it comes to realizing that much of the Church is believing a lie, called Replacement Theology, many are satisfied with turning a blind eye. By exposing this transgression, we can guide Christianity out of dangerous apostasy.

Christian replacement meant God broke His Everlasting Covenant with Israel, changed His Mind, and divorced His Chosen People, to marry another. That kind of thinking disregards the authenticity of the unchanging decrees in God’s word. Replacement Theology’s rotten fruit is proof that God’s promise of Genesis 12:3 has been taken lightly, and blood-soaked stains have been left on Christendom’s spiritual garments. Anyone, teaching or instructing Christians, must come to grips with this deadly “thorn” thrust into the side of our faith. We’ve got to get it out.

Not every church or denomination advocates Replacement Theology boldly, but at the core of many of our sermons, it is there. The exposure to the Church’s history with Israel, may shake some staunch, traditional beliefs. One of the world’s most renowned rabbis, Rabbi Daniel Boyarin, said it with precise clarity. He said, “sometimes investigations shake old certainties.”

The Jewish people are also learning how to relate to us, after centuries of our negative treatment. Many relationships have been developed, that have proven that true believers in Jesus, are indeed their best friends. What Christians do with the truth they learn could change history. Elie Weisel once stated,

“There may be times when we are powerless to prevent injustice, but there must never be a time when we fail to protest.” We protest Replacement Theology, which was rarely challenged down through the centuries. We hope you will also.

As we reflect further on why Christianity ended up with a “missing link,” in the chain of faith, we must allow all evidence to stand under examination, and then come to a conclusion on how we should play our part in repairing the break. As we learn how allegory played a big part in the deception, our faith can heal.

One morning as I was enjoying my daily devotions, (*Word for Today* (UCB.co.uk), the following struck a chord in my heart. Based on Judges 3:31, “Shamgar...struck down six hundred Philistines with an ox-goad. He saved Israel...because the Israelites disobeyed God, they ended up enslaved to the Philistines who ruled them by fear and intimidation. But Shamgar refused to be intimidated. He decided to disrupt the status quo, and he did it with an ox-goad – a long stick used by farmers to prod animals. He refused to be what he could not do--keeping him from doing what he could...Shamgar grabbed his ox-goad and charged six hundred Philistine soldiers. The enemy probably chuckled at his makeshift weaponry until he started wielding it. Then the look in his eyes struck fear into their hearts...When God gives the go, it’s full steam ahead...whatever “ox-goad” God has given...it’s an all-out assault on the forces of darkness, by deciding to become “salt and light” where God has placed us. It’s more than pointing out the problems. It’s committing ourselves to be part of the solution...It’s deciding to take action and...instead of sitting on the sidelines...it’s using what God gave us...” In my opinion, it is time to take our “ox-goads” (in this case it will be our Bibles) and speak the truth in love. We can be the instruments of the Almighty, to help stamp out Christian anti-Semitism. (We must not allow anyone to persuade us there is no such thing). It may shock some to their

core, but the Church needs to read its history book, which I have labeled “The Christian Hall of Shame” as it pertains to its relationship toward Israel.

It’s sad that most churches hardly make room in the bulletin for any mention of Bible prophecy. It’s difficult to reinforce one’s faith when God’s Promises to Israel are coming to pass and then hardly get a mention. Both Israel, and the Church, are facing forces of evil which live in hope of seeing us wiped out. Together, we should be standing together stronger against the enemies of God.

Other than Judaism, and more than any other faith community, true Christianity is Jewish, in nature. We must do all we can to close the gap that exists today between Christians and Jews. When we form a connection, we need that sense of connection to fight our mutually avowed enemies.

Where to Start?

Christians need to begin by asking, “Why push away from entering into fullness, without the olive tree from which we grew?” Devastating theological errors developed over centuries, from misunderstood idioms, words taken out of context and time, plus a lack of knowledge of the original language of the Bible: Hebrew. Christians have been served from a menu of ecclesiastical sermons, penned by non-Jews raised with Western mindsets, rather than being served a complete meal, including drinking water from the wells of Jacob.

The “Way” (what the early followers of Jesus called themselves)--as an “offshoot” of Israel’s olive tree is hardly spoken about from pulpits. For two thousand years, Christianity has attempted to reach higher, without acknowledging her (Romans 11:25) Hebraic foundations, and devastating results ensued. We need to pull back the curtain of yesteryear, and observe what happened in the meeting hall of the Council of Nicaea, in 325 CE called by Emperor Constantine. The unconcern and coldness toward the Jewish nation stirred up anti-Semitism among intolerant, narrow-minded and biased people. Then it rubbed salt into the already festering wound of betrayal of them. Elie Wiesel so aptly said, “The opposite of love is not hate, it’s indifference.”

Christian missions are still bearing good fruit in hospital work, clothing and feeding the poor, but when teaching the Bible, who shares about Jesus’ human form being Jewish or about the nation from which He came? Learning about our foundations was some of the most exciting information I ever learned. My spirit jumped when I learned the truth.

We have to ask ourselves, “Where is Christianity going when we look at the condition of the Church in the United States and in Europe?” Our leaders must intensify prayer for what God has commanded us to pray: for the peace of Jerusalem (Psalm

122:6). We need to teach the sheep to love that which God loves, with all of His Heart, the “apple of His eye.” (Zechariah 2:8). Jewish scholar, David Nekrutman reminds us, “You (Christians) have poked God in His Eye” by committing the cruelest of actions toward God’s Chosen People. Also we take too lightly God’s offer to bless, in Genesis 12:3, “I will bless those who bless My People” which is not a healthy practice. The fact that God loves the whole world, but Israel remains the very center of His Eye will never change. He stays focused on Israel, and the Land, “...from the beginning of the year until the end of each year.” (Deuteronomy 11:12).

When a church body totally ignores the Jewish Scriptures calling the Torah, the “Old” Testament, it is not only insulting to a Jewish person, but inappropriately termed. How can the infinite words of the Eternal God ever be termed “old”? Nowhere does it say in the Bible to disregard God’s Eternal Word spoken through the Jewish Scriptures! Again, the Council of Nicaea, was a major player in developing the “Old” Testament terminology, and that’s when the chain snapped.

I am concerned that when those responsible for teaching wrong doctrine in regard to Israel, arrive at Heaven’s doors, they may have to learn quickly why they may be locked out. Then it may be too late.

Everyone can make a difference in Jewish-Christian relations and help us repair the breach (Isaiah 58:12). Living in Israel for most of my life transformed and deepened my faith as well as taught me about a Jewish world I had never known. It is a responsibility for all Christians to make certain that once we learn to love as Jesus taught us, we will “never again” allow the chain that binds us together, to be broken. We must never separate from Israel again. “Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the LORD, speak, saying, The LORD hath utterly separated me from his people...” (Isaiah 56:3).

Tangible things can be mislaid, but if something goes missing in my faith, I run with passion, as fast as I can, to find it. I say to every Christian reading this, “Run!” Run from heresy! Just like Jesus, our dear Rabbi Yaacov who worked with CFI so many years, was always teaching. He left us with the words “Educate, Educate, Educate!” Yaacov showed us a love for the Torah we had never before experienced. We showed him unconditional love, something he had never before seen. For centuries, churchgoers sat in the pews, repeating phrases as parrots, not even aware that what they were being taught was false doctrine. Too many went to their graves hating the Jewish people because they believed a lie. It’s hard to admit, but we must face the truth.

When Christianity took root around the world, its branches grew so quickly, they disconnected from their Hebraic roots. New congregations dropped their own roots, instead of

remaining connected to the mother root and ended up bearing bad fruit. Replacement Theology had found an incubator in which to thrive, and because of it, many Jewish people died. Having spent years with Holocaust survivors after they came to Israel, I often thought, “How would the Holocaust have turned out if Christian neighbors had answered the call for help from their Jewish neighbors, instead of being by-standers when the Nazis arrived at their doors? What if they had stepped in front of their Jewish friends and told the Nazis, “you cannot take them, if you do not take me!” Today’s good news is that God has raised up educated teachers who are qualified to expose the dangers of Replacement Theology that took us down the wrong path.

“Sometimes people hold core beliefs that are very strong. When they are presented with evidence that works against those beliefs, the new evidence will not be accepted. It can create a feeling that is extremely uncomfortable, called cognitive dissonance. And because it is so important to protect that core belief, they will rationalize, ignore and even deny anything that doesn’t fit with the core belief.”
(Frantz Fanon) We must be determined in our quest to bring the light of truth out of the darkness of centuries.

It is amazing to see how an eagerness to learn about Christianity’s foundational roots is not coming from seminaries and institutions, but from among ordinary people. In my travels to over fifty-five nations teaching the Church about Israel, in some places it was truly a startling revelation to hear that Jesus was a Jew. One Christian told a friend of mine, “Knowing the truth of this now, I have to empty out all the years of rubbish, and start all over again.” Dr. Michael S. Heiser, scholar of the Israel Bible Center Round Table Talk appropriately laid the truth in front of his students, when he said: “The proper context for interpreting the Bible is in the context of the Biblical writers--the context that produced the Bible. Every other context is alien to the Biblical writers and therefore, to the Bible. Yet there is a pervasive tendency in the believing Church to filter the Bible through creeds, confessions, and denominational preferences.”

Adam and Gila Milstein said, “We must turn the tragedies of the past into lessons for the future.” For those who are engaged in helping Christians find their “Missing Link” and are working toward the eradication of Replacement Theology, we need to continue to guard the Jewish people, and shield Israel on the wings of prayer. It is in our hands to make sure that the next generation of believers will seek the welfare of the Jewish people, and never again allow a disconnect. We cannot change history, but we can change the future, and no longer tolerate indifference. Let us know of your passion for truth, and we’ll be there to connect you to the missing link. 

