

Pastor-teacher Don Hargrove
Faith Bible Church
Friday, March 04, 2011
<http://fbcweb.org/doctrines.html>

JEWISH APOLOGETICS (36)
ANSWERING JEWISH OBJECTION #27
(DDR #655)

Objection #27: The origins of anti-Semitism can be traced to the pages of the New Testament. From the negative depiction of the Pharisees to the charge of deicide, anti-Semitism is a Christian plague.

Michael Brown's short response:

It is commonly recognized among scholars today that anti-Semitism existed in various forms in the ancient world long before a single page of the New Testament was written. Further, the New Testament documents primarily reflect friction between Jewish groups—differences between Messianic Jews and non-Messianic Jews (including Pharisees, Sadducees, etc.)—just like the Dead Sea Scrolls reflect legal and religious arguments between different Jewish groups. It is a mistake to read the later history of “Christian” anti-Semitism back into the New Testament. As for passages in the New Testament that have helped fuel anti-Semitism in the church, you need to remember that passages from our own Hebrew Bible have often been used against us Jews by anti-Semitic texts in the New Testament, when properly translated and understood, are really not anti-Semitic at all. In fact, Israel's greatest support today comes from those who read the New Testament as the literal Word of God. For them, it is the source of philo-Semitism not anti-Semitism.¹

Following this short response, Brown (for thirty pages) does a superb job in documenting the “anti-Semitic statements” from various sources (Dead Sea Scrolls, Romans, Greeks, Josephus, the Talmud, Islam) thereby debunking the idea that the New Testament is responsible for anti-Semitism. He also demonstrates the compatibility of the New Testament with the Old

¹Michael L. Brown, *Answering Jewish Objections to Jesus: General and Historical Objections*, 1ST ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 2000), see 145-75 for his full response to this objection. In this work, Brown lists the objection and then gives a short response that is followed by a more developed response. This DDR series, for the most part, tracks the objection and his *short* response, after which you will find my comments. I highly recommend his book if you are interested in his longer responses (there is far too much material to include in the DDRs).

Testament concerning the Jews, and makes it clear that the New Testament is indeed philo-Semitic.

Pastor Don—enjoying the light and life of fellowship that make all the wonderful provisions and promises of God's Word work (without fellowship all we are left with is religion—even if based on Bible passages). It really is all about our relationship with God. That's always the bottom line, and the thing that separates true Christianity from everything else! There is nothing else that is as important. No program or method will every replace it.

1 John 1:5-7 And this is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. ⁶ If we say that we have fellowship with Him and *yet* walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; but if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.