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JEWISH-CHRISTIAN CONTROVERSY IN THE SECOND AND THIRD CENTURIES A.D.

by E.L. Abel

Prior to the Jewish war of 66-70 A.D., Christianity was almost an unknown religion. The few non-Jews who did have any knowledge of it considered Christianity to be merely a sect of Judaism, while to the Jews themselves, Christianity was of such minor concern that Jewish teachers of the first century A.D. tended to ignore its very existence¹. However, by the second century A.D., as growing anti-Jewish polemic began to become part of Christian proselytizing, Judaism suddenly became cognizant of this group of heretics. Confronted by the growing source of anti-Jewish contumely, Jewish leaders began to reply to the calumnies against them and a hardening and bitter attitude was adopted towards Christianity. In this paper, the growth and nature of this controversy will be discussed in the belief that such an examination will help to explain the basic attitude which each religion came to adopt towards the other.

I

After the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., the Jews faced an enormous crisis. The Temple, the symbol of their religion was destroyed and it seemed to many that Judaism itself might disappear. As a result, a new school was established at Jamnia. The founders of this school felt that to insure Judaism's continued existence, consolidation was necessary and arising from this attitude came the decision condemning Paul's teaching and the disavowal of Christianity as having any part in Judaism.

The first direct action was taken against the compromise sect, the Jewish Christians, called *Minim* or *Nosrim*. This was to become the term for all unfaithful Jews and was primarily attached to any

Jew who acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah. However, it was also occasionally employed to designate gentile Christians or for that matter, any so-called enemy of Judaism².

In trying to make it clear that they would not even allow a passing acquaintance with the Christian heresy, the Jewish authorities gave Shemuel ha-Qaton the task of composing a special liturgical prayer to be included in the eighteen benedictions which Jews recited every day. This was immediately inserted into the daily benedictions and Gamaliel II, president of the Sanhedrin at Jamnia quickly directed letters to be sent out not only to the Jewish communities in Palestine, but to Jewish communities throughout the Diaspora informing them of its inclusion and announcing the formal separation of Judaism and Christianity.

Schoeps³ reconstructs one of the sentences in the prayer as : « may the *nosrim* (Jewish Christians) and *minim* (other Jewish heretics) perish suddenly, may they be blotted out of the book of life, not to be recorded there together with the righteous. » The Minim, or Nosrim as Schoeps calls them, of course would omit the malediction dealing with the curse and thus would identify themselves. The result was that the Jewish Christians were cut off from any association with the Jews, Judaism or the synagogues. Apparently they had previously hidden their leanings towards Christianity so as to continue their association with Judaism. After the inclusion of the Birkath-ha-Minim, this was no longer possible⁴.

This would not bother the Gentile Christians to any great extent, but they were concerned with the fact that the Jews were turning against them. The early Christian Fathers, e.g. Justin, Origen, Tertullian, were familiar with the curse *per se* but they were not certain as to its intent. Some believed that Jesus himself was being cursed, others that the Christians were its target and still others thought that the concepts of Christianity were being maligned⁵. Whatever its purpose, they know that the Jews cursed someone or something three times a day and the unanimous feeling was that the curse reflected unfavourably upon themselves as Christians.

It was not long before these feelings came out into the open. Justin, in his *Dialogue with Trypho* confronted the Jews : « In your synagogues you curse all who by Him are made Christians... »⁶ and

he seems sure that special Jews were sent out from Jerusalem⁷ to announce to the world that Christianity was a godless sect⁸, and he notes that « Jews were taught not to hold any communication with the Christians »⁹.

On the surface this last accusation seems to indicate Justin's resentment at the rejection of the Jews. But the Jews were cautioned against communicating with Christians for an altogether more important reason. Krauss¹⁰ believes that the Christians had expert dialecticians, what we might call professional debaters, who were able to challenge the unskilled Jew with questions which he was not trained to answer. The Jew, having had no special training in controversy was thus especially warned not to engage in any polemical exchange with Christians because such debate might prove disadvantageous to Judaism. By declaring himself unable to answer the questions put to him, the Jew would have to declare himself formally beaten and Christianity would thereby be vindicated as the superior religion.

The Christian Fathers were also disturbed by the attitude of the pagans towards them. It seems that among the pagans, stories maligning Jesus and the Christians were a popular pastime. Celsus, in his *True Account*, written around 180 A.D., collected these stories and gave them special emphasis in his derision of Christianity. Herford¹¹ has collected the various statements which are recorded in the Jewish writings of that period concerning Jesus and it is likely that Celsus used either some Jewish acquaintance or some facsimile of these writings as his source material. Thus he describes Jesus (also called ha-Notzri, Ben Stada, Ben Pandira) as an illegitimate child who went to Egypt to learn magic and then returned to Palestine where he deceived Israel and called himself God¹². Justin was certain that it was the Jews who were responsible for these stories about the illegitimacy of Jesus' birth : « You (Jews) are the authors of the evil opinion with which other nations entertain the just one and of us His followers »¹³. Whatever the origin of this accusation, whether Jewish or pagan, it is likely that its impetus came from the Christian account of Jesus' birth by a virgin. Another accusation made against the Christians was that they held wild banquets and engaged in promiscuous concubinage¹⁴. This latter

accusation may not have been without foundation since Paul himself was concerned with the promiscuity of the Corinth church ¹⁵. But to Justin, these and other rumors were all the work of the misguided Jews. The breach between Judaism and Christianity could hardly be mended.

The final schism between the two monotheisms came as a result of the Bar Kochba revolt. The Jews, under the authoritative statement of Rabbi Akiba, accepted Bar Kochba as the Messiah. To the Christians, this appeared as the final rejection of Jesus by the Jews-¹⁶, and there was no longer a reason for any kind of a rapprochement.

The Bar Kochba revolt and the anti-Christian reaction resulting from the fact that the Christians refused to support them against the Romans, had an important effect on Judaism which is not usually mentioned. Prior to the revolt, Judaism had been a religion which had been known for its active proselytism. But after the war, the Jews were warned by their leaders and even by the Mishna, not to have anything to do with the Gentiles ¹⁷ or even to be alone with them; especially was this to be avoided on the Sabbath ¹⁸. Rumours were also circulated that spies, masked as converts, were being planted in Jewish communities by the Romans ¹⁹. As a result, proselytism was abandoned by the Jewish religion.

II

Following the parting of the ways, there began to accumulate a sizable body of anti-Jewish polemical literature consisting of allegorical interpretations drawn from the Old Testament by the Church Fathers to glorify and justify the existence of Christianity, to separate Christian belief from Judaism, and to make the Jews appear contemptuous and followers of the devil ²⁰ and of ignorance ²¹. Included in this task was the attempt to demonstrate that all the words which had been prophesied concerning the Messiah had been fulfilled in Jesus.

The most revered sources among both Christians and Jews, were the Holy Scriptures and it was to these writings that the early Church turned in order to prove its statements. Meticulously the

Church Fathers examined the various passages in their search for Biblical support of their arguments. When they thought that they had found such authentication, they quoted it verbatim ignoring the context or the historical circumstances from which they arose. However, they were at a distinct disadvantage whenever they appealed to Biblical authority for they only knew the Septuagint and frequently they based their arguments on faulty texts.

Initially the early polemicists merely contented themselves with comments about the Jews which had no bitter overtones. Aristides professed that the Jews came nearer to the truth than any of the other peoples, except the Christians of course, because they worshipped God and not the symbols of God. But, he hastens to add, in reality they also err since it is God's angels that they serve and not God himself ²². Justin also realized that there was not much difference between the Jews and the Christians. They both worshipped the same God, but the Jews looked for salvation through Moses and the Law, while the Christians sought it through Christ. Tertullian came to the same conclusion: « Nor do we differ from the Jews concerning God, the only contention between them and us is that they believe the advent has not yet occurred » ²³. But in the same breath they denounced the Jews as wicked, foolish, hard-hearted, prone to evil, useless, and unbelieving concerning God ²⁴.

In general this view prevailed in most of the early Christian writings. The Jews were often pictured as the most dangerous of all the enemies of Christianity. Yet, the cynosure for the invectives of the early writers was most often not the Jews themselves, but rather their leaders — the rabbis, scribes, and especially the pharisees. The precedent no doubt was taken from the gospel of Mathew, wherein the pharisees are especially condemned. The Church Fathers recognized them as being their chief obstacle to winning over the Jews and they bombarded them with accusations. They were accused of being responsible for the death and crucifixion of Jesus ²⁵; erroneously interpreting the Scriptures, especially concerning the Messianic passages referring to Jesus ²⁶ (sic) ²⁷; preaching not the word of God but their own ideas ²⁸; not being able to interpret the Scriptures ²⁹; knowing the meaning of the Scriptures in reference to Christ, but not telling the Jews for fear that they might

be testifying to the coming of Jesus³⁰; making Israel sin³¹; and finally, being anachronistic since their function was taken over by Christ³².

III

Another of the major objectives of the early Christian polemics was to demonstrate that the « election of Israel » had been transferred from the Jews to the Christians.

A very distinct feature of Judaism was that its followers believed that they alone were the chosen people of God and of all the various nations of the world, they were his favourite. This ego-centric dogma was not challenged by the Church Fathers but was rather incorporated into their own growing dogmatism. The Jews, they agreed, had been the elect of God, but they had forfeited this election and the Christians had inherited it. The forfeiture was primarily due to the sins which the Jews committed beginning as far back as their worship of the golden calf and ending with their heinous crime of rejecting and crucifying Christ. This transference, Justin maintained, involved not only salvation but the powers of exorcism and the gift of prophecy³³. Moreover, Justin claimed that the Jews were aware that they had lost the divine grace and therefore they hated and persecuted the Christians³⁴. The only reason that God left the Jews on earth was that he wanted to make it clear that they were solely responsible for the crucifixion and the Gentiles were in no way to blame³⁵.

To prove that the election no longer pertained to the Jews, the Christians pointed to the destruction of the Temple and to the final banishment of the Jews from Jerusalem by the Edict of Hadrian (135 A.D.). Tertullian offered « their present national ruin » as evidence of his assertion that the election had passed from the Jews³⁶. Others however, saw the edict as a punishment for the sin of killing Jesus³⁷. But it is Tertullian who gives the event the greatest import by offering it as proof positive that Jesus is the Messiah. Since the Jews are forbidden to enter the holy city, he contends that the Messiah must already have been born since the prophets clearly state that the Christ will be born in Bethlehem and by Hadrian's

Edict, the Jews are not permitted there³⁸. The flaw in the argument comes from the fact that Tertullian is the only author who extends the limitation of entrance from Jerusalem to Bethlehem. Nowhere else is Bethlehem mentioned and it is likely that Tertullian misunderstood the content of the edict. History also turned against his prophetic statement since the edict was later revoked by emperor Alexander Severus (222-235 A.D.).

IV

After offering various arguments that the Christian Church had inherited whatever promises for the future that God had made to the Jews, it was necessary to prove to the ancient world that the Christian Church was not an upstart organization but rather that it had a firm basis in antiquity. Tradition and authority were very highly valued in the Roman world and to be branded as a contemporary movement was tantamount to calling Christianity an evanescent promotion. Accordingly, special texts were composed and were circulated to support Church premises concerning its ancestry. These texts had a dual purpose. They were composed to provide a basis for arguments offered to the pagans and they were at the same time written for use against the Jews. The theme of the pagan orientation was to prove that Christianity was rooted in the past and had been preordained by God in his divine scheme. The Jewish orientation was similar but had greater theological significance consisting as it did of the « election » doctrine adopted by the early Church.

Pagan culture, it seems, regarded Christianity as a disgraceful religion which did not give Judaism its true position. To divest themselves of such an accusation, the Church Fathers traced the split between Judaism and Christianity back to the time of Cain and Abel. Cain, they claimed, represented Judaism; Abel stood for Christianity. In those times, as in more recent days, Abel the forerunner of Christianity had been crucified by Cain, the prototype of the Jews. Those who did not trace the two religions back to the Garden of Eden, saw in Abraham the father of the two nations³⁹. From him came both the Jews and the Gentiles. At first the Jews

were the preferred nation but this was only temporary since they gave up their claim to the future by forsaking God and turning to idols such as the golden calf. The Gentiles, on the other hand, had given up their early idolatry and had turned to God. By such arguments the early Fathers of Christianity sought to gain respectability from pagan society.

V

The controversy with the Jews was equally important since Judaism was a *religio licita*, a religion recognized as being both ancient and legal in contradiction to the outlawed Christian cult. By attacking Judaism or by demonstrating its inferiority to Christianity, the Church Fathers hoped to gain a more tolerant attitude towards their own religion. Thus, in the second century A.D., an official Christian attitude towards the Jews was adopted since Judaism was considered a very important danger to the tenets of Christian orthodoxy. The greatest challenge was to counteract the pagan denigration of Jesus and to substantiate the claim that he was in truth the long awaited Messiah.

In his book *Testimonies* ⁴⁰, R. Harris maintains that there existed in the early Church collections of arguments which were used for this purpose. These extracts were drawn from the Old Testament and became the standard source of reference in any polemical works. The extracts apparently alluded to Jesus' descent and the forecasts of the prophets regarding the Messiah. Gradually, these dialectics were schematized and were formed into a book the evidence for which can be plainly seen in the recurrence and direction of the arguments offered by the Church Fathers when dealing with the Jews.

Regarding the collection or collections ⁴¹ of such books, Harris states that, «Both Irenaeus und Justin» ⁴² had access to such a collection and probably it was a part of their Christian education to know such a book ⁴³. Besides dealing with the legitimacy of Jesus as the Messiah, the books also offered arguments to be used in demonstrating the obsolence of Judaism, the Law, circumcision, and other Jewish practices. Included in this collection were also passages purporting to demonstrate the manner in which the Jews falsified

the Scriptures so that the true message of Jesus would not be made known. It is to these topics that the rest of this discussion will turn.

VI

The Jews challenged the Christian belief in Jesus as the Messiah for many reasons, but one of their most cogent arguments was a passage from the Old Testament which stated that a man that is hanged is accursed before God ⁴⁴. This is the challenged offered by Trypho in reference to the crucifixion of Jesus. But Justin avoids the issue and remarks that the statement is irrelevant since every race of man is under a curse according to the Law of Moses ⁴⁵. Turning himself to the Scriptures, he adds that Trypho's charge does not in fact even pertain to Jesus since God had foreordained what was going to happen ⁴⁶. Then, it is only natural for him to relate Paul's formula whereby Jesus took upon himself the curses of all men and died for them, thus relieving man of his sin ⁴⁷.

Given the perspicacity of such an argument (sic), why then did the Jews still deny Jesus? Origen maintained that the Jews refused to acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah because of their dependence on tradition and authority (viz. the pharisees); this was to be expected of them since their whole history was one of ignorance and blindness ⁴⁸. Then came the invectives. Because of the invectives. Because of their criminal attitude toward Jesus they had sinned against God ⁴⁹ and thereby precluded themselves from his mercy ⁵⁰. St. Ignatius declared that Judaism was entirely obsolete. Its only value, as far as he could determine, was its link with Christianity ⁵¹ whereby the Scriptures which were given to the Jews, could be passed to the Christians. The Law of Moses, the foundation of Judaism, had been abrogated. This reference to the Law was inevitable since it played such a key position in Jewish life. Some of the Church Fathers tried to ignore it, stating that the Law had been superceded by Christ or that the Jews misinterpreted it.

Tertullian ⁵² attempted to challenge both the Law's antiquity and its authority. The Law of Moses, he stated, was not intended to last forever. Long before Moses, there had been a law which had been observed by Adam and Eve and the great patriarchs, Noah

and Abraham and these elders had found great favour with God. Therefore, it was not necessary to observe the Law of Moses since a more ancient law preceeded it. Apparently this law was embodied in the teaching of the Church.

Justin took a different line. He explained that the Christian hope was not founded in Moses and the Law because of its obsolescence, but in the new Law which the prophet Jeremiah had foreseen. This new Law was spiritual and had been given the Christians through Jesus ⁵³.

Origen expounded on this spiritual aspect of the new Law. According to him, the Law of Moses was composed of a spiritual and carnal dichotomy. The spiritual law was the inheritance of the Christians; the carnal law was the portion allotted to the Jews. Then he accused the Jews of violating their portion by interpreting it literally, instead of allegorically as did the Christians. The final result, was that the spiritual Christians have pre-empted the literal Jews ⁵⁴.

Another approach taken by some Church leaders was to recognize the importance of the Jewish Law, but to assert that the Jews had disqualified themselves from its teaching since they had turned to sin. Thus, Irenaeus acknowledged that God had given the Law to the Jews and had done so in order to turn them from their idols and make them realize that he alone was the only true God. But no sooner had they received the Law when they nullified it by accepting the words of their rabbis instead of the Law which clearly announced the coming of Christ ⁵⁵.

Again and again the two themes : obsolescence of the Law and vilification of the rabbis, were reiterated by the Church writers of the second and third centuries. The Law's salience in the life of the Jew was an important stumbling block in the early attempts of Christians to bring devout Jews into the Church. Even though a Jew might be ready to give up his heritage, he could not give up the idea of the Law. The Church leaders were fully cognizant of Jewish feelings and they attempted to relieve any guilt feelings by claiming that potential Jewish apostates were not really forsaking the Law but were in fact giving it a more honorable position than those Jews who only superficially obeyed it ⁵⁶. Later, this approach

was completely abandoned and it became an emphatic principle of the Christian Church that Jews could only become members if they abandoned the Law and made no attempts to introduce it into the Church.

As far as the rabbis were concerned, there was no way in which the early Church could overcome their opposition. Debate was impossible since the Jewish teachers knew far more Biblical text than did the Christians and furthermore, they had better i.e. more accurate texts from which to quote. Indeed, it was common practice for Christians to turn to the rabbis for instruction in the Scriptures, the most notable case being Jerome who later composed the Vulgate, the first latin translation of the Jewish Scriptures.

Of all the Jewish rites singled out for derision, circumcision received the greatest attention. Various attempts were made to explain its *raison d'être*, the most ingenious of which was Tertullian's. According to him, circumcision was imposed by Abraham so that the Jews could be clearly distinguished from all other nations and would therefore not be able to escape Hadrian's decree to keep them out of Jerusalem after the War of 132-135 A.D.⁵⁷.

Justin held that in place of bodily circumcision, Paul had introduced the idea of circumcision of the heart through knowledge of God and Christ⁵⁸. This was an obvious answer to the Gentile refusal of bodily circumcision. Furthermore, Tertullian pointed to the early patriarchs before Abraham. Since they had not been circumcised, it could not be important⁵⁹. The same line of thought had been advanced concerning the unimportance of the Law.

The final Christian accusation to be dealt with was the charge that the Jews altered or falsified the Scriptures so that either the Christians would not be able to find in them any passages referring to Christ or because the rabbis wanted to deceive the Jews as to Christ⁶⁰. How these early Christians deduced this is difficult to explain, since it was necessary for them to come to the rabbis if they wished to know the actual meaning of much of their Scriptures. It seems that the errors of the Septuagint were apparent even to the Church Fathers⁶¹ who did not come close to the understanding of the Jews. But in many cases, the accusations were still voiced and sayings were quoted from almost any portion of the Bible as proof

of every argument regarding Christ.

What may be said in conclusion? The second and third centuries A.D. were very critical for both Judaism and Christianity. Judaism had suffered numerous blows which had threatened its existence and the Jewish mind was not in any state to tolerate heretical movements. When Christianity began to expand and make its existence felt (in Judaism), steps were taken to divorce it from its early host. On the other hand, Christianity was still an unclear orthodoxy as testified to by the multitude of sects that existed. Union could only be achieved by recognizing a common enemy and that common enemy was Judaism⁶⁰. Accordingly, the Church Fathers sought respectability in the pagan world by removing any connection it might have with Judaism and by declaring its own lineage as the « true Israel ».

The pagan world could not be blamed for any wrongs since it was one of the goals of Christianity to bring it into the Church. Instead, the Jews proved to be the logical scapegoats and all the hostility of the Church was directed towards them in the form of the polemics described above. In the later centuries, polemic gave way to pogrom.

FOOTNOTES

¹ See Baron, S.W., *The Social And Religious History Of The Jews* (New York 1952), Vol. 2, p. 131.

² Herford, R.T., *Christianity in Talmud and Midrash* (London 1903), p. 122 notes that strictly speaking the term « Min » does not signify a Jewish Christian but only a Jewish heretic. The T. Sanhedrin 13.4,5 denotes four classes of offenders against Judaism: *minim*, *meshummadim*, *masoroth*, and *epiquorsin*. The *minim* are Jewish heretics who have concealed their apostasy to Christianity; the *meshummadim* are also Jewish heretics but they have admitted their apostasy. The *masoroth* are those who have politically betrayed Israel, while the *epiquorsin* are the « free thinkers », Jewish or Gentile (Herford, op. cit. p. 366). The similarity between the *minim* and the Jewish Christians is sufficient enough to consider them as synonymous (see p. 3).

³ Schoeps, H.J., *The Jewish-Christian Argument* (New York 1963), p. 39.

⁴ If a reader omitted the passage or made a mistake in reciting it, he would be accused of being a *Min* and would be asked to leave the synagogue. Amusingly, the author of the malediction, Shemuel ha Qaton himself forgot it on one occasion and for three and one-half hours he stood before the congregation

- trying to recall it, but apparently could not (j. Ber. 9c; b. Ber. 28b,29a). The sources do not indicate that he was asked to leave the synagogue.
- ⁵ See Krauss, S., « The Jews in the Works of the Church Fathers, » *Jewish Quarterly Review* o.s. v (1893), p. 130-134.
- ⁶ St. Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho* (London, 1930), c. 96.
- ⁷ The Dialogue was probably written contemporaneous with the Bar Kochba revolt (132-135 A.D.) judging from the frequency with which it is mentioned e.g. c. 108. This was approximately sixty years after Jerusalem ceased to be the centre of Judaism (70 A.D.). Yet for Justin, the Gentile, Jerusalem was still the citadel of Jewish authority.
- ⁸ Dial. c. 8,10,17,117,120.
- ⁹ Dial. cl. 112.
- ¹⁰ Op. cit. p. 128. Justin was probably one of these, but apparently Trypho was just as adept and was able to hold his own in the argument. Nevertheless, the Jew regretted breaking the admonition not to communicate with Gentiles Dial. c. 38).
- ¹¹ Op. cit.
- ¹² Shabbath 104b. Doubtless these stories were Jewish in origin and were contrived in answer to the contumelies hurled at Judaism.
- ¹³ Dial. c. 17.
- ¹⁴ St. Justin Martyr. *First Apology* (Oxford 1911), p. 26.
- ¹⁵ I Corinth. 5.1.
- ¹⁶ Baron, op. cit. p. 132.
- ¹⁷ Thus we find the rabbis actually trying to discourage potential proselytes : « If at the present time (shortly after the Bar Kochba revolt) a man desires to become a proselyte, he is to be addressed as follows : 'What reason have you for desiring to become a proselyte; do you not know that Israel at the present time are persecuted and oppressed, despised, harassed and overcome by afflictions' » (Yeb. 47a). Many of the rabbis discouraged proselytism outright. R. Helbo remarked that : « Proselytes are as hard for Israel to endure as a sore. » (Yeb. 47b) (i.e. they will be like a sore). Yet tradition still favoured conversion and other rabbis tempered these remarks : « He (the potential proselyte) is not, however, to be persuaded, or dissuaded too much. » (Yeb. 47a,b).
- ¹⁸ Baron, op. cit. p. 149 notes that, « No greater encouragement to the development of a voluntary ghetto was needed, » than these measures.
- ¹⁹ Baron, op. cit. p. 148.
- ²⁰ Dial. c. 131.
- ²¹ Dial. c. 123. This was a common barb hurled against the Jews because of the closeness with which they followed the teachings of their rabbis. Cf. Dial. c. 94.
- ²² Quoted by Wilde, R., *The Testament of the Jews in the Greek Christian Writers of the First Three Centuries* (Washington 1949), ch. 3.
- ²³ Tertullian, *Apology* (Buffalo 1885), c. 21.
- ²⁴ Dial. 123.
- ²⁵ Origen, *Contra Celsus* (Buffalo 1885), c. 4.32.
- ²⁶ Dial. c. 68, 72.
- ²⁷ This accusation is ludicrous in view of the inferior texts used by the Christians (see p. 7). Even Justin (Dial. c. 73) conceded to the superiority of the Hebrew texts and Origen (Hom. in Jerem. 16.10) on more than one occasion acknow-

- ledged the fact that the Christians possessed a corrupt text compared to that known to the Jews.
- ²⁸ The Pharisees accused Jesus of the same practice.
- ²⁹ Dial. c. 34, 38.
- ³⁰ Contra Celsus. 5.60.
- ³¹ Contra Celsus. 4.32.
- ³² These accusations are repeated over and over. One gets the impression that they were part of some early Christian catechism (see p. 12).
- ³³ Dial. c. 51, 85.
- ³⁴ Dial. c. 16.
- ³⁵ Dial. c. 21.
- ³⁶ Apology. c. 21.
- ³⁷ Contra Celsus. 4.32.
- ³⁸ Adversus Judaeos (Buffalo 1885) c. 13. Characteristically, the Jewish teachers answered such slurs by pointing to their failure to follow Jewish precepts closely enough. In the Talmud (Shabbat 119) the rabbis ascribe the destruction of Jerusalem to, 1) desecration of the Sabbath, 2) neglect in reading the Shema morning and evening, 3) neglect in educating the children, 4) because the inhabitants were not ashamed of each other, 5) because respect was not given to the priests, 6) because they had shut their eyes to evil, 7) because the scholars were despised (« He who despised a scholar, has no remedy for his wounds. »), 8) because men of faith ceased to exist.
- ³⁹ Tertullian, *Adv. Jud.* c. 1.
- ⁴⁰ Harris, R., *Testimonies* (Cambridge 1916).
- ⁴¹ Williams, A.L., *Adversus Judaeos* (Cambridge 1935) agrees with Harris as to the existence of such a collection, but believes that there were several variations and not just one standard edition.
- ⁴² Irenaeus wrote *Adversus Haereses* ca. 175-185 A.D. For the date of the *Dialogue with Trypho* see note. 7.
- ⁴³ *Testimonies*, p. 10.
- ⁴⁴ Deut. 21.23.
- ⁴⁵ Dial. c. 95.
- ⁴⁶ Dial. c. 96.
- ⁴⁷ Romans. Ch. 6.
- ⁴⁸ Contra Celsus. 4.32.
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*
- ⁵⁰ St. Hippolytus, *Adversus Judaeos*. Quoted by Wilde, op. cit. Ch. 6.
- ⁵¹ *Letter to the Magnesians*.
- ⁵² *Adv. Jud.* c. 2.
- ⁵³ Dial. c. 11.
- ⁵⁴ Contra Celsus. 5.40.
- ⁵⁵ *Adv. Haereses*. 15.1.
- ⁵⁶ Contra Celsus. 2.1.
- ⁵⁷ *Adv. Jud.* c. 3.
- ⁵⁸ Dial. c. 28.
- ⁵⁹ *Adv. Jud.* c. 3.
- ⁶⁰ Dial. c. 120.
- ⁶¹ Dial. c. 73; *Hom. in Jerem.* 16.10.
- ⁶² The part played by the Jews in the Christian persecutions has been omitted since the question is debatable and should comprise a separate study.