

# The Toxic Fruit of Reformed Theology, Part 2: Theological Butchers Origen and Tertullian



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*We are not to simply bandage the wounds of victims beneath the wheels of injustice, we are to drive a spoke into the wheel itself. –Dietrich Bonhoeffer, on Hitler’s evil.*

*The devil is not fighting religion. He’s too smart for that. He is producing a counterfeit Christianity, so much like the real one that good Christians are afraid to speak out against it. We are plainly told in the Scriptures that in the last days men will not endure sound doctrine and will depart from the faith and heap to themselves teachers to tickle their ears. We live in an epidemic of this itch, and popular preachers have developed “ear-tickling” into a fine art. –Vance Havner*

*You can’t love God without loving the Jewish people. –Corrie Ten Boom*

Amen to [Corrie Ten Boom](#) who lost her sister and father in the concentration camps, but survived to tell the story of how her family saved Jewish brethren and then ended up in the camps simply for loving God’s people. She is considered one of the [Righteous Among the Nations](#).”

So many Christians are on a collision course with God. Many evangelical believers, to their utter shame, are joining ranks with the enemies of Israel in attempting to "lift Jerusalem." Surely, the ugliest and most pernicious partnerships ever witnessed in the history of Christianity, is the joining together with, and marching arm in arm with, those of false doctrines, including the likes of liberal protestants, Islamists, humanitarians, secularists, politicians and a host of other ungodly rubble of society. (Like heretic Rick Warren's Chrislam.)

Rallying under the banner of "justice for the Palestinian people," these multifaith crusaders are blissfully unaware that they are on a collision course with the God of Israel. This is a theologically driven jihad and those who are united in their opposition to the State of Israel will not be held guiltless. Some join because of their anti-Zionist prejudice; others with a pro-Palestinian axe to grind, likely bent on furthering their careers at the expense of truth.

Jew Hatred has grown tall in the amillennial seedbeds of our churches. Amillennialism is a laundered system which has bleached out the plain meaning of Scripture; it cannot be deduced from Bible study, but must be taught. Amillennialism makes no distinction between Israel and the church, wrongly asserting that there is only one people of God and one overarching covenant, the so-called covenant of grace. They do not believe in the thousand-year reign but that the millennium is symbolic of the church age. Symbolizing the Word of God, where there is no symbolism, has created some of the most heretical doctrines of both Christianity and cults.

Remember that many uninspired hands have commented on the words in the Bible. Not all Bible commentaries are of sound doctrine.

In 1867, J.C. Ryle wisely urged his readers to "Cleave to the literal sense of Bible words, and beware of departing from it,

except in cases of absolute necessity. Beware of the system of allegorizing and spiritualizing, and accommodating, which the school of Origen first brought in and which has found such an unfortunate degree of favor in the Church."

Unfortunately, Ryle's wise teaching went against the Church of England which was steeped in allegorical methods of Biblical interpretation which can be found in the writings of their most learned and influential theologians. They believe they must always look beyond the plain literal sense of the text to the "mystical meaning therein." Many of the theologians did not agree with the prophecy that Israel would again inhabit the land. But Ezekiel's prophecy is true, "And the desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by. And they shall say, 'This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced and are inhabited.'" (Ezekiel 36:34-35)

Scripture teaches us that an escalation of opposition against Israel from the international community will build. Zechariah speaks of that time of unprecedented pressure when "all the nations of the earth" will rise up against Jerusalem to besiege it. In that day, when world attention is fixed on God's beloved city, the Lord declares that He will make Jerusalem "a cup of reeling to all the peoples round about." He will give advance warning to would-be meddlers that "all who burden themselves" with Jerusalem, those who attempt to lift it, will be "cut in pieces," (Zechariah 12:2-3).

## **Origen and Tertullian**

Origen of Alexandria, also known as Origen Adamantius, was an early Christian scholar, ascetic, and theologian who was born and spent the first half of his career in Alexandria, Egypt (c.185 – c.253). He died in Tyre, Lebanon.

Tertullian of Carthage was born in 160AD and died in Carthage

240AD. He wrote his main theological works at the turn of the third century, primarily apologetics, mainly targeting Gnostics and Marcionites. But in his Apologies, he includes An Answer to the Jews. As with most early Church fathers, his anti-Judaic works have been largely ignored by scholars but they are, frankly, an embarrassment.

The Jews, with their constant idolatry, writes Tertullian, deserve less than the Christians, who have fled idolatry to worship the true God.

Like [Philo of Alexandria](#) before him, Origen believed he had uncovered the doctrines of Plato in the writings of Moses. (Plato offers a state in which there are justice, good and wisdom, his state was criticized as “anti-democratic, anti-humanitarian, anti-individualistic, and totalitarian.”)

Once again Greek allegorical tools were used to “excavate” the Old Testament text to reveal its true “hidden” or “higher spiritual” meaning. Like Clement and Philo before them, Origen and Tertullian were able to make the Bible dance to whatever tune they chose to play. They claimed that faith was also the basis of gnōsis, a spiritual and mystical knowledge.

Origen’s lengthy treatise, [Against Celsus](#), opens a window into Origen’s Greek-Christian mind, revealing just how deeply convinced he was that there was no future for the Jewish nation in the purposes of God. He therefore set the theological stage upon which Israel’s “irrevocable judgment” would be performed with the church playing the lead role. As far as the church of Origen’s day was concerned, the Jews had committed the unpardonable sin, deicide (the murder of God), and all they could expect was unrelenting punishment and the harshest condemnation from the Christian.

The same libel against the Jews was uttered and written by Tertullian. Third century anti-Judaism libel was the accusation of Christ-killing. This is not done by isolated

Jews or religious groups according to Tertullian, but “all the synagogue of Israel did slay Him, saying to Pilate, when he was desirous to dismiss Him, ‘His blood be upon us, and upon our children.’”

Reality has it that the Romans murdered Christ. But if one digs into history, you’ll find that the Jewish leaders did not want Him crucified for fear He would become a martyr. For Christians, our belief is that our sins were laid upon Him and he was the final and perfect sacrifice, the perfect lamb of God slain for us. Nevertheless, we should never have been separated from Passover in the earliest church. How sad the cost to our Jewish brethren, most unforgivable, and how sad the poisoning of the true church by men filled with demonic hatred.

Origen was a Neo-Platonist, and he immersed himself in Greek philosophy, and was “one of the first to place the authority of tradition on a level with the Bible.” [Link](#)

Origin and Tertullian influenced Augustine and in turn Augustine influenced Calvin. The lie continues despite the truth being written in the Lord’s Word. Augustine was the patron saint of the heretical doctrine, “Replacement Theology.”

Can readers see how this false and heretical doctrine from such an early age could turn into the massive hatred and destruction of all things Jewish? Surely these early men, although having some things right, were accursed of God because of their demonic hatred of His people. The Lord calls Israel His Wife! The unconditional Abrahamic Covenant speaks volumes regarding the harsh punishments and curses that will befall those who hate Israel and who have cursed her throughout history.

The anathematizing of the Jewish people had begun.

For Origen, all souls, including the devil himself, will

eventually achieve salvation, even if it takes innumerable ages to do so. Origen believed that God's love is so powerful as to soften even the hardest heart, and that the human intellect – being the image of God – will never freely choose oblivion over proximity.

Tertullian believed that only martyrs go to paradise. All other Christians (the Theotokos being an exception?) have to wait in Hades for the resurrection. The Greek word, *Theotokos*, means to bear God, as in to bear a child, and was used to refer to Mary as the mother of Jesus. Mary is named *Christotokos* (Christ-bearer) in 431 by the Council of Ephesus in response to this insight.

In the year 400, Theophilus summoned a council in Alexandria, which condemned Origen and all his followers as heretics for having taught that God was incorporeal, which they decreed contradicted the only true and orthodox position, which was that God had a literal, physical body resembling that of a human.

Both Origen and Tertullian profoundly shaped the way Christian minds would interact with the Scriptures, but it later fell to Augustine of Hippo, the unrivaled patron saint of replacement theology to systematize Origen's allegorical methods. Augustine's harsh amillennialism dominated the Reformation and exercised great influence on the theology of John Calvin. Then too, there is Emperor Constantine who, by legalizing Christianity, declared "open season" on the Jewish people. And of course, let's not forget John Chrysostom, called the "golden mouth," whose virulent anti-Semitic *Eight Homilies Against the Jews* find their equal with Martin Luther's treatise, *On the Jews and Their Lies* (1543). These men may rant and rail against the Jews all they like, but the God of Israel will have the final word.

Far too many have tried to excoriate the Jews from modern day prophecies, but it will never work for God has decreed for His

ancient covenant people, a foundation of truth upon which the doctrine of Israel's restoration stands. No Origin, Tertullian or Augustine, Luther or Calvin, or any of their twenty-first counterparts, can halt the progression of God's prophetic purposes.

The Lord is gathering the Jews to their ancient homeland; He is watching over their flourishing land; He sees Israel's enemies rising on every side; He hears the Christian Palestinian lies; and He bears witness to the injustice of the anti-Israel boycotts. The stage is being set for the end of this era, and when it comes, there will be hard times, but our Lord God will set everything righteous for His people.

Thomas Newton had this sober warning to all who would touch the "apple of God's eye." (1 January 1704 – 14 February 1782) Newton was an English cleric, biblical scholar and author. He served as the Bishop of Bristol from 1761 to 1782.

"We see that after so many ages, [the Jews] are still preserved by a miracle of providence a distinct people; and why is such a continual miracle exerted, but for the greater illustration of the divine truth, and the better accomplishment of the divine promises, as well as those which are yet to be, as those which are already fulfilled? We see that the great empires, which in their turns subdued and oppressed the people of God, are all come to ruin: because though they executed the purposes of God...all that they intended was to satiate their own pride and ambition, their own cruelty and revenge. And if such hath been the fateful end of the enemies and oppressors of the Jews, let it serve as a warning to all those, who at any time or upon any occasion are for raising a clamor and persecution against them."

## **Conclusion**

Next up a deep dive into Chrysostom, Ambrose, Augustine and Calvin and the rotten fruit their reform churches are built

upon.

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