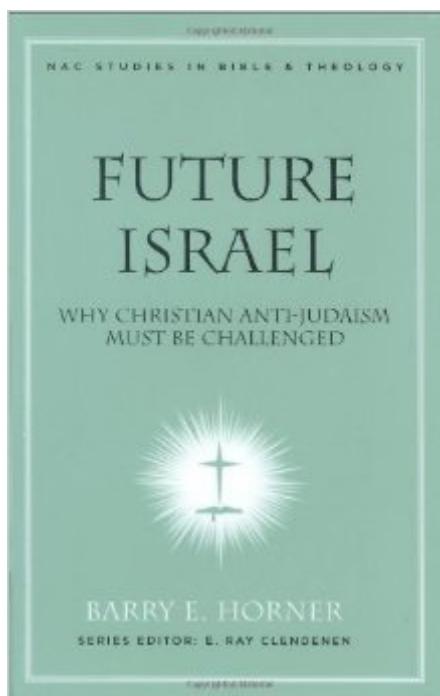


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Future Israel: Why Christian Anti-Judaism Must Be Challenged (New American Commentary Studies In Bible And Theology)



Synopsis

Future Israel: Why Christian Anti-Judaism Must Be Challenged is volume three in the NEW AMERICAN COMMENTARY STUDIES IN BIBLE & THEOLOGY (NACSBT) series for pastors, advanced Bible students, and other deeply committed laypersons. Author Barry E. Horner writes to persuade readers concerning the divine validity of the Jew today (based on Romans 11:28), as well as the nation of Israel and the land of Palestine, in the midst of this much debated issue within Christendom at various levels. He examines the Bible's consistent pro-Judaic direction, namely a Judeo-centric eschatology that is a unifying feature throughout Scripture. Not sensationalist like many other writings on this constantly debated topic, Future Israel is instead notably exegetical and theological in its argumentation. Users will find this an excellent extension of the long-respected NEW AMERICAN COMMENTARY.Â

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Barry Horner, pastor and author, believes that the conservative Christian church of our day--in particular, the Reformed branch of that church, to which he belongs and with which he is most familiar--has mistakenly absorbed the false notion that the Christian church has replaced the nation of Israel as God's chosen people. Consequently, there is no longer a special place of blessing or privilege for the Jewish people or nation. This belief, "replacement theology," as it is called, became predominant in the early church by the fifth century, and was accepted and passed on by the early Protestant Reformers Martin Luther and John Calvin, as well as most of their successors. Horner

contends that this teaching is non-biblical, and that it has led to historical anti-Semitism and its horrific consequences. Having come to an appreciation of the Reformed faith by his own study and reading, Horner is convinced that strong exegetical arguments support the doctrines of grace. On the other hand, he says, the arguments supporting amillennialism and replacement theology do not share that strength; nor is replacement theology required by the Reformed doctrines of salvation. That being the case, he has maintained his premillennial beliefs, along with the belief that national Israel is still the "beloved enemy" of God and his people. He states that his particular study of Ezekiel, Hosea, Zechariah, and Romans has confirmed him in this opinion. Scattered throughout the book are lengthy discussions of these passages, along with substantial quotations from earlier sympathetic writers, such as Jonathan Edwards, David Baron, Horatius Bonar, C. H. Spurgeon, J. A. Seiss, H. C. G. Moule, J. C. Ryle, and C. E. B. Cranfield. He also produces statements that favor portions of his argument from such authors as J. B.

The State of Israel has a political problem: many people want to destroy it and are teaching their children that it would be a good idea to destroy it. And some of this antipathy to Israel is religious in nature, as Barry Horner shows in this fine book. There is a review of some of the foundations of Christian anti-Zionism, including the works of Tertullian, Saint Augustine and Saint John Chrysostom. In more recent times, we see that John Calvin was no friend of the Jews, although Martin Luther was surely far worse. As a matter of fact, one of the few Saints who showed no special animus towards the Jews was Anselm. We read about some of the expulsions of Jews in Europe. England expelled its Jews in 1290 and Jews were not permitted to return until the time of Oliver Cromwell, in the seventeenth century. Jews were expelled from France in 1306 and 1394, and from Spain in 1492. Some of these Jews fled to Portugal, only to be expelled from there. And, of course, there was anti-Semitism in Europe in the 19th and 20th centuries. There still is. Next, we see some examples of contemporary anti-Judaism in the United States: Albertus Pieters, Loraine Boettner, Gary Burge, Donald Wagner and O. Palmer Robertson. And there are some corresponding examples of anti-Judaism in the United Kingdom: Colin Chapman, N. T. Wright, Stephen Sizer, Steve Motyer, Peter Walker, and Kenneth Cragg. Horner also refers to James Parkes, who quite properly explained that the Balfour Declaration did not give Levantine land to the Jews: it simply recognized a historic right of Jews to be in that land (and rejected any claim by Arabs to have a sole right to live there).

This extraordinary work superbly exposes Christian Antisemitism (although the author politely

employs the term "Anti-Judaism"), relating the history of gentile usurpation of the heritage of the Jewish people, how this mindset became popular with Augustine's amillennialism and how reformers like Luther and Calvin accepted the doctrine of supercessionism or replacement theology and how it has persisted in Reformed theology up to the present day. Jewish Christians are given a voice and the author holds the attitude of the Apostle Paul up as an example, in particular his love for Israel as expressed in the letter to the Romans chapters 9 to 11. In essence, the book seeks answers from scripture on whether Israel as a distinct nation in its own land has a future according to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Those who learn from history already know the answer, based on the country's miraculous rebirth in 1948 and its survival against overwhelming odds in a neighborhood of unspeakable evil. The aforementioned question is not a mere academic issue. There are those who still hold to the doctrine of supercessionism/replacement theology, often in a veiled form. They are contributing to the spread of the new Antisemitism as recorded by Phyllis Chesler and by Bernard Harrison in his book *The Resurgence of Anti-Semitism*.

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