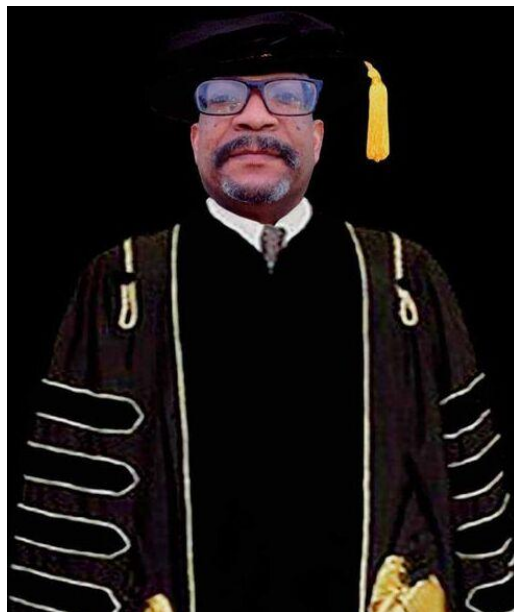


THOUGHTS UPON ZIONISM AND THE JEWS:

A Review of Harvard Law School Professor Noah Feldman's
To Be A Jew Today: A New Guide to God, Israel, and the Jewish People ©



by

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SPECIAL DEDICATION



The Author Dedicates this Publication to

Deborah A. Ford of Jacksonville, Florida

for Her DNA-Genetic Research on the

Lemba-Jewish People of Southern Africa



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I. Preface

Noah Feldman, who is the author of *To Be A Jew Today: A New Guide to God, Israel, and the Jewish People*,¹ is the Felix Frankfurter Professor of Law and chair of the Society of Fellows at Harvard University. My interest in reading Professor Feldman's *To Be A Jew Today* is yet another chapter in my rendezvous and friendly and professional confrontations with the Jews! – and particularly members of the Jewish legal community! Indeed, as a Reformed-Puritan theologian, I consider the Jews to be my spiritual comrades in arms; because, as the Apostle Paul has said, to be a Jew is to be inwardly Jewish *at heart*.² To that very end, for instance, I once published a theological paper on the Reformed theologian John Calvin (1509 – 1564), in which I expressed my friendship and appreciation towards several Jews, in the following introductory footnote:

Footnote 1. to “Part XXIII. Anglican Church: ‘Christian Theology and Protestant Dissent in England (1530-1650)’ (Sec. 3) ‘John Calvin’s *Institutes of the Christian Religion*’”

“This paper on the Protestant Reformation in England (1530-1650) is dedicated to the Jewish legal community. At the University of Illinois College of Law, certain Jewish professors were of great assistance to my professional development:
Marvin Gerstein, Esq. (moot court adjunct); **Professor Anthony**

¹ Noah Feldman, *To Be A Jew Today: A New Guide to God, Israel, and the Jewish People* (New York, N.Y.: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2024).

² Romans 2: 28-29 (“28 For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: 29 But **he is a Jew, which is one inwardly**; and **circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit**, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.”) See, also, St. Augustine, *The City of God* (New York, N.Y.: The Modern Library, 1950), p. 592 (“the Christians, who are Israelites not after the flesh but **after the Spirit**”); p. 598 (“the true Israelites... by faith, is the City of God”); p. 658 (“the true Israelites, the citizens of the country that is above”); p. 562 (“For Israel means seeing God, which will at last be the reward of the saints.”)

Taibi (civil procedure; legal theory); **Professor Steven Ross** (comparative constitutional law).

"Jewish history and culture, as reflected in the Old Testament, have also deeply influenced me ever since my early childhood. I knew no Jews as a child growing up in the Bible-Belt in rural, northern Florida, but I had a profound respect for the Jewish heritage. I had been taught that the Jews were God's chosen people. And, up to the late 1980s, the contemporary clashes between African Americans and Jews in cities such as New York and Chicago, I had heard and knew nothing. This lack of exposure to some of the contemporary challenges between African Americans and Jews allowed me to objectively assess Jewish heritage and culture, and to freely dialogue and embrace Jewish law professors and fellow law students during the early 1990s.

"No other group (not the Roman Catholics, African Americans, Hispanics, or whites) were as open, willing, and eager to discuss with me such unique topics such as "race, law and economics," and "law and religion" as were the Jewish law professors and students. I also found the Jewish law faculty to be a treasure trove of practical instruction, mentoring, and wisdom. The Jewish law professors seemed to have a thorough grasp of what everybody else was thinking and doing; they seemed to be able to move diplomatically and fluidly between the various groups of conservative and liberal whites, Hispanics, and African Americans, without losing a sense of their own internal Jewishness.

"The Jewish law professors and law students at the University of Illinois were the first real Jews whom I actually met and held conversations with. And, given my rural background in the Bible Belt of northern Florida, I could not pass up the opportunity to discuss the forbidden topics of "law and religion," "the Jews and Christianity," "black and Jews," etc., etc. The Jewish legal community has always been willing to share with me their thoughts, history, and heritage. For it has been their insights into the origins of law and constitutional law that have tremendously helped me to unravel many questions that I have had regarding the role of Christianity in shaping the secular legal system.

"The life's work of John Calvin reminds me of how much the Old Testament has influenced the building of Western law and civilization. Calvin based most of his theology on Hebrew traditions found in the Bible. And he believed that the ancient

Hebrew polity which God had given to Moses was the best form of government known to mankind. Calvin based his Christian polity off of the ancient Hebrew polity as found in the Bible. And yet, the Old Testament is seldom, if ever, discussed within the American legal academy. This is a very tragic development in Western legal education....

"I entered law school thoroughly prepared to research and discuss legal theory, law and religion. I distinctly remember that one new topic that caught my attention was the 16th-century era New England colonies and the Virginia colony (i.e., the Puritans and the Anglicans of early colonial America). I readily noticed how closely the Bible was aligned to early America's court opinions, statutes, and constitutional provisions. 16th and 17th century New England pastors were of some interest to me. I therefore maintained a vague interest in the development of early American jurisprudence from 1607 up to 1776, in order to ascertain precisely how, why, and when American legal positivism supplanted the natural-law foundations of American jurisprudence.

"As a Christian law student, the Christian foundations within American law and jurisprudence continuously preoccupied my extra-curricular and supplemental readings in law. And Calvinism remained one of the predominant themes within those supplemental readings."

Many years later, I read Auerbach's *Rabbis and Lawyers: The Journey from Torah to Constitution*, and then I immediately recognized the pride, provincialism, and pain of the Jews, given their long history with European anti-Semitism and racism, and having attained some measure of material and cultural success in North America; and I then recognized the Jewish affinity toward the Puritans of colonial New England. Henceforth, my Christian embrace of Thomas Aquinas' natural-law theory greatly facilitated my interesting conversations with Jewish lawyers over the years.

Interestingly, several years ago, I learned from my sister, Deborah A. Ford – for whom this paper has been dedicated – that the darker-skinned, maternal side of our African American family had ancient Hebrew lineage, now

confirmed through her own recent maternal-mitochondrial DNA testing;³ and that our closest ancestral connection on the African continent is that of the Lemba peoples,⁴ who are a Bantu-speaking people, who live throughout eastern and southern Africa.⁵ Deborah assured me that our family lineage goes all the way from South Carolina to the original black Hebrews from the ancient Nile Valley, sending me several historical works on the black Hebrews. As a lawyer, I remained skeptical for several *years*, until December 25, 2023 (Christmas Day), my sister Deborah then presented me with this beautiful gift, — namely, the DNA evidence of my Lemba-Bantu lineage!⁶

This revelation of my Lemba-Jewish heritage had much to do with why I grabbed and opened a copy of Professor Feldman's new book, *To Be A Jew Today* (a book published during the Fall of 2024) and turned to the index, looking for the word "Lemba." There I found it! And, in the pages of *To Be A Jew Today*, I was reassured, through Professor Feldman's tacit acknowledgement, that these Lemba people were an acknowledged, legitimate sub-family of ancient Hebrew Israelites — i.e., black Jews living in Africa!

³ "Maternal mitochondrial DNA" refers to the DNA found within the mitochondria of a cell, which is inherited solely from the mother, meaning that an individual receives all their mitochondrial DNA from their biological mother, allowing researchers to trace ancestry through the maternal line exclusively. Because of its maternal inheritance pattern, mitochondrial DNA is used in genetic genealogy to trace a person's ancestry through their mother's lineage, often referred to as the "matrilineal line". All siblings from the same mother will share the same mitochondrial DNA because mitochondrial DNA is exclusively inherited from the mother, meaning all children of a woman will have the same mitochondrial genetic sequence as her; therefore, siblings will share identical maternal mitochondrial DNA. With my sister Deborah's maternal mitochondrial DNA test results, I have correctly deduced that, I too, have genetic links to the Lemba peoples of Zimbabwe and throughout southern and eastern Africa. [See, e.g., *The Library of Congress Research Guide* (online), stating, "Autosomal DNA captures roughly five to seven generations of the family tree, **whereas Mitochondrial DNA extends back to ancient origins.**"].

⁴ See, e.g., "Lemba," Jewish Virtual Library <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/lemba>

⁵ See, e.g., "Zimbabwe's Black Jews: The Lemba People" <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/zimbabwe-s-quot-black-jews-quot-the-lemba-people>

⁶ See Footnote # 3 above. (Note: as a precautionary measure, and as "a spiritual, inward Jew," I heeded the admonition of the Apostle Paul who forewarned Christians to heed not to "endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: *so do.*" 1 Timothy 1:4.)

Naturally, this new DNA revelation of mine gives me an added attraction to the Jewish people. My review of *To Be A Jew Today* thus has another special meaning, considering the potentiality of my membership within the Jewish peoplehood! Indeed, the African continent (and the African American people) is richer and vaster in culture, genetic diversity,⁷ and civilization than the Western world (which includes European Jews such as Professor Feldman) cares to acknowledge or admit.

To be sure, I do not now pretend “to be a Jew” within the traditional conceptualization of “Jewishness” within orthodox Judaism. Without question, my religious life as a Christian; my experiences with Jews and the Jewish legal community; and, perhaps, even my selection of the law as a profession (as well as the manner in which I chose to advocate for moral and just outcomes within the courts),⁸ all contribute to a very salient argument that, somehow, even I – an African American civil rights attorney – also fit within the everchanging boundary of “Jewishness” which Professor Feldman explores in *To Be A Jew Today*.

Accordingly, as a proud lineal descendant of the Lemba-Bantu peoples, as well a proud African American, I humbly present to St. Clements University this very special book review on *To Be A Jew Today*. I believe that this work is important because it helps the reader to understand the following three major questions about the Jewish people since the outbreak of the Hamas-Israel War on October 7, 2023, namely:

- Who are the Jewish people today?

⁷ See, e.g., W.E.B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America* (New York, N.Y.: Harcourt, Brace, and Co., 1935), pp. 3-4, stating:

In origin, the slaves represented everything African, although most of them originated on or near the West Coast. Yet among them appeared the great Bantu tribes from Sierra Leone to South Africa; the Sudanese, straight across the center of the continent, from the Atlantic to the Valley of the Nile; the Nilotic Negroes and the black and brown Hamites, allied with Egypt; the tribes of the great lakes; the Pygmies and the Hottentots; and in addition to these, distinct traces of both Berber and Arab blood. There is no doubt of the presence of all these various elements in the mass of 10,000,000 or more Negroes transported from Africa to the various Americas, from the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries.

⁸ See, generally, Alan Dershowitz, *Abraham: The World's First (But Certainly Not Last) Jewish Lawyer* (New York, N.Y.: Schocken Books, 2015)(explaining why Jews become lawyers and the Jewish legal tradition).

- What are their present-day aims and aspirations?
- What are their present-day attitudes toward the state of Israel?

Given the Jew's ancient history, together with their vast and disproportionate amount of cultural, economic, and political influences upon the Middle Eastern politics of several governments in the world, including the United States, the United Kingdom, and other governments in the West, the subject matter of *To Be A Jew Today* is extraordinarily imperative.

II.

General Summary of *To Be A Jew Today*

Harvard law professor Noah Feldman has made a great, new addition to the catalogue of scholarship on Jewish identity and struggle since the creation of the modern-day state of Israel with his recent publication of *To Be A Jew Today: A New Guide to God, Israel, and the Jewish People*. My review of *To Be A Jew Today* is both “Christocentric” and “political” in nature, because I sincerely believe that the existential condition of “being a Jew today” must honestly include coming to terms with the spiritual and prophetic *convergence* between Judaism and Christianity – a *convergence* of two world religions that is undoubtedly reflected in America’s foreign policy towards the state of Israel and the Middle East!

In this book review, I attempt to test some of Professor Feldman’s (and Orthodox Judaism’s) most sacred and fundamental Jewish tenets, utilizing my own “Christocentric” analysis that is informed by some of the central tenets of Orthodox Christianity. Again, I attempt here to demonstrate that, despite the plight of European Jewry over the past 2,000 years, both Judaism and Christianity have merged together politically, even if not ecclesiastically, in order to form a Jewish-Christian alliance against Islam and the Arab nations in the Middle East! This American-Israeli political alliance undergirds America’s international relations and geopolitics. Indeed, many conservative American Christians – myself included – inwardly believe that they, too, are the “spiritual Israelites” or “spiritual Jews”; and, as such, America’s conservative Christianity has largely embraced the state of Israel as their allies in the Middle East. Why this is inadvertently explained – though not intentionally – in *To Be A Jew Today*.

A. A Lookback to Auerbach’s *Rabbis and Lawyers*

My previous review of Professor Jerold S. Auerbach’s *Rabbis and Lawyers: From Torah to Constitution* in essay which I previously submitted to St. Clements University also supplements this book review of *To Be A Jew Today*.⁹ In *Rabbis*

⁹ See Roderick Ford, “American Zionism: How the Puritans of Colonial New England Inspired 20th-century Jewish Lawyers,” <https://www.stclements.edu/Articles/PCNE.pdf>

and Lawyers, Professor Auerbach masterfully traces the roots of this Jewish-Christian convergence to the early 19th century, when Jews began to immigrate from Europe to the United States; and, ever since then, “American Jews have located their Zion six thousand miles west of the biblical promised land.... In the United States they were inspired and comforted to discover that the legacy of the Torah converged with American democratic promise, miraculously fusing ancient Jewish tradition to their adopted American homeland.”¹⁰

“American Zionism” thus predated the founding of the state of Israel in 1948 by several decades; and, through American Zionism, prominent American Jews became important leaders of worldwide Jewry. Today, there are more Jews who live in the United States than anywhere else in the world.¹¹ Hence, as Jewish immigrants to the United States attained “stunning success” and they were also dubbed “the ‘greatest collective Horatio Alger story in American immigration

¹⁰ Jerold S. Auerbach, *Rabbis and Lawyers: The Journey from Torah to Constitution* (New Orleans, LA: Quid Pro Books, 2010), pp. vii., 15 (“...American Jews became the last Puritans; the last Americans, that is, to take seriously the claim that the United States truly was the fulfillment of divine promise to Israel.”)

¹¹ **The Jewish Diaspora (approximate number of Jews in each county):**

- a. United States of America (7,460,600)
- b. Israel (7,427,000)
- c. France (440,000)
- d. Canada (398,000)
- e. United Kingdom (312,000)
- d. Argentia (171,000)
- e. Russia (132,000)
- f. Germany (125,000)
- g. Australia (117,000)
- h. Brazil (90,500)
- i. South Africa (50,000)
- j. Hungary (46,000)

history.”¹² As a result, “Jews are now so thoroughly integrated into American society... that it is all but inconceivable that they once had to struggle to secure their American birthright.”¹³

For these reasons, “American Zionism” — i.e., the constitutional law, liberalism, and culture of the United States — allowed American Judaism and Christianity to eventually mutate and to merge together, leading to both the “Judaization of American politics and law” as well as the “Christianization of Judaism.”¹⁴ As a result, Professor Auerbach complains in *Rabbis and Lawyers* (originally published in 1990) that orthodox Jewish holiness has been sacrificed in exchange for American prestige and influence. Professor Feldman’s up-to-date *To Be A Jew Today* does not make the same claim.

B. The decline in Jewish Orthodoxy Among Jews

In *To Be A Jew Today*, the reader is brought current with respect to the steady decline in orthodox Jewish holiness and the rise of a variety of other forms of Judaism — including secular, godless Judaism. Unlike Professor Auerbach’s *Rabbis and Lawyers*, which laments the decline in orthodox Jewish values, Professor Feldman’s *To Be A Jew Today* embraces the new Jewish diversity which has emerged since the 1970s. If we accept and adopt Professor Feldman’s conclusions and judgments, then we must also accept a definition of “Jewishness” that is quite broad — including several versions of Jewishness that is void of the Torah, or the orthodox interpretations of the Torah, or even Messianic Judaism!

In fact, *To Be A Jew Today* does not really mandate that the Torah be utilized as the standard of measure as to who is or is not an authentic Jew. But rather *To Be A Jew Today* instead accepts all types of Jews — even the godless ones! — as being authentically Jewish! Here, Professor Feldman acknowledges that even his own Modern Orthodox Jewishness *does not* get in the way of his own ability to be inclusive of various versions of Jewishness. Professor Feldman

¹² Jerold S. Auerbach, *Rabbis and Lawyers*, supra, p. vii.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 82.

points out in *To Be A Jew Today* that there are many legitimate versions of Jewishness – much like there are different denominational sects within the Christian religion. He discusses six broad categories of Jews. Accordingly, as I examine the six types of Jews, which Professor Feldman discusses, I also make some suggestions as to which Christian denominations tend to resemble those corresponding Jewish denominations or sects. Ultimately, however, Professor Feldman’s goal is quite different from mine: here, Professor Feldman’s goal is to highlight the importance of Jewish diversity to the existence and to the survival of the state of Israel today.

C. Two Thousand Years of Jewish Provincialism and Struggle

Significantly, *To Be A Jew Today* does not clearly explain the historic antipathy toward Jews in Europe going back thousands of years! This might help to put the American Jews into a much better perspective. This might have enabled Professor Feldman to better explain what it truly means to be a Jew today. Here, I surmise that being a Jew today means to be culturally, economically, and politically aligned with conservative Christian elites in the United States¹⁵ – ostensibly, at the risk of watering down orthodox Judaism!¹⁶

In *To Be A Jew Today*, however, Professor Feldman cannot go so far as to admit that American Jewish synagogues and American Christian churches are *very similar*; or that American Jews and American Christians have largely *merged their politics and their theology together*. I believe that this is because Jews, such as Professor Feldman, cannot go so far as to admit that there are so many conservative American Christians – heirs of the Puritans of colonial New England – who conceptualize themselves as “spiritual Israelites” or as “spiritual Jews.”¹⁷ Of course, such radical Christian self-conceptualizations tend to

¹⁵ In ancient times, the Jews courted the Egyptians, the Greeks, and the Romans. See, e.g., *Josephus: The Complete Works* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Pub., 1998); Roderick Andrew Lee Ford, “The First and Second Maccabees (Apocrypha),” *Apostolate Papers* (2022) and “The Destruction of the Second Temple, the New Testament Priesthood, and the Early Church,” *Apostolate Papers* (2022). Today, the Jews are in a courtship with the United States of America. See, e.g., Jerold S. Auerbach, *Rabbis and Lawyers: The Journey from Torah to Constitution* (New Orleans, LA: Quid Pro Books, 2010).

¹⁶ See, generally, Jerold S. Auerbach, *Rabbis and Lawyers*, *supra*.

¹⁷ *Ibid*.

threaten Jewish self-identification and self-preservation.¹⁸ And perhaps this is why Professor Feldman is careful to not mention this Jewish-Christian convergence.

Moreover, for many centuries, since the fall of the Second Temple in 70 A.D., up to the early 1800s, the Jews were viciously oppressed throughout Europe. The Nazi atrocities during the 1930s and 40s were part of a long train of abuses against Jewish people, ultimately leading to the creation of the state of Israel in 1948. Consequently, it is difficult for many Jews, such as Professor Feldman, to acknowledge a Jewish-Christian political and religious convergence, because for many centuries European Christians viciously discriminated against and oppressed European Jews.¹⁹

Table 1. A Summary of Jewish History from 70 AD to 1800



Jewish Life from 70 AD until Jewish Emancipation during the 1700s

“Following the destruction of the Second Temple in Jerusalem in 70 AD, Jews were dispersed across the Roman Empire, known as the Diaspora, primarily settling in regions around the Mediterranean, including North Africa, the Middle East, and Europe, where they generally lived in distinct communities, often facing legal restrictions and social discrimination, primarily engaging in trade and scholarship

¹⁸ Feldman, *To Be A Jew Today*, supra, p. 191 (Professor Feldman admits that there has been a sort of Jewish evasion of the question of Messiah because, perhaps, there was always “**a long-standing need to distinguish Jewishness from Christianity**, the offshoot of Judaism whose self-definition begins with the idea that the messiah (Christ is Greek for messiah, meaning the anointed one) has already come and will return. Another is the rabbis’ this-worldly, pragmatic bent, which sits uneasily with imagining an idealized future when everything will be the way it should be.”)

¹⁹ Interestingly, *To Be A Jew Today* does not cover any of this history of European oppression of the Jewish people, or of American discrimination against the Jews. But this subject matter anti-Jewish oppression is covered quite extensively in Jerold S. Auerbach, *Rabbis and Lawyers: The Journey from Torah to Constitution* (New Orleans, LA: Quid Pro Books, 2010). Also, within the context of discrimination against Jewish lawyers, this subject matter is also covered in Alan M. Dershowitz’s *Abraham: The World’s First (But Certainly Not Last) Jewish Lawyer* (New York, N.Y.: Schocken Books, 2015).

while maintaining their religious practices, until the gradual process of emancipation began in the late 18th century with the Enlightenment era in Europe, allowing them greater integration into society.

“Key points about Jewish life between 70 AD and emancipation:

- **Diaspora dispersal:**

“After the destruction of the Temple, most Jews were forced to leave their homeland and settled in various regions across the Roman Empire, with significant populations in areas like Egypt, Mesopotamia, and later, Western and Eastern Europe.

- **Community life:**

“Jewish communities established their own leadership, religious courts, and educational systems, often centered around synagogues.

- **Occupational restrictions:**

“Due to societal constraints, Jews were often limited to certain professions like trade, money lending, and crafts, which could sometimes lead to negative stereotypes.

- **Ghettos:**

“In many European cities, Jews were forced to live in designated areas called ghettos, which were often overcrowded and had restricted access.

- **Religious scholarship:**

“Despite limitations, Jewish intellectual life flourished during this period, with significant developments in the study of the Torah, Talmud, and Jewish law.

- **Persecution and Pogroms:**

“Jews frequently faced periods of persecution and violence, including pogroms (organized attacks) which often led to displacement and migration.

- **The Haskalah (Jewish Enlightenment):**

“During the 18th century, the Jewish Enlightenment movement encouraged greater integration of Jewish culture with the broader European society, advocating for education and civil rights.

- **Emancipation process:**

“With the rise of Enlightenment ideals and revolutions like the French Revolution, many European countries began to grant Jews legal equality and citizenship rights, marking the era of Jewish emancipation.”²⁰

- **Merger of Judaism with Christianity:**

“American Zionism” purports that “Emancipation,” Jewish immigration of the United States during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and the success of American Jews have resulted largely in the merger of Judaism into Christianity – thus creating a Judea-Christian social, religious, and political philosophy that is uniquely American and also Zionistic in nature. American policy towards Israel is an expression of that religious and political philosophy.²¹

Because of this two thousand years of European antipathy toward the Jews, Professor Feldman admits that a large component of present-day Jewish ideology is centered around *distinguishing itself* from the Christian religion – and not around providing an objective critique of the New Testament; the teachings of Jesus; or the similarities between Christian redemption and Jewish fidelity to the Torah.²² (It is ironic that such an approach as Professor Feldman’s can accept a “godless” Jew, simply because he or she has a Jewish mother, but it cannot accept an orthodox Presbyterian or orthodox Congregationalist who upholds the Puritan ideals of colonial New England!). For these reasons, while most Jews secretly embrace the American Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution as the natural expression of New England Puritanism, which was fundamentally Hebraic, they nevertheless cannot embrace, say, Messianic

²⁰ This material in was taken from various on-line sources. Professor Feldman does not mention or address this history in any detail. His concern, rather, is the condition and plight of Jews during “the two hundred-plus years since Jewish emancipation.... Before that, the history of the Jewish contributions to Western thought and civilization, from ancient Greece and Rome up through the Enlightenment, is not especially remarkable.” Feldman, *To Be A Jew Today*, p. 302.

²¹ See, generally, Jerold S. Auerbach, *Rabbis and Lawyers*, *supra*.

²² Feldman, *To Be A Jew Today*, p. 302.

Jews or Reformed Christians as a type of “reformed” Judaism – again, such an embrace would threaten Jewish self-identification and self-preservation.²³

I surmise, however, that the Jews and Judaism would not have attained their present levels of world influence without the success of Yeshua, who is Judaism’s most successful or influential rabbi.²⁴ Notwithstanding being omitted from Professor Feldman’s great work, *To Be A Jew Today*, I surmise that the pre-eminent status of world Jewry rests largely upon Yeshua’s work and success – and this Jewish has occurred largely within the boundaries of the United States of America, whose Puritan-Calvinistic foundations was attractive to the Jews.²⁵

Moreover, all twenty-seven books of the New Testament, which is the *Law of Christ* (i.e., Yeshua), were written by first-century Jews²⁶ who were molded and shaped by first-century Jewish traditions and customs.²⁷ These first-century Jews believed that Yeshua, who was himself a first-century Torah-observant rabbi, had fulfilled the prophetic and messianic promises made in the Tanakh.²⁸ Because this *Law of Christ* – particularly as interpreted by Reformed theologians such as Calvin – is indisputably one type of interpretation of the Torah and the Tanakh, I argue here that this *Law of Christ* is a particular type of “Jewish” law,

²³ Feldman, *To Be A Jew Today*, supra.

²⁴ See, generally, Jerold S. Auerbach, *Rabbis and Lawyers: The Journey from Torah to Constitution* (New Orleans, LA: Quid Pro Books, 2010).

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Some sources opine that Luke, who was the reputed author of the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts, may not have been Jewish. Luke was the ministerial assistant to the Apostle Paul. See, e.g., *Jews for Jesus*, “Is the New Testament Jewish,” <https://www.jewsforjesus.co.za/faq/is-the-new-testament-jewish#:~:text=Most%20scholars%20agree%20that%20the,5>. Luke was also believed to have been a “Hellenized Jew.”

²⁷ See, e.g., *Jews for Jesus*, “Is the New Testament Jewish,” supra, asking “Can the New Testament be considered a Jewish book?” Another source in the “Jews for Jesus” Facebook website states: “Although you may have been told differently, It’s not weird for Jewish people to believe in Jesus – in fact, if you think about it, it’s actually stranger that Gentiles would believe in Jesus. After all, he was a Torah-observant rabbi born in Israel who came as a fulfillment of the prophecies of the Tanakh. Thankfully, his atonement provided a way for *all* nations to be united in one faith in the God of Israel – Jewish and Gentile alike.”

²⁸ Ibid.

which is the cornerstone of western civilization. The 19th-century Jewish immigrants to the United States early acknowledged this fact.

It is because of Yeshua's success amongst the Gentiles that prominent rabbis such as Rabbi Arthur Kurzweil can credibly claim that "the Torah provide the basis of Western civilization."²⁹ The fact of the matter is that Judaism is a major pillar of the Christian religion; and through Christian theologians and lawyers the Written Torah has influenced western civilization. Hence, the Apostle Paul, in his *Epistle to the Romans*, has referred to Christians as "inward" Jews.³⁰ And Augustine of Hippo, in his magnum opus, *The City of God*, has called the Christians "spiritual" and (or) "true" Israelites.³¹ Significantly, Augustine's orthodox Catholic theology also devised a "wall of partition"³² between Jews and Christians, but it also simultaneously united them under one head, the Messiah (i.e., Yeshua).³³

In North America, the Jewish acknowledgement of "Hebrew-Jewishness" within American constitutionalism was most profound. Indeed, as previously

²⁹ Rabbi Arhur Kurzweil, *The Torah* (Hoboken, NY: Wiley Publishing, Inc., 2008), p. 2.

³⁰ Romans 2: 28-29 ("28 For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: 29 But **he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit**, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.")

³¹ St. Augustine, *The City of God* (New York, N.Y.: The Modern Library, 1950), p. 592 ("the Christians, who are Israelites not after the flesh but **after the Spirit**"); p. 598 ("the true Israelites... by faith, is the City of God"); p. 658 ("the true Israelites, the citizens of the country that is above"); p. 562 ("For Israel means seeing God, which will at last be the reward of the saints.")

³² Ibid., p. 634, stating:

We should but weaken the savour of this prophetic oracle if we set ourselves to expound it. Let the reader but call to mind the corner stone and those two walls of partition, the one of **the Jews**, the other of **the Gentiles**, and **he will recognize them**, the one under the term sons of Judah, the other as sons of Israel, supporting themselves **by one and the same headship**, and ascending from the earth.

³³ Thus, having embraced that same Augustinian theology, I must also come to terms with the historical fact that historically **most Christians and most Jews have never conceptualized themselves as belonging to the same religion**, united by the **same Messiah!** The first-century Jews and the Early Church appears to have fought to preserve this basic theological nexus between churches and synagogues. But as the Early Church became more diverse and under the control of the Gentiles, that nexus was eventually dissevered.

mentioned, the foundations of “American Zionism,” and the influence which the United States of America has had upon Judaism, and vice versa, traces its roots to the late 19th- and early 20th- centuries, when European Jews began to immigrate to the United States in large numbers.³⁴ Eventually, these Jews found in the history of Puritan colonial New England, the Declaration of Independence, and the United States Constitution, the influence of the Torah and of Hebrew civilization, thus ostensibly making American civilization – at least in the minds of many Jewish immigrants-- an offspring of Judaism. This theme is lucidly set forth in Professor Jerold Auerbach’s *Rabbis and Lawyers: From Torah to Constitution*.³⁵ (Although Professor Feldman’s book, *To Be A Jew Today*, omits this theme, I find it hard, as a self-proclaimed Puritan,³⁶ to entertain any discussion upon the “meaning” of present-day Jewishness without including American Judaism’s connections with Puritan colonial New England – the bedrock of American constitutionalism.)³⁷

Indeed, as Professor Auerbach explained, “American Zionism” was the result of a tacit Jewish acknowledgement of an overlapping constitutional objective between the Torah and the United States Constitution.³⁸ Subsequent generations of Jewish theologians and scholars tacitly acknowledged that the

³⁴ See, generally, Jerold S. Auerbach, *Rabbis and Lawyers: The Journey from Torah to Constitution* (New Orleans, LA: Quid Pro Books, 2010).

³⁵ Ibid, pp. 3 – 28.

³⁶ See, e.g., “Roderick Andrew Lee Ford, LL.D.” www.roderickford.org.

³⁷ As Noah Feldman is a constitutional law professor at Harvard University, I was somewhat surprised that he failed to discuss in *To Be A Jew Today* the connection between Puritanism, Calvinism, New England Congregationalism and their attraction to early American Jews.

³⁸ See, generally, Jerold S. Auerbach, *Rabbis and Lawyers: The Journey from Torah to Constitution* (New Orleans, LA: Quid Pro Books, 2010), p. 23, stating:

The euphoric celebration of the rule of American constitutional law... should not obliterate the fact that it was never law alone, but **law as an instrument of justice**, that ostensibly bound the Jewish and American traditions. Justice was a recurrent theme in the American Jewish discourse of compatibility. It was a necessary insertion, for it enabled Jews to submerge ‘arid’ legalism, the part of their tradition with which modern Jews felt least comfortable, in the resounding call of the ancient Hebrew prophets for social justice and moral righteousness.

United States Government was derived from ancient Hebrew polity.³⁹ For this reason, Professor Auerbach has called American Jews “the last Puritans.”⁴⁰

Not surprisingly, Professor Feldman’s *To Be A Jew Today* painstakingly gives us a definition of “Jewishness” that does not contemplate even a remote possibility that Christians – not even Messianic Christians or the Calvinistic Puritans of colonial New England – can be classified as “Jews.”⁴¹ I find this omission to be quite curious, because Professor Feldman’s definition of “Jewishness” includes “godless, secular” Jews – i.e., ostensibly persons born from Jewish mothers who no longer believe in the Torah or God! Be that as it may, Feldman’s *To Be A Jew Today*’s omission of the “spiritual Israel” (i.e., the Christian Church), as being a major component of present-day Jewishness, was a lost opportunity.

D. The Psychological and Cultural Evasion of the Black Jews

Nor does Professor Feldman’s *To Be A Jew Today* appear to embrace non-European, non-white Jews as a major component of mainstream Judaism! Rather he implicitly assigns such fringe Jewish groups (e.g., the Beta Israel and the Lemba Jews) to the categories of religious or historical anomalies, much like the

³⁹ Ibid. See, also, “The Ancient Hebrew Polity,” *The Presbyterian Quarterly* 12.2 (April 1898): 153-169. <http://www.pcahistory.org/HCLibrary/periodicals/tpq/122-2.pdf>

See, e.g., Daniel Eleazar, *Covenant & Polity in Biblical Israel: Biblical Foundations & Jewish Expressions* (New York, N.Y.: Routledge, 1998).

Daniel J. Eleazar, “Deuteronomy as Israel’s Ancient Constitution: Some Preliminary Reflection,” Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, <https://www.jcpa.org/dje/articles2/deut-const.htm>

Peter Barenboim, *Biblical Origins of Separation of Powers Doctrine* (E-Book, Moscow Florentine Society Site: Letny Sad Moscow 2005).

⁴⁰ Jerold S. Auerbach, *Rabbis and Lawyers: The Journey from Torah to Constitution* (New Orleans, LA: Quid Pro Books, 2010), p. 15 (“So American Jews became the last Puritans; the last Americans, that is, to take seriously the claim that the United States truly was the fulfillment of divine promise to Israel.”) Hence, Professor Auerbach’s general thesis in *Rabbis and Lawyers* led me to Professor Noah Feldman’s new book, *To Be a Jew Today*, as I was curious to find whether the same themes further explored and developed.

⁴¹ Feldman’s *To Be A Jew Today* does not acknowledge the basic premise set forth in Auerbach’s *Rabbis and Lawyers* that Jewish liberation in the United States was the result of the Hebraic constitutional foundations laid by the Calvinistic Puritans of colonial New British North America.

Christians who commit what Professor Feldman has called “the Judaizing heresy.”⁴² *To Be A Jew Today* would have been a really extraordinary book had Professor Feldman elected to honestly address the black-white racial divide that is within Judaism. A special chapter on the subject ought to have been devoted to this topic. Instead, Professor Feldman only quietly acknowledges that there are so-called “black Jews,” without any analysis regarding their influence and significance to Judaism. But, in fact, these black Jews [e.g., the Ethiopian Jews (i.e., the Beta Israel) and the Lemba Jews⁴³ of Southern Africa] have bona fide DNA links to the original Hebrews and to many European Jews.

In other words, while Professor Feldman acknowledges that there are “black Jews,” his general treatment of these groups suggests that “black Jews” generally fall outside of the major concern of orthodox European-centered Judaism. Professor Feldman admits that the Beta Israel are the subject of racial discrimination even in Israel, but he does not discuss the nature of that racial discrimination in any detail; nor does he ever unequivocally state that such racial discrimination is inconsistent with teachings within the Oral Torah. *To Be A Jew Today* does not assert that orthodox Judaism condemns racial discrimination against black Jews or that the state of Israel should work to abate such discrimination.⁴⁴

In a word, the existence, history, and plight of “black Jews” is not within the general concern of *To Be A Jew Today*. As an African American civil rights lawyer, I find Professor Feldman’s omission to be reminiscent of “the problem of the color line,” which W.E.B. Du Bois made popular in his classic, “The Souls of Black Folk” (1903).⁴⁵ The omission of this anti-black Jewish racism in *To Be A Jew*

⁴² Feldman, *To Be A Jew Today*, supra, p. 264.

⁴³ Feldman, *To Be A Jew Today*, supra, p 263 (“[T]he Lemba, a Bantu-speaking people in southern Africa who identify as Jews and have some apparent genetic links to ancient Israelites....”)

⁴⁴ Ibid., pp. 263- 264.

⁴⁵ See, e.g., W.E.B. Du Bois, “The Souls of Black Folk,” *Writings* (New York, N.Y.: The Library of America, 1986), p. 479 (“The rod of empire that passed from the hands of Southern gentlemen in 1865... has passed to those men who have come to take charge of the industrial exploitation of the New South, — the sons of poor whites fired with a new thirst for wealth and power, thrifty and avaricious Yankees, **shrewd and unscrupulous Jews**. Into the hands of these men the Southern laborers, white and black, have fallen; and this to their sorrow.”) See, also, Alan Dershowitz, *Abraham: The World’s First (But Certainly Not Last)*

Today was a lost opportunity, too, for Professor Feldman to update the current state of Judaism in its relation to the African American community in the United States, as well as the state of Israel to South Africa's present-day critique of its handling of the Hamas-Israeli War.⁴⁶

I do not mean here to suggest that Professor Feldman himself holds a racially-discriminatory perspective of "black Jews"; however, given the context of the plight of all Jews in throughout the entire world, it is a surprise that Professor Feldman did not emphasize the absolute need for all Jews, who conceptualize themselves as "the light of the world," to abate all forms of racial discrimination, especially Jewish discrimination against "black Jews."

Although Professor Feldman devotes far fewer pages of *To Be A Jew Today* to non-white Jewish groups than he does to various predominantly-white Jewish groups,⁴⁷ he does laudably leave the door open for ultimate inclusiveness of all non-white Jews into the "definition of the Jewish people as family."⁴⁸ As I survey the landscape of non-white Jewish groups, such as the Black Hebrew Israelites in the United States, the Lemba Jews of southern Africa, and the Beta Israel of Ethiopia, their claims to being the "original" Hebrews is certainly shocking to predominantly-white Jewish sects, such as Professor Feldman's own Modern Orthodox Jews. For this reason, I suppose that worldwide Jewish identity may

Jewish Lawyer (New York, N.Y.: Schocken, 2015), p. 109 ("In the early days of American history, the great moral issue did not directly involve Jews – though Jews played roles on both sides of the conflict. That issue, of course, was slavery. Judah Benjamin, the greatest Jewish lawyer of his day, not only collaborated with this evil by owning slaves but became one of the most forceful defenders of the Confederacy.")

⁴⁶ See, generally, "Trump cuts South Africa funding over land policy, ICJ case" *China Times* (8 February 2025) ("President Donald Trump signed an executive order to cut US financial help to South Africa, the White House said on Friday, citing disapproval of its land policy and of its genocide case at the International Court of Justice against Washington's ally Israel.")
<https://www.scmp.com/news/world/united-states-canada/article/3297922/trump-cuts-south-africa-funding-over-land-policy-icj-case>

⁴⁷ Feldman, *To Be A Jew Today*, supra, pp. 263-264 (Professor Feldman here acknowledges that the Ethiopian Jew face racial discrimination in Israel and appears to have been placed at a cultural disadvantage by "'embracing' rabbinic Judaism.")

⁴⁸ Ibid.

remain fundamentally split along the same color line that W.E.B. Du Bois promulgated and made famous.⁴⁹

E. Conservative American Values: The Torah and Jewish Law

Finally, my interest in, and admiration for, the Jews rest largely in their having been the caretakers of the Torah and Jewish law [*in the original Hebrew language*] for more than three thousand years! Interestingly, *To Be A Jew Today* never makes this claim, but very many other Jewish authors have readily admitted this in voluminous Jewish publications.⁵⁰ In my voluminous research notes on the history of the Anglican Church, and of the constitutional foundations of England, Great Britain, and the United States, I have concluded that this same Torah and Jewish Law are the foundations of Anglo-American common law, constitutional law, and general jurisprudence.⁵¹

Thus, my own conceptualization of what it means “to be a Jew today” – especially “to be an American Jew today” – is to be a preserver of those sacred Judea-Christian foundations that is within the Anglo-American law and legal system.⁵² I do not here intend to suggest that only lawyers and judges should be concerned with this matter, or hold my perspective; because, the Torah itself concerns the entire body politic, the structure of the civil polity, the establishment of a federated court system, and the duty to seek and to establish justice and judgments with honest judges. That is the core of what civil polity is

⁴⁹ W.E.B. Du Bois, “The Souls of Black Folk,” *Writings* (New York, N.Y.: The Library of America, 1986), p. 372 (“The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color-line,— the relation of the darker to the lighter races of men in Asia and Africa, in America and the islands of the sea.”)

⁵⁰ See, e.g., Rabbi Arhur Kurzweil, *The Torah* (Hoboken, NY: Wiley Publishing, Inc., 2008).

⁵¹ See, generally, “Roderick Andrew Lee Ford, LLD,” www.roderickford.org.

⁵² See, e.g., Alan M. Dershowitz’s *Abraham: The World’s First (But Certainly Not Last) Jewish Lawyer* (New York, N.Y.: Schocken Books, 2015), p. 133 (“the influence of Jewish lawyers – and of the Jewish tradition of law – has become an important part of the American legal system.”)

established to achieve. The special ordination and commission of the Jews are to help all the nations of the world to achieve that objective!⁵³

The other major omission in *To Be A Jew Today* is that there is no analysis of how central and pivotal the Torah is to the application of moral laws, to the health, and to the cultural renewal in Jewish life. In other words, *To Be A Jew Today* seems to suggest that “authentic Jewishness” might be in opposition to the Torah and Jewish Law, while simultaneously resulting in the blessings to Jewish holy life. To that end, *To Be A Jew Today* attempts to explain Judaism – and the different types or denominations of Jews – without the Torah and Jewish Law. Here Professor Feldman is presumptuously assuming that his lay readers will not understand, or benefit from, any meaningful religious analysis of the Torah and Jewish Law. Perhaps Professor Feldman’s judgment is ultimately correct here – and mine wrong.

F. What Does It Mean for Jews to be A Chosen People?

This leads me to my last observation for this introductory note: *To Be A Jew Today* provides a superb analysis of the meaning of Jewish “chosen-ness” – i.e., what does it mean for the Jews to be a “chosen people” under the parameters of the Torah and Jewish Law?⁵⁴ Again, in my Christocentric perception of this question, to be “chosen” is to be a keeper and preserver of the Torah and Jewish Law [particularly *in the original Hebrew language*]. Professor Feldman’s *To Be A Jew Today* appears to have adopted that same understanding, where he describes the fundamental aspect of the Jewish religion, referencing an ancient Jewish text called *Ethics of the Fathers*, which is “a compilation of wise aphorisms by rabbis who lived roughly from 200 BCE to 200 CE,” stating:

Moses received the Torah at Sinai and transmitted it to Joshua; and Joshua to the elders; and the elders to the prophets; and the prophets transmitted it to the men of the Great Assembly. They said three

⁵³ Genesis 18: 18-19 (Abraham’s household would establish justice and judgment, and thereby all the nations of the world would be blessed) ; Exodus 18 (Moses establishes a system of federated judges) ; Deuteronomy 16: 18-20 (Moses’ system of judged reaffirmed; the Jews were thus commanded: “Justice, justice shall you pursue.”)

⁵⁴ Feldman, *To Be A Jew Today*, supra, pp. 288-313.

things: Be patient in doing justice; raise many students; and make a fence round the Torah.⁵⁵

Thus, God passed the law down to Moses who passed it on to the sages and rabbis. “[T]he Law governs in the real world (it does ‘justice’)... the rabbis must protect the observance of the Law....”⁵⁶ In Judaism, “...the universe exists teleologically for the purpose of the Torah.”⁵⁷ This is especially the belief system of the ultra-orthodox and orthodox Jews; “[t]o Traditionalists, then,” writes Professor Feldman, “God’s authority is primary, primordial, and absolute. The Traditionalist God is the Master of the Universe, the divine King.”⁵⁸

Without question, billions of Christians and Muslims believe, to varying degrees, that the Jews are (or were) God’s chosen people. This concept of having been “chosen” – or called or ordained – is a major pillar of the Christian religion. Ostensibly, this Christian concept results in certain Gentile persons or peoples being “chosen” in the same sense that the Jews were “chosen.” As a Christian lawyer reviewing *To Be A Jew Today*, I am compelled by Genesis 18:18-19 to reach the conclusion that *the Jews*, through whom the entire world would be blessed, were given the Torah, in order to teach and to instruct the all of nations of the world.⁵⁹ Without question, the global footprint of the Jewish influence is manifest in the Christian Church (i.e., “inward Jews” or “spiritual Israelites”) and in western civilization.

Interestingly, Professor Feldman’s *To Be A Jew Today* does achieve a monumental and extraordinary task by separating and distinguishing Jewish “divine chosenness” from the “worldly success of secular Jews”! Professor Feldman does not hold that the recent “worldly success” of Jews within the secular world is any evidence at all that present-day Jews have been “chosen” by

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 23.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 29.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 29.

⁵⁹ For example, both Augustine of Hippo (354- 430) and John Calvin (1509 – 1564) reached this theological conclusion in their voluminous writings.

God. Professor Feldman is careful to acknowledge that this worldly Jewish success is no proof of Jewish chosen-ness or special Jewish genius; but, rather, he concludes that these achievements are *historical accidents*, based largely upon the history of Jewish struggle and resistance to anti-Semitic oppression during the late 19th or early 20th centuries.⁶⁰

Christian “chosen-ness,” particularly that found among the British people, appears to have been greatly influenced by Jewish “chosen-ness.” Although Professor Feldman’s *To Be A Jew Today* does not address British-Christian chosen-ness, I am mentioning it here, because Jewish scholars such as Jerold S. Auerbach⁶¹ and Alan M. Dershowitz⁶² write frequently about the merger of Jewish with Anglo-British-American culture — a sort of British or American “Judea-Christian” Zionism. Here, the great British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli (1804 - 1881), a Jew who represented England at the Congress of Berlin of 1878 and the great Lord Walter Rothschild (1868 - 1937), a Jew who co-authored the Balfour Declaration of 1917,⁶³ which laid the foundation for the creation of the state of Israel, certainly come to mind. I was surprised that *To Be A Jew Today* did not provide more historical background information on the origins

⁶⁰ Notably, Professor Feldman laments that younger Jews, who were more born within the past few decades and who are the beneficiaries of the hard work and victories won by their Jewish parents and grandparents, were not excelling or demonstrating the same level of occupational excellence. Here, Professor Feldman’s realism ought to serve as a wake-up call not only to Jews but to all groups who struggle.

⁶¹ See, e.g., Jerold S. Auerbach, *Rabbis and Lawyers: The Journey from Torah to Constitution* (New Orleans, LA: Quid Pro Books, 2010).

⁶² See, e.g., Alan M. Dershowitz, *Abraham: The World’s First (But Certainly Not Last) Jewish Lawyer* (New York, N.Y.: Schocken Books, 2015).

⁶³ See, e.g., “Board of Deputies of British Jews”
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Board_of_Deputies_of_British_Jews, which provide:

The Board of Deputies of British Jews, commonly referred to as the Board of Deputies, is the largest and second oldest Jewish communal organisation in the United Kingdom, after the Initiation Society which was founded in 1745. Established in 1760 by a group of Sephardic Jews, the board presents itself as a forum for the views of most organisations within the British Jewish community, liaising with the British government on that basis. Notably, while Lord Rothschild was President of the Board of Deputies, the Balfour Declaration was addressed to him and eventually led to the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine.

of the state of Israel arising out from fall of the Ottoman Empire, the Balfour Declaration, and British imperialism.⁶⁴

Finally, this brings me to another major topic which *To Be A Jew* was principally written in order to confront: *why is the state of Israel so controversial and so important in the world?*⁶⁵ It is because Israel is inherently chosen? The discussion and analysis of this question is at the heart and core of this book. Professor Feldman says that there is obviously an inexplicable mystique surrounding the state of Israel, but he never mentions the Hebrew prophets and their obvious contribution towards that mystique. See, e.g., the Book of Daniel;⁶⁶ the Book of Hosea;⁶⁷ the Book of Amos;⁶⁸ the Book of Isaiah;⁶⁹ Book of Micah;⁷⁰ and, inter alia, the Book of Ezekiel.⁷¹

⁶⁴ Noah Feldman, *To Be A Jew Today*, supra, p. 147 (“...the British Empire has a lot to answer for... [i]n Israel-Palestine.”) However, Professor Feldman does not delve into this subject matter or provide even a hint as to those underlying historical issues are.

⁶⁵ See, generally, Noah Feldman, *To Be A Jew Today*, supra, pp. 125 -256.

⁶⁶ The Prophet Daniel also foretold of the coming of a “Son of Man” (Daniel 7:13); a “Prince of princes” (Daniel 8:25); and a “Messiah the Prince” (Daniel 9: 25-26).

⁶⁷ The Book of Hosea describes the return of the Israelites (i.e., the ten tribes of the northern kingdom) from Assyrian captivity and reunification with the nation of Israel (i.e., the kingdoms of Judah and Israel unified under “one head.”) [Hosea 1:11]. Hosea says that when these “children of Israel” shall return, they shall be “as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or numbered.” The Book of Hosea then states that this restored Israel (which is a numberless as the “sand of the sea”) “shall be gathered together” with “the children of Judah,” and shall “appoint themselves one head....” [Hosea 1:11]. For “shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days.” [Hosea 2:5].

⁶⁸ Amos goes on to describe a divine separation of the faithful Israelites from the unfaithful Israelites, stating, “the sinners of my people shall die by the sword....” [Amos 9:10] But, at the same time, “[f]or, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations... yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth.” [Amos 9:9] And God shall “raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen... as in the days of old....” [Amos 9:11].

⁶⁹ Isaiah 9: 6-7 (Prince of Peace reigning on David’s throne forever); Isaiah 52: 13-15 (the glory of the Suffering Servant); Isaiah 53: 1-12 (the glory of the Suffering Servant).

⁷⁰ Micah 4:1-5 (“ The law will go out from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He will judge between many peoples and will settle disputes for strong nations far and wide.”)

⁷¹ Ezekiel 37: 20-22 (“Hold before their eyes the sticks you have written on and say to them, ‘This is what the Sovereign Lord says: I will take the Israelites out of the nations where they have gone. I will gather them from all around and bring them back into their own land. I will make them one nation in the land,

Here, I assume, Professor Feldman made an editorial decision not to discuss biblical theology in great detail; however, I cannot see how this topic could be honestly addressed without it. Indeed, those Hebrew prophets frequently spoke of a reunification of the *house of Judah* with the *house of Israel*, under one head, who is David their king who shall reign forever as sovereign upon the entire earth. With that backdrop, it is difficult to treat the state of Israel as just any other nation-state, which, Professor admits, is clearly not the case.

With so many Christians in the world (2.38 billion souls) and so many Muslims in the world (1.9 billion souls), most of whom believe that their Christ or Messiah is this Jewish Messiah (i.e., Yeshua), there can be no small wonder as to why the Jews (only about 15.7 million souls) are so famous or as to why the state of Israel is so pivotal in world affairs. “To be a Jew,” then, is to not only “wrestle with God as a family,” as Professor Noah explains in *To Be A Jew Today*, but it also means to be a member of a *very famous royal household* – i.e., the royal “House of Abraham,” which would *do justice and judgment*,⁷² and through whom God promised to bless all the nations of the world!⁷³ That promise was published in the Torah and made famous by Moses (i.e., Judaism) and by Yeshua (i.e., Christianity) and by Muhammad (i.e., Islam).

We Christians say that the Jews were (and still are) a “Chosen People” because, as Augustine of Hippo has written, they *prefigured* the spiritual status of God’s chosen saints who live among all races, ethnicities, and nations.⁷⁴ But lest

on the mountains of Israel. There will be one king over all of them and they will never again be two nations or be divided into two kingdoms.”)

⁷² Genesis 18: 18-19.

Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and **all the nations of the earth** shall be blessed in him? For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, **to do justice and judgment**; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ St. Augustine, *The City of God* (New York, N.Y.: The Modern Library, 1950), p. 525 ((the “Hebrews... **The people of Israel** among whom was **the city of God**, mysteriously prefigured in all the people, and truly present in the saints”); p. 696 (Ibid., p. 696. (The city of God “calls citizens out of **all nations**, and gathers together a society of pilgrims of all languages, not scrupling about diversities in the manners, laws, and institutions whereby earthly peace is secured and maintained, but recognizing that, however various these are, they all tend to one and the same end of earthly peace.”)

the Jews should boast, we Christians also acknowledge that, even as the Jews were being “chosen,” God had lain his grace upon certain primitive and ancient Gentiles as well, whom Augustine has called a “church of the Gentiles,”⁷⁵ of whom the patriarch Job [the protagonist from the Book of Job] was a member;⁷⁶ of whom comprise “the true Israelites, the citizens of the country that is above”;⁷⁷ and of whom, like the Jews, are saints who are called upon to do justice and judgment in the earth.⁷⁸ But from Augustine’s theological perspective, there are two types of Jews – those who live according to the city of man,⁷⁹ and those who live according to the city of God.⁸⁰ Augustine held that there were godly Jews

⁷⁵ Ibid, p. 654 (“Wherefore, if that city is rightly held as prophetically representing the Church of the Gentiles... Which Nineveh represented....”).

⁷⁶ Ibid, 658 (Here St. Augustine argues with the Jews, saying “[n]or do I think the Jews themselves dare contend that no one has belonged to God except the Israelites.... Because, if they deny this, they can be most easily confuted by the case of the holy and wonderful man Job, who was neither a native nor a proselyte, that is, a stranger joining the people of Israel, but, being bred of the Idumean race, arose there and died there too, and who is so praised by the divine oracle, that no man of his times is put on a level with him in regards justice and piety.”)

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 658.

⁷⁸ Ibid., pp. 577-578, quotes these same verses as stating:

Now, he does **judgment and justice** who live aright. But he live aright who yields obedience to God when He commands. ‘The end of the commandment,’ that is, to which the commandment has reference, ‘is charity out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned.’ Moreover, this ‘charity,’ as the Apostle John testifies, ‘is of God.’ Therefore **to do justice and judgment** is of God. But what is ‘in the midst of the earth?’...Therefore, ‘in the midst of the earth,’ that is, while our soul is shut up in this earthly body, **judgment and justice** are to be done, which shall be profitable for us hereafter, when ‘every one shall receive according to that he hath done in the body, whether good or bad.’ In the same way we may suitably understand what we read in the psalm, ‘But God, our King before the worlds, hath wrought salvation in the midst of the earth;’ so that the Lord Jesus may be understood to be our God who is before the worlds, because by Him the worlds were made, working our salvation in the midst of the earth, for the Word was made flesh and dwelt in an earthly body.

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 633 (“But that those **carnal Israelites** who are now unwilling to believe in Christ shall afterward believe....”).

See, also, **Appendix A**, “Letter to Rev. Jason Bradfield regarding The Jews” (December 17, 2023).

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 525 (the “**Hebrews... people of Israel** among whom was **the city of God**, mysteriously prefigured in all the people, and truly present in the saints”).

See, also, **Appendix A**, “Letter to Rev. Jason Bradfield regarding The Jews” (December 17, 2023).

who were a part of the heavenly city called the New Jerusalem, and who were the co-heirs with their fellow Christians; but that there were also very worldly, carnal-minded Jews as well.⁸¹

Some Jews, including Professor Feldman's *To Be A Jew Today*, seem to be slowly arriving at the same basic theological point.⁸² For this reason, we Christians say that "to be a Jew" is to be one of the "true Israelites."⁸³ Professor Feldman's *To Be A Jew Today: A New Guide to God, Israel, and the Jewish People* ultimately does not refute this claim.⁸⁴

⁸¹ In ancient times, the Jews courted the Egyptians, the Greeks, and the Romans. See, e.g., *Josephus: The Complete Works* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Pub., 1998); Roderick Andrew Lee Ford, "The First and Second Maccabees (Apocrypha)," *Apostolate Papers* (2022) and "The Destruction of the Second Temple, the New Testament Priesthood, and the Early Church," *Apostolate Papers* (2022). Today, the Jews are in a courtship with the United States of America. See, e.g., Jerold S. Auerbach, *Rabbis and Lawyers: The Journey from Torah to Constitution* (New Orleans, LA: Quid Pro Books, 2010). See, also, Dershowitz, *Abraham: The World's First (But Certainly Not Last) Jewish Lawyer*, supra, p. 109 ("Judah Benjamin: From Confederate Leader to Commercial Lawyer") and p. 112 ("Bruno Kreisky: The Jewish Lawyer Who Admired Nazis and Palestinian Terrorists").

⁸² See, e.g., Alan Dershowitz's *Abraham: The World's First (But Certainly Not Last) Jewish Lawyer* (New York, N.Y.: Schocken Books, 2015), p. 132, stating:

This does not mean, of course, that non-Jews cannot arrive at the same point by consulting Christian or other sources or that Jews make better lawyers than non-Jews. It does suggest that we are all the products of our experiences, personal and historical, and that these experiences may inform the manner in which we practice our professions and live our lives.

⁸³ See, also, Romans 2: 28-29 ("But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart...") and Romans 2:11-16 ("when the Gentiles... do by nature the things contained in the law... shew the work of the law written in their hearts").

⁸⁴ See, e.g., *To Be A Jew Today*, supra, pp. 263-264 ("Jewish peoplehood is a lot like this inclusive, complex, contested conception of the family. The peoplehood of family cannot be defined without asking how individuals perceive and define themselves. But neither can peoplehood-as-family be defined entirely by self-perception. Considering oneself to be a Jew, a member of the family, is not automatically going to make one a member of the Jewish people in the eyes of all others. Is... [a] messianic Jew, born of Jewish parents, who accepts Yeshua as his Lord and Savior [a Jew]? Depends again.... Nevertheless, the point of this example—and the other, more contested ones—is to show that an adequate definition of the Jewish people as family cannot be exhaustive or permanent. Even after we have a workable definition of the Jewish people, there will be debates about who is in and who is out, just as there can be in families.")

III.

Mainline Judaism: The Different Types of Jews Today

First, and most importantly, Professor Feldman's *To Be A Jew Today* needs to introduce the Jews to lay readers, and he masterfully achieves this objective. His audience is, ostensibly, a very wide audience of non-religious, non-Jewish readers. Professor Feldman achieves this objective, in the first section of his book, which is titled "Part I: Of God." The first three chapters of this section covers three broad categories or types of Jews which are given the following nicknames: (a) the Jews whose God is "of Black and White"; (b) Jews whose God is "of Social Justice"; and (c) Jews whose God "Whose Law Evolves."

Notably, Professor Feldman utilizes his own unique method of categorization. In other words, *To Be A Jew Today* incorporates its own unique nick-names for various classes of Jews not found anywhere else! These adjectives include, for instance, "*Black and White*" for the Ultra-Orthodox Jewish sect; "*Evolutionists*" for the Modern Orthodox Jewish sect; and "*Progressives*" for the Conservative, Reformed, and Reconstructionist Jewish sects. Here, Professor Feldman follows the same model as set forth in Auerbach's *Rabbis and Lawyers*.⁸⁵

Consequently, I was required to do a small amount of independent research on these various categories of Jews, in order to clarify Professor Feldman's information and descriptions. Thus, by way of comparing Professor Feldman's descriptions of various Jewish sects with descriptions from other

⁸⁵ See, also, Jerold S. Auerbach, *Rabbis and Lawyers*, supra, pp. 82 ("As traditional legal obligations became modern options, obedience to law ceased to define what it meant to be a Jew. Each Jew could choose; every choice contained presuppositions about Jewish law, or its negation. At the antinomian extreme, Reform Jews insisted upon the freedom to choose which laws to obey, or whether to obey any. Orthodox Jews still insisted upon the Torah as the word of God and remained committed to the written and oral law regardless of shifting social values among the gentiles — or among Jews. In time, Conservative Jews, perhaps conceding the divine origin of Jewish law, would insist upon its human development and application. Secular Jews, of course, rejected the authority of Jewish law altogether. The fragmentation of Jewish life is the distinctive legacy of two centuries of emancipation.")

Jewish scholars (primarily those found in Rabbi Kurzweil's *The Torah*),⁸⁶ I believe that I have been able to better explain Professor Feldman's basic points.⁸⁷

In part one of *To Be A Jew Today*, Professor Feldman thus describes six broad categories of present-day Jews in the world as follows:

A.

Jews in Black and White: The Ultra Orthodox Jews

In *To Be A Jew Today*, Professor Feldman refers to Ultra-Orthodox Jews as "Traditionalists" and (or) as the Jews in "Black and White." These are the Haredi Jews.⁸⁸ These Ultra-Orthodox Jews tend to live provincial lives, and they live strictly in accordance with the Sacred Scriptures. I find this to be a very attractive aspect of Ultra-Orthodox Judaism, because it demonstrates a level of faithfulness to the text of the Torah not found in other denominations.

Within the Christian world, perhaps the provincial Amish communities are comparable in nature to these Ultra-Orthodox Jews. But, also, other very conservative Christian church denominations (including many Baptist, Reformed, independent, or non-denominational churches) replicate the same

⁸⁶ Rabbi Arhur Kurzweil, *The Torah* (Hoboken, NY: Wiley Publishing, Inc., 2008).

⁸⁷ Accordingly, this summation of Professor Feldman's categorization of present-day Jews is supplemented with footnotes with supplemental descriptions from other Jewish sources, in order to assist the reader with better understanding Professor Feldman's underlying points.

⁸⁸ Noah Feldman, *To Be A Jew Today*, supra, pp. 21-46 ("The God of Black and White"). See, also, Rabbi Arhur Kurzweil, *The Torah* (Hoboken, NY: Wiley Publishing, Inc., 2008), p. 265 (provides a different listing of the various types or categories of Jewish sects, stating that there are (1) Chassidic Jews; (2) Orthodox Jews [Orthodox and Haredi ("one who is in awe of God")]; (3) Conservative Jews; (4) Reform Jews; and (5) Reconstructionist [and "Renewal"] Jews.

Rabbi Kurzweil writes, *Ibid.*, p. 265, that "**Chassidic Judaism**, which is based on the original teachings of the **Baal Shem Tov** (bah-ahl shem towv; master of the Good Name), contains many subgroups. Three of the largest groups are **Satmar**, **Lubavitch**, and **Bobov**. The synagogue of each of three groups generally use editions of the Torah in Hebrew. The most well-known Chassidic group is Lubavitch; the teachings of this group's leaders and revered teachers from past generations can be found in the Tunick edition of the Torah."

traditionalist life-styles as do the Ultra-Orthodox Jews. Historically, the Puritans of colonial New England tried to build a church-state system modeled after Ultra-Orthodox Hebrew laws and customs. For this reason, the nexus between Judaism and American constitutional law and traditions is strong and continues to influence present-day American-Jewish politics.⁸⁹

B.

The Jews Whose Law Evolves

Professor Feldman refers to Modern Orthodox Jews as “Evolutionists,” because, even though they are “Traditionalists” like the Ultra-Orthodox Jews, the Modern Orthodox Jews do not dress in archaic attire, but rather they look and dress like typical middle-class Americans or Europeans. The Modern Orthodox Jews also consider the Torah to be the anchor of their Jewishness; they do not ordain women as rabbis; and they accept the authority of the rabbis for its interpretation. But Modern Orthodox Jews also believe that the application of the Torah must “evolve” in order to address unique circumstances of present times.⁹⁰

In the Christian world, the Modern Orthodox Jews are similar to those conservative Presbyterian, the Congregationalist, the Baptist, and the independent Evangelical churches which do not ordain women as pastors; promote family values; and tend to vote Republican in national and local elections. The Modern Orthodox Jews wear modern clothes, attend mainstream universities founded by elite Christians – such as the Ivy League – and are closely aligned culturally with the aforementioned mainline Christian sects.

⁸⁹ See, e.g., Jerold S. Auerbach, *Rabbis and Lawyers: The Journey from Torah to Constitution* (New Orleans, LA: Quid Pro Books, 2010).

⁹⁰ Noah Feldman, *To Be A Jew Today*, supra, pp. 68-94 (“The God Whose Law Evolves”). See, also, Rabbi Arthur Kurzweil, *The Torah*, supra, p. 265 (Rabbi Kurzweil notes that “[t]he Orthodox movement in America is divided into modern Orthodox and haredi (Khah-ray-dee; one who is in aw of God), sometimes known as ultra-Orthodox.”)

The Modern Orthodox Jews and the conservative Black Baptist Churches are also uniquely similar in both their conservative theology, refusal to ordain women as pastors, and internal church or synagogue polity.⁹¹

C.

The Progressives: The Conservative Jews

Next, Professor Feldman refers to Conservative Jews as “Progressive Jews” *who ordain women*, thus distinguishing them from the Ultra-Orthodox and the Modern Orthodox Jews. These Conservative Jews promote social justice, but they are committed to Jewish tradition and the plain meaning of the Torah. They are not as liberal as the Reformed Jews or as the Reconstructionist Jews, who sometimes seem willing to dispense with, or to completely disregard, the plain meaning of the Torah altogether.⁹²

D.

The Progressives: The Reformed Jews

Professor Feldman refers to Reformed Jews as “Progressive Jews.” The Reformed Jews have been on the forefront of modernization of Judaism, as well as social justice. There are two broad types of “Reformed” Jews: “Conservative” Reformed Jews and the more “Liberal” Reformed Jews. We have previously discussed the Conservative Jews, above – they are so-called “Conservative Jews” merely to distinguish themselves from the Reformed Jews, who tend to be more

⁹¹ See, e.g., Carter G. Woodson, *The History of the Negro Church* (Washington, D.C.: The Associated Publishers, 1921), p. 282 (“The [Negro] church serves as a moral force, a power acting as a restraint upon the bad and stimulating the good to further moral achievement. Among the Negroes its valuable service is readily apparent....”); W.E.B. Du Bois, “The Souls of Black Folk,” *Writings* (New York, N.Y.: The Library of America, 1986), p. 496 (“[T]he [Negro] Church often stands as a real conservator of morals, a strengthener of family life, and the final authority on what is Good and Right”); and James H. Cone and Gayraud S. Wilmore, *Black Theology: A Documentary History*, Vol. One: 1966- 1979 (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2003), p. 218 (“[T]he Black Church of the nineteenth century... thought of itself as God’s judgment upon racism... converted thousands, stabilized the Black family... founded schools and colleges.... And provided the social, cultural, economic, and political base of the entire African American community in the United States.”)

⁹² Noah Feldman, *To Be A Jew Today*, supra, pp. 47-67 (“The God of Social Justice”). See, also, Rabbi Arthur Kurzweil, *The Torah*, supra, p. 265 (Rabbi Kurzweil notes “[t]here are some Conservative synagogues where you can find equal participation among men and women in all rituals, while other Conservative synagogues continue to follow the traditional divisions between male and female roles.”)

liberal. Arguably, the Reformed Jews are secret or anonymous Christians, because, like many Christian denominations, Reformed Jews emphasize agape love and social justice more than Torah and Jewish Law. For this reason, Reformed Jews are more liberal than the Conservative Jews, but they are also much more conservative than the Reconstructionist or Secular Jews.⁹³

E.

The Progressives: The Reconstructionist Jews

Next, Professor Feldman also refers to Reconstructionist Jews as “Progressive Jews,” *who also ordain women*. But the Reconstructionist Jews’ real distinguishing marker is that they have almost completely discarded the Torah and Jewish Law. Consequently, there is an element of moral relativism within Reconstructionist Judaism. Not only do the Reconstructionist Jews claim that the God of the Bible is only a “metaphor,” but they also claim that individual Jews should be completely free to interpret the Oral and Written Torah, without input from rabbis; or to devise a mode of Jewish life tailored wholly to their own individual inclinations and needs.⁹⁴

F.

The Progressives: The Secular or Godless Jews

Finally, in *To Be A Jew Today*, Professor Feldman adds yet another category to the listing of “Progressive Jews,” namely, that of the “godless, secular” Jew.

⁹³ Noah Feldman, *To Be A Jew Today*, supra, pp. 47-67 (describing Reform, Conservative, and Reconstructionist Judaism as “Progressive Judaism” under the heading “The God of Social Justice.”)

See, also, Rabbi Kurzweil, *The Torah*, supra, stating that “[t]he Reform movement, like the other movements... isn’t monolithic in synagogues’ practices. Some are more traditional than others.”)

⁹⁴ Noah Feldman, *To Be A Jew Today*, supra, pp. 47-67 (describing Reform, Conservative, and Reconstructionist Judaism as “Progressive Judaism” under the heading “The God of Social Justice.”)

See, also, Rabbi Arthur Kurzweil, *The Torah*, supra, p. 265 (Rabbi Kurzweil notes “[n]either the Reconstructionist movement (the first movement to have begun in North America) nor the Renewal movement (a relatively new movement that considers itself transdenominational) has its own official Torah translation and commentary, and the resources used vary widely among the synagogues and prayer groups of both movements.”)

Ostensibly, these are persons who have been born to Jewish mothers and thus are “legal” Jews, but nevertheless they are sceptics or wholly godless, but nevertheless still insist upon the right to be categorized as Jews. Here, Professor Feldman argues that *the sheer fact* that these Jews choose both (a) to disbelieve in God and (or) the Torah while (b) still clinging to their Jewish heritage, demonstrates that they are, indeed, “authentic” Jews. Professor Feldman argues on two or three occasions throughout *To Be A Jew Today* that “to be a Jew” means to “wrestle with God,” and, as such, those godless, secular Jews are really “authentic” Jews because all they are doing is “wrestling with God” in their own Jewish way.⁹⁵

I take issue with Professor Feldman’s callous indifference towards such moral relativism that is ever-present within such secular, godless Jews, because it belies the plain message of Hebrew Scriptures, Jewish history, and the plain fact that, without adherence to the Torah’s teachings, very many misguided, influential Jews have done great evil in this world.⁹⁶

G.

The Progressive Jews and the Liberal Wing of Protestant Christianity

Unsurprisingly, the Progressive wing of Judaism – the Conservative Jews, the Reformed Jews, the Reconstructionist Jews, and the Secular Jews – tend to vote Democratic in local and national American elections; they ordain women as pastors; they are open to protecting the human rights of those persons who engage in alternative life-styles, such as members of the LGBTQ+ communities; and they are very similar in form and temperament to Christian denominations such as the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States; the United Methodist Church; and the more liberal Presbyterian churches.

Notably, as Professor Feldman points out, the Black-Jewish alliance in the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s died out during the 1970s; and that alliance

⁹⁵ Feldman, *To Be A Jew Today*, supra, pp. 95 – 113 (“Jews Without God”).

⁹⁶ See, e.g., Dershowitz, *Abraham: The World’s First (But Certainly Not Last) Jewish Lawyer*, supra, p. 109 (“Judah Benjamin: From Confederate Leader to Commercial Lawyer”) and p. 112 (“Bruno Kreisky: The Jewish Lawyer Who Admired Nazis and Palestinian Terrorists”).

has never been rekindled.⁹⁷ Professor Feldman explains that this break-up of the Black-Jewish alliance was not intentional, but rather it was the result of a very pragmatic approach to the question of “Jewish redemption.”⁹⁸

Professor Feldman’s categorization of these six different sects or types of present-day Jews is liberating, because it helps both Christians or other non-Jewish persons to better appreciate the complexity within Jewish theology, Jewish thought, and Jewish approaches to the state of Israel. There is no one “Jewish” position or way of thinking or doing things – i.e., “to be a Jew” is to be very complicated! Explaining the nature of this complexity is Professor Feldman’s main objective in *To Be A Jew Today*.

⁹⁷ Feldman, *To Be A Jew Today*, supra, pp. 47-48, 163.

⁹⁸ Regarding the Jewish break with the African-American-led Civil Rights movement, Professor Feldman states:

But once American Jews began to confront **the reality of the Holocaust** [during the 1970s], it became harder to rely on this traditional, citizenship-and-social-justice solution to the theological question of redemption. The **devastation of the Holocaust** showed, among other things, that equal citizenship, as Jews had formally achieved in Germany, France, and even Poland before World War II, had not sufficed to protect or save Jews from genocidal murder. Jewish survival through equal citizenship in the United States looked like an almost accidental feature of the superiority of American liberal constitutionalism, not a success of the Progressive Jewish strategy of relying on liberalism. To a significant degree, omitting the United States, the classical prewar Zionist critique of Progressive Jewish political liberalism had been correct. **Equal citizenship, privatized religion, and the struggle for social justice had not saved Europe’s Jews, much less redeemed them.**

Feldman, *To Be A Jew Today*, supra, p. 163 – 164. Notably, W.E.B. Du Bois also acknowledged the similarity between the plight of Jews and African Americans in 1940, writing:

As the Negro develops from an easily exploitable, profit-furnishing laborer to an intelligent independent self-supporting citizen, the possibility of his being pushed out of this American fatherland may easily be increased rather than diminished. We may be expelled from the United States as the Jew is being expelled from Germany.

W.E.B. Du Bois, “The Dusk of Dawn,” *Writings* (New York, N.Y.: The Library of America, 1986), p. 778.

IV.

Present-Day Jewish Attitudes Towards the State of Israel

Lastly, *To Be a Jew Today* was also written for readers needing to comprehend the present state of Jewish thinking on the present-day state of Israel, particularly since the outbreak of the on-going Hamas- Israel War, which commenced on October 7, 2023.

Professor Feldman thus explains how the diversity in Jewish thinking and perspectives – i.e., the aforementioned six categories of Jews – coalesces in support of the state of Israel, even despite the tremendous internal tensions and disagreements that are ever-present within Jewish thought. To that end, *To Be A Jew Today* also explains why each of the aforementioned Jewish sects or groups take different approaches to the actual state of Israel. Professor Feldman explains some of these approaches as being *wholly religious*; while others as being *wholly secular*; but with most being a mixture between the religious and the secular.

A. Pre-1948 Jewish Perspectives of Zionism and Israel

From the fall of the Second Temple in 70 A.D. up to the late 19th century, Orthodox Jews (and, indeed, nearly all Jews) did not imagine returning to ancient Palestine in order re-create a nation-state of Israel. This idea was not “kosher” within Jewish theological and political thought – as explained in the “Three Oaths,”⁹⁹ which Professor Feldman refers to frequently in *To Be A Jew Today*.

⁹⁹ See, e.g., “The Three Oaths,” *Wikipedia*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Three_Oaths#cite_note-jpost-3

The Three Oaths is the name for a midrash found in the Babylonian Talmud, and midrash anthologies, that interprets **three verses from Song of Solomon** as God imposing three oaths upon the world. Two oaths pertain to the Jewish people and a third oath applies to the gentile nations of the world. For their part, Jews were sworn **not to ‘ascend as a wall’ to reclaim Land of Israel and not to ‘rebel against the nations of the world.’** In turn, the other nations were sworn **not to ‘subjugate the Jews excessively.’**

Among Orthodox Jews today there are primarily two ways of viewing this midrash. Haredim who are strongly anti-Zionist often view this midrash as legally binding, and therefore the

Significantly, Professor Feldman points out that before the state of Israel came into existence in 1948, these aforementioned Jewish sects or groups had *radically different* theological and political positions on Zionism and the state of Israel.¹⁰⁰ However, after the State of Israel came into existence in 1948, ostensibly in response to the Holocaust in Germany during World War II, and following the Arab-Israeli conflicts of the 1960s and 70s, the *necessity to build consensus* among Jews around the world forced all of these sects or categories of Jews to come together, in one form or another, around a common cause of Jewish survival, and for support of the nation-state of Israel.

Notably, the pivotal position of the state of Israel within Judaism is *a relatively new phenomenon* – one that has come into existence perhaps only as recently as the 1980s or 90s. In *To Be A Jew Today*, Professor Feldman concludes that Israel is now critically fundamental to Jewish identity in both in the United States and around the world. “Israel has become,” says he, “far more important in defining Jewishness than it was even in the recent past.”¹⁰¹ As of today, argues Professor Feldman, the state of Israel is now pivotal, if not altogether essential, to the psychology of worldwide Judaism and to the survival of Jews.¹⁰²

movement to establish the state of Israel and its continued existence would be a violation of Jewish law, whereas Religious Zionists have the view that either the oaths are no longer applicable or that they are indeed binding, but the current movement is not a violation of them. Both buttress their positions by citing historic rabbinic sources in favor of their view.

¹⁰⁰ The complexity within Jewish thought far exceeds the boundaries of Professor Feldman’s *To Be A Jew Today*. Suffice it to say, however, with respect to “The Three Oaths,” many counter arguments have been put forth, in support of establishing the state of Israel, such as:

Although the Three Oaths were obligatory in the past, the gentiles violated their vow by excessively persecuting the Jewish people. Therefore, the validity of the two other vows has been nullified. Religious Zionists point to a specific Midrash warning that if gentile nations violated this oath, then “they cause the End of Days to come prematurely.” This has been interpreted to mean that Israel’s re-establishment would be implemented sooner than originally intended. With atrocities against Jews throughout history, and especially after The Holocaust, the Jewish people were absolved of their part of the Oaths.

Source: “The Three Oaths,” *Wikipedia*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Three_Oaths#cite_note-jpost-3

¹⁰¹ Feldman, *To Be A Jew Today*, *supra*, p. 150.

¹⁰² Some Jews obviously disagree with this statement and do not approve of the state of Israel.

Professor Feldman admits that the present-day nation state of Israel *does not* reflect traditional Hebrew or Jewish theology or prophecy, stating:

The coming of the messiah was not understood in (most of) the Jewish messianic tradition as an event in history but as an event that would represent the end of history. The utopian messianic age would put an end to the vicissitudes of Jewish survival and suffering that marked God's intermittent reward and punishment of the Jewish people.¹⁰³

"From the time Zionism was born in the nineteenth century," writes Professor Feldman, "nearly all Traditionalist Jews [i.e., the Chassidic Jews, the Ultra-Orthodox Jews, and the Modern Orthodox Jews] rejected it as secular heresy."¹⁰⁴

As a Christian theologian, I find Professor Feldman's tacit admission that Zionism is not supported as a biblical or theological right within the Orthodox rabbinical tradition to be a breath of fresh air, a mark of intellectual honesty, and the exemplification of academic integrity.

Indeed, in Orthodox Jewish and Christian eschatology,¹⁰⁵ a "Jewish" return will occur "during the end times," when a reunification of the twelve tribes of "Israel" will be consummated. See, e.g., the Book of Daniel;¹⁰⁶ the Book of

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 133.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 212.

¹⁰⁵ See, e.g., St. Augustine, *The City of God* (New York, N.Y.: The Modern Library, 1950), p. 634 ("Let the reader but call to mind the corner stone and those two walls of partition, the one of the Jews, the other of the Gentiles, and he will recognize them, the one under the term sons of Judah, the other as sons of Israel, supporting themselves by one and the same headship, and ascending from the earth.")

¹⁰⁶ The Prophet Daniel also foretold of the coming of a "Son of Man" (Daniel 7:13); a "Prince of princes" (Daniel 8:25); and a "Messiah the Prince" (Daniel 9: 25-26).

Hosea;¹⁰⁷ the Book of Amos;¹⁰⁸ the Book of Isaiah;¹⁰⁹ Book of Micah;¹¹⁰ and, inter alia, the Book of Ezekiel.¹¹¹

Although *To Be A Jew Today* does not mention, or meaningfully discuss, any of this biblical prophecy, Professor Feldman rather implies that ancient Hebrew theology is firmly reflected within the foundations of present-day Jewish thought – even present-day though amongst godless, secular Jews.¹¹² However, Professor Feldman also tacitly admits that secular or godless Jews have also repackaged traditional Jewish theological conceptions of the Messiah (i.e., the “secularization of the idea of the messiah”), while making the “messiah [into] a metaphor for the nation acting collectively to restore itself to full national status and sovereignty. The metaphor of messianic return was what could be salvaged from Diasporic Jewish religious belief.”¹¹³ Therefore, as Professor

¹⁰⁷ The Book of Hosea describes the return of the Israelites (i.e., the ten tribes of the northern kingdom) from Assyrian captivity and reunification with the nation of Israel (i.e., the kingdoms of Judah and Israel unified under “one head.”) [Hosea 1:11]. Hosea says that when these “children of Israel” shall return, they shall be “as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or numbered.” The Book of Hosea then states that this restored Israel (which is a numberless as the “sand of the sea”) “shall be gathered together” with “the children of Judah,” and shall “appoint themselves one head....” [Hosea 1:11]. For “shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days.” [Hosea 2:5].

¹⁰⁸ Amos goes on to describe a divine separation of the faithful Israelites from the unfaithful Israelites, stating, “the sinners of my people shall die by the sword....” [Amos 9:10] But, at the same time, “[f]or, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations... yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth.” [Amos 9:9] And God shall “raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen... as in the days of old....” [Amos 9:11].

¹⁰⁹ Isaiah 9: 6-7 (Prince of Peace reigning on David’s throne forever); Isaiah 52: 13-15 (the glory of the Suffering Servant); Isaiah 53: 1-12 (the glory of the Suffering Servant).

¹¹⁰ Micah 4:1-5 (“ The law will go out from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He will judge between many peoples and will settle disputes for strong nations far and wide.”)

¹¹¹ Ezekiel 37: 20-22 (“Hold before their eyes the sticks you have written on and say to them, ‘This is what the Sovereign Lord says: I will take the Israelites out of the nations where they have gone. I will gather them from all around and bring them back into their own land. I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel. There will be one king over all of them and they will never again be two nations or be divided into two kingdoms.’”)

¹¹² See, e.g., “The Three Oaths,” *Wikipedia*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Three_Oaths#cite_note-jpost-3

¹¹³ Feldman, *To Be A Jew Today*, supra, p. 132.

Feldman lucidly explains, the ultimate justifications for the modern state of Israel are largely unbiblical!

Prior to the 20th century, Jewish theologians and rabbis fully embraced the concept of the Messiah and of Messiah's eventual return – guided by the theology of the “Three Oaths.” As Professor Feldman explains, “[s]ystematic Jewish theology spent relatively less time exploring the timing, nature, and qualities of the future messiah, except to specify that the messiah would be a successful redeemer, a king who actually ruled the Jewish people under conditions of sovereign independence.”¹¹⁴ Indeed, “[h]istorically, Jews have almost always talked about the messiah as *potentially coming*, not already arrived.”¹¹⁵ But the Jews have always been apprehensive about engaging in too much discussion of the Messiah, because inevitably the subject matter led to discussions about Yeshua and comparisons with the Christian religion.¹¹⁶ The need to distinguish Judaism from Christianity (along with the potential threat that Christianity might absorb Judaism) eventually led to the suppression or evasion of the study or discussions of Messianism within the Jewish religion.¹¹⁷

If I had an opportunity to provide a suggestion to Professor Feldman, prior to his publication of *To Be A Jew Today* during the Fall of 2024, I would have suggested that he provide an analysis of the slow convergence between Christianity and Judaism. Given the present state of Israel, and the risks of a general Middle Eastern war, I do not see how Christian and Jewish theologians can continue to remain silent about the theological ideas regarding the “Messiah” and the “Three Oaths.”

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. 191.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p. 195.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., p. 191 (Professor Feldman admits that there has been a sort of Jewish evasion of question of Messiah because, perhaps, there was always “a long-standing need to distinguish Jewishness from Christianity, the offshoot of Judaism whose self-definition begins with the idea that the messiah (Christ is Greek for messiah, meaning the anointed one) has already come and will return. Another is the rabbis’ this-worldly, pragmatic bent, which sits uneasily with imagining an idealized future when everything will be the way it should be.”)

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

B. Reimagination: Jewish Zionism and Christian Restorationism

In order for the state of Israel to come into existence, and to be legitimized in the eyes of most Jews, there had to be some form of biblical and theological reconciliation between the “Three Oaths” theology and the idea of establishing a Jewish nation state. In *To Be Jew Today*, Professor Feldman describes how that reconciliation was effectuated.

During the early 20th century, both Jewish and Christian theologians began to re-interpret their orthodox views on Zionism and the creation of a new state of Israel. The Progressive wing of Judaism – e.g., the Reformed Jews, the Reconstructionist Jews, etc. – began to redefine the nature of the Messiah, transforming Him from an individual person or deity into a “metaphor” of a present-day nation state (i.e., the state of Israel). Professor Feldman unwittingly admits that this new Progressive version of the Messiah is not biblical, stating:

[t]he messiah depicted in the Bible is a literal, anointed king of the House of David, selected by God to rule the Jewish people. Evolutionists of a Religious Zionist persuasion made the coming of this messiah into a collective, depersonalized event, expressed in the achievement of total Jewish sovereignty over the entire historical Land of Israel. They did so... by rejecting the Traditionalist view that God had forbidden the Jews from establishing a Jewish state without miraculous messianic intervention and by consciously evolving classical Jewish beliefs about the messiah in the light of modern, nationalist, Zionist ideals.¹¹⁸

During the early 20th century, Orthodox Jewish theologians, too, began to re-evaluate and to reconsider whether the “secular” Zionism of the godless Jews actually did have Divine fingerprints or was a part of a Divine plan. Then, religious Zionism “gradually replaced” secular Zionism.¹¹⁹ During the period, Orthodox Jews began to conceptualize “[t]he messianic age as one... in which

¹¹⁸ Ibid., p. 183.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., p. 184.

the Jewish people are safe and free and rule their own land, inspired by God and his Torah.”¹²⁰ Thus, [c]ollectivizing the messiah changed the game for Religious Zionist messianism. It meant that the Jews need not wait for an identifiable individual who would reveal himself as the king-messiah.... That state’s flourishing existence would constitute the messianic age.”¹²¹ Professor Feldman acknowledges, too, that “Christian Restorationism... the precursor of Christian Zionism” held “that Jews must resettle the ancient land of Israel as part of the divine plan that will lead to the Second Coming.”¹²²

This new religious Zionism came to define the general sense of American Jews after the mid-part of the 20th Century.¹²³ How and why did this occur? Professor Feldman opines that during the 1960s, Jews were finally beginning to come to terms with the Holocaust that had occurred in Nazi Germany during the 1930s and 40s. Then came the Six-Day War of 1967 – and this Jewish victory began to change Jews perspectives regarding the state of Israel.¹²⁴ Pride in Israel’s 1967 military victory was followed by a slow realization in the trauma of the Holocaust.¹²⁵ The 1973 Yom Kippur War further fueled Jewish “Holocaust” memorialization.¹²⁶ Moreover, as Professor Feldman explains, “[t]he 1967 war inspired Jewish pride, the 1973 war inspired Jewish fear.”¹²⁷ Wars of the 60s and

¹²⁰ Ibid., P. 183.

¹²¹ Ibid., pp. 193- 194.

¹²² Ibid. p. 143.

¹²³ Ibid., p. 210. (“Religious Zionism hasn’t restricted itself to Israel. It has come to infuse American Jewish Evolutionism.... Religious Zionism as it is presently developing in Israel is increasingly diverging from contemporary American ideals about how all people should be treated and what rights all people deserve.”)

¹²⁴ Ibid., p. 152.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Ibid., pp. 152-155; 167 – 168, stating that the central theme of these museums became “‘Never Again,’ a moral-ethical takeaway from the horrific facts of the destruction of the Jews of Europe... intended to turn the Holocaust into a moral lesson of universal significance.... The Israeli Holocaust memorialization more closely links the Holocaust to the deep history of European antisemitism. It depicts the state of Israel as the historic solution to that problem.”

¹²⁷ Ibid., p. 154.

70s, plus memory of the Holocaust fueled Jewish support – even among the Ultra-Orthodox Jews – for Zionism and the state of Israel.¹²⁸

Today, “Religious Zionism” has become acceptable among all the various aforementioned categories of Jews. The founding fathers of religious Zionism, as Professor Feldman, explains, were:

- Tzvi Hirsch Kalischer (1795 – 1874), a Prussian-born rabbi;¹²⁹
- Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook (1865 – 1935)(the elder Kook);¹³⁰ and,
- Rabbi Tzvi Yehudah Kook (1891 – 1982)(the junior Kook).¹³¹

This new religious Zionism has remained explosive; and, as Professor Feldman tacitly admits, it has become jingoistic and existentially explosive!¹³² “The transformed Religious Zionism that has become so important in Israel today is pervasively messianic. It operates by interpreting contemporary events as evidence of God’s hand in history and forming policy on that basis. As a result, Jewish messianism, in its Evolutionist or Religious Zionist forms, is itself influenced by secular Zionism, and such messianism has come to pervade Zionist ideology and belief. The God whom secular Zionists eschewed has found His way back into Zionism, and He is transforming Israel itself in His image.”¹³³

¹²⁸ Ibid., p. 160. (“At roughly the same time that the Holocaust came to function as one theological pillar of Progressive Jewish thought, Israel came to function as a similarly fundamental pillar.”)

¹²⁹ Ibid., p. 184.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ibid., p. 186.

¹³² Ibid., p. 249. (“[T]he Jewish notion of collective sin that derives from collective pride. In its most unrestrained form, the sin of pride is what allows, enables, and encourages us to forget about the interests and needs of other people, in violation of the biblical command to love the stranger, who is the Other”); Ibid., pp. 248 -249 (The source of this sin of pride can **partly be attributed to secular Zionism**, with its rejection of God and the associated idea of sin.... Jews who read the Bible to prove that God gave them the land of Israel must be held accountable for ignoring the verses of that same Bible that tell them not to boast of their own power.”)

¹³³ Ibid., p. 185.

C. Political Unity Among Jews Around the State of Israel

The “Three Oaths” debate has led most Jews to conclude that some theological ideals must be construed in light of the socioeconomic and political necessities of the Jewish people – meaning, essentially, that the nation state of Israel is biblically justified even despite the literal meaning of the “Three Oaths.”

Nevertheless, the “Traditionalist” Jews – i.e., the Orthodox Jews – do not theologically reconcile either secular Zionism or religious Zionism with their Orthodox Jewish theology.¹³⁴ Nevertheless, as Professor Feldman has admitted, even these “Traditionalist” Jews have not only accepted the State of Israel, but many of them have moved there,¹³⁵ participate in its politics, and hold considerable political power there. This presents an interesting paradox that, in the end, unites even the “Traditionalist” Jews with the so-called “Progressive” Jews when it comes to support for the state of Israel. What is important to note here is that the “Traditionalist” peaceful co-existence with religious Zionism is relatively recent in development.¹³⁶ “[B]eginning in the 1990s,” Traditionalist

¹³⁴ Ibid., p. 223 (“Traditionalist identification with the state of Israel is entirely distinct from Religious Zionism. Its origins lie with the most fascinating, important, and controversial figure in post-World War II Traditionalism: **Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson** (1902 – 1994)....”); Ibid., 225 (“Scheerson did not collectivize the messiah”); Ibid., p. 212 (“[F]or Schneerson, the state of Israel was an unmentioned – almost unmentionable – occasion for the gathering of Jews in the land of Israel in readiness for a miraculous messianic intervention.”); Ibid., p. 226 (“Scheerson did not articulate a grant theory of Israel because he did not want to”); Ibid., p. 214 (“Consequently, Traditionalists in Israel have shifted their beliefs about their relation to Israel without developing an explicitly stated theory for why their deepening participation in the life and politics of the Zionist state is religiously permissible, much less desirable.”)

¹³⁵ Ibid., p. 226 (“Yet the Traditionalist live in the most state of Israel and they participate in its government. They are 12.6 percent of the population.”)

¹³⁶ Ibid., p. 217 (“Traditionalists do not embrace the Religious Zionist project of treating the state as a stage in the process of messianic redemption. Traditionalists do not say that the Jewish people must be a nation in the full modern sense or that Israel is a legitimate manifestation of a justified nationalist project. It is not that they have consciously replaced their historical anti-Zionism with a new ideology of non-Zionist identification with Israel. Rather, their attitude toward the state of Israel is mostly unstated and implicit. Within their community, no one much seems to mind.”)

Jews began to form closer ties with Israel.¹³⁷ Today, Traditionalist American Jews are pro-Israel and tend to vote Republican.¹³⁸

What this means is that the present-day Jewish support for Israel is not all based upon Jewish orthodoxy – it is partly secular; partly “evolutionist” invention; and partly political or pragmatic.¹³⁹ By no means do the Ultra-Orthodox, Modern Orthodox, or Chassidic Jews consider the present-day nation-state of Israel to be the *same prophetic return of the Messiah* who is mentioned in the Old Testament. Nevertheless, Professor Feldman masterfully brings all of these competing viewpoints – the pros and the cons – together. He does so in his chapter 5 of part II of *To Be A Jew Today*, which he entitled, “Israel as Struggle and the Question of Sin.”

D. The Present State of Israel Still Needs Hebrew Prophets

Significantly, Professor Feldman rightfully argues that even if present-day Jews have the right to return to land of their forefathers and to reclaim this land as their own, that they still have *no right whatsoever* to do so in a manner that violates the original covenant with God who authorized them to do so in the first instance – i.e., the present state of Israel still has a fundamental obligation to be “a light unto the world.” Professor Feldman’s *To Be A Jew Today* questions whether present-day Israelis and Jews are mindful of this great moral obligation.

For this reason, Professor Feldman admits that there is a problem regarding “the Jewish notion of collective sin that derives from collective pride. In its most unrestrained form, *the sin of pride* is what allows, enables, and encourages us to forget about the interests and needs of other people, in violation of the biblical command to love the stranger, who is the Other.”¹⁴⁰ “What I am noticing,” he adds, “is that in many of the contemporary **Jewish theological assertions of self-questioning in search of sin has taken a back seat to self-confident assertions of correctness.** I am urging Jews to be more Jewish in their

¹³⁷ Ibid., p. 215.

¹³⁸ Ibid., p. 216.

¹³⁹ See, e.g., “The Three Oaths,” *Wikipedia*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Three_Oaths#cite_note-jpost-3

¹⁴⁰ Feldman, *To Be A Jew Today*, *supra*, p. 249.

thinking about Israel: to explore the dynamic of sin, of pride, and of punishment, no matter where it originates and with whom. To repeat, there is nothing un-Jewish about looking for collective sin and trying to do better.”¹⁴¹ To remedy this, Professor Feldman acknowledges that the Torah (i.e., Deuteronomy) ought to be read in such a manner that even present-day secular Jews and Zionists are held accountable, stating, “[c]onsider that from Deuteronomy onward, Israelites and later Jews were told that entering and settling the land of Israel carried with it the ever-present threat of sinning against God by breaking the covenant.... The source of this **sin of pride** can partly be attributed to secular Zionism, with its rejection of God and the associated idea of sin.... **Jews who read the Bible to prove that God gave them the land of Israel must be held accountable for ignoring the verses of that same Bible that tell them not to boast of their own power.**”¹⁴²

In a word, the modern nation state of Israel still needs Hebrew prophets. As Professor Feldman notes, “[a] Jeremiah who spoke only to his own soul and did not preach the sins of Jerusalem to the people of Jerusalem would be no prophet.”¹⁴³ In making this observation, Professor Feldman reaches the same theological analysis that is predominant in that of many Christian theologians and pastors. Here, Professor Feldman acknowledges Reinhold Niebuhr (1892 – 1971) and his “effort to deploy the Christian idea of sin to address American collective action, still relevant to U. S. foreign policy, holds a powerful lesson for Jewish theology today.”¹⁴⁴ This is a nice, diplomatic way of admonishing the state of Israel, the Israelis, and Jews all over the world, to engage in self-examination, and to acknowledge that same God of Israel whose covenantal Promise is to reward or to punish on the basis of the quality or content of our hearts and deeds.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., p. 251.

¹⁴² Ibid., pp. 248 – 249.

¹⁴³ Ibid., p. 252.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 249.

V.

Conclusion

“What’s the point of being a Jew?” is the question which Professor Feldman asks at the very beginning of his book, *To Be A Jew Today*.¹⁴⁵ He points us to the patriarch Jacob, who falls asleep and wrestles with an angel all night, and prevails, and thereby he is re-named “Israel,” which means to wrestle with God. And so for Professor Feldman, to be a Jew today – as indeed the very nature of Jewishness – is to question, to contend with, to wrestle with God. While I agree with Professor Feldman on this answer, I would go a step further and state that the whole point of this wrestling with God is to pursue and to establish justice and judgment, and “to repair the world.”

Ostensibly, the answer to the question, “what’s the point of being a Jew?” is a theological one, because the Jews – as Abraham’s seed – were predicted to bless all the nations of the earth by doing justice and judgment,¹⁴⁶ and because Yeshua, who was himself a Jew, has persuaded billions of his followers that He is the promised Messiah through whom the throne of King David would be established forever. Some Jews have answered this question in a similar, quasi-religious fashion, as follows: the Jews are to be “a light unto the nations.” Constitutionally and legally, the Jews are the keepers of the Torah and, thereby, the law teachers of all the nations upon the earth. Indeed, no matter what the Jew does, or what the Jew does not do, he is a living, breathing museum of ancient Hebrew history – a living testament that God seeks relationships with mortal human beings and that he establishes covenants with them.

¹⁴⁵ As an American and Christian lawyer trained in the doctrine of the “Separation of Church and State,” I can attest to the value of the Jewish perspective of the Torah which leads Jewish lawyers to actually clarify what that doctrine really means. See, e.g., Auerbach, *Rabbis and Lawyers*, supra, pp. 11-12 (“The First Amendment ... did not repudiate the principle of a Christian state; rather, it provided an alternative means toward securing it.”) See, also, Dershowitz, *Abraham: The World’s First (But Certainly Not Last) Jewish Lawyer*, supra, p. 122 – 135 (“... an American legal profession with far fewer Jewish lawyers will be a less creative and compassionate profession.”)

¹⁴⁶ Genesis 18: 18-19 (Abraham’s household would establish justice and judgment, and thereby all the nations of the world would be blessed) ; Exodus 18 (Moses establishes a system of federated judges) ; Deuteronomy 16: 18-20 (Moses’ system of judged reaffirmed; the Jews were thus commanded: “Justice, justice shall you pursue.”)

Indeed, the Torah and Jew Law, which is comprehensive legal system which pervades every aspect of life, runs counter to the modern doctrine of the “separation of church and state,” and so to be Jewish is to remind modern humanity that the “secular” is also a part of the “sacred,” and that all of life remains subject to divine Providence – a sentiment that is echoed in the American Declaration of Independence!

To Be A Jew Today, however, reminds me that the sheer complexity of present-day Judaism requires the coming of a Messiah to unravel and resolve. This points us to the Jewish Messiah – a lineal descendant of King David, as “a light unto the nations.”¹⁴⁷ During the meanwhile, both Jews and Christians must work together, both individually and communally, to ensure that justice is done. “The idea of the Jews as a light unto the nations” writes Professor Feldman, “was especially fitting for Jewish Progressives because it called for Jews to be model messengers of the divine project of achieving social justice. If Jews fell short in that mission, they could justifiably be chided for failing to live up to their divinely assigned task. If they performed well, their mission would enhance the lives of all humans.”¹⁴⁸

Indeed, the Jewish people are certainly the physical, genealogical heirs to a great tradition of “repairing the world” and of being a “light unto the nations,” beginning with King David.¹⁴⁹ The Jews – the physical, earth Jewish people – are living, breathing testament of God’s love for all of humanity; and they exist not simply for themselves but to serve as preachers and teachers of God’s moral laws to the world – i.e., the Jews exist, as God’s chosen people, to be a light unto the world. There is no question that the messianism within Judaism, together with the mission of Jews to be a “light unto the nations,” appears to have been expropriated by the Christians.¹⁵⁰ That even when Yeshua, in his verbal confrontations with the Jewish scribes and Pharisees of his day, sought to provide a deeper meaning of the Torah!¹⁵¹ Hence, “[a] tradition that is based

¹⁴⁷ Felman, *To Be A Jew Today*, supra, p. 296. (citing “Isaiah 42:6, 49:6; and cf. Isaiah 60:3”)

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 297.

¹⁴⁹ I Chronicles 16: 1 – 36.

¹⁵⁰ See, e.g., John 1: 1-51.

¹⁵¹ See, e.g., Matthew 5-7 (Sermon on the Mount).

fundamentally on interpretation and disagreement, as the Jewish tradition is,” writes Professor Feldman, “lends itself to a degree of pluralism, because **everyone who engages it knows that multiple perspectives** are and can be valid interpretations of God’s word and will.”¹⁵² What I am saying is that, by even this definition of Jewishness in *To Be A Jew Today*, “to be a Christian” is also what it means “to be a Jew.”

Indeed, although Professor Feldman does not admit this (whereas Auerbach’s *Rabbis and Lawyers* certainly does),¹⁵³ many Jews – such as the Reformed Jews – have become attracted to a prophetic Judaism that is both centered on social justice and is even Christocentric in nature.¹⁵⁴ This convergence of Judaism and Christianity – especially in North America – cannot be denied! Hence, I believe that the existential condition of “being a Jew today” includes *confronting* the spiritual and prophetic *convergence* of Judaism and Christianity!¹⁵⁵

¹⁵² Feldman, *To Be A Jew Today*, supra, p. 46.

¹⁵³ Auerbach, *Rabbis and Lawyers*, supra, p. 82 (Jewish Emancipation and the “Christianization of Judaism”).

¹⁵⁴ Feldman, *To Be A Jew Today*, supra, p. 59 (Interestingly, Professor Feldman writes: “Progressivism grew up in tandem with modern beliefs in voluntary choice and equality.... What’s more, Reform Judaism first arose partly to provide an option for Jews who had rejected the authoritarian God of Traditionalism and did not want to embrace liberal Protestantism.” Here, he cites W. Gunther Plaut, *The Rise of Reform Judaism* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1963), pp. 10-11.

¹⁵⁵ Are we living in the proverbial “Last Days?” According to Augustine of Hippo’s interpretation of the book of Hosea, in the Last Days, the Jews shall believe.

But that **those carnal Israelites** who are now unwilling to believe in Christ **shall afterward believe**, that is, their children shall (for they themselves, of course, shall go to their own place by dying), this same prophet testifies, saying, ‘For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, without a prince, without a sacrifice, without an altar, without a priesthood, without manifestations.’ Who does not see that the Jews are now thus? But let us hear what he adds: ‘And afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king, and shall be amazed at the Lord and at His goodness in the latter days.’ Nothing is clearer than this prophecy, in which by David, as distinguished by the title of king, **Christ is to be understood, ‘who is made,’ as the apostle says, ‘of the seed of David according to the flesh.’** ...

The prophet Hosea speaks so very profoundly that it is laborious work to penetrate his meaning. But, according to promise, we must insert something from his book. He says, ‘And it shall come to pass that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there they shall be called the sons of the living God.’

Also, Professor Feldman has rightly called for “the deeper meaning of meta-halakhah.”¹⁵⁶ From a jurisprudence perspective, that deeper meaning appears to imply “justice” and “equity” as being the ultimate purpose of Jewish laws and traditions. Perhaps this explains why Reform Judaism is similar in content and tone to the Christian religion. The “deeper meaning,” which Professor Feldman admits, appears to be Yeshua or Jesus Christ (i.e., the Word). The Christian theology of *Logos*¹⁵⁷ and of the Golden Rule¹⁵⁸ are implicated in Professor Feldman’s Jewish assessment of “deeper meaning of meta-halakhah.”

Even the apostles understood this as a prophetic testimony of the calling of nations who did not formerly belong to God; and because **this same people of the Gentiles is itself spiritually among the children of Abraham**, and for that reason is rightly called Israel, therefore he goes on to say, ‘And the children of Judah and the children of Israel shall be gathered together in one, and shall appoint themselves one headship, and shall ascend from the earth.’

We should but weaken the savour of this prophetic oracle if we set ourselves to expound it. Let the reader but call to mind the corner stone and those two walls of partition, the one of the Jews, the other of the Gentiles, and **he will recognize them**, the one under the term **sons of Judah**, the other as **sons of Israel**, supporting themselves by one and the same headship, and ascending from the earth

St. Augustine, *The City of God* (New York, N.Y.: The Modern Library, 1950), p. 634.

¹⁵⁶ Feldman, *To Be A Jew Today*, supra, pp. 41-44 (“Meta-halakhah asks: For what deeper purpose must we follow the law?”).

¹⁵⁷ Indeed, Christ is the Logos (i.e., “reason”) of God. See, e.g., Bertrand Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy* (New York, NY: Touchstone, 2007), p. 309 (“For Christians, the Messiah was the historical Jesus, who was also identified with the Logos of Greek philosophy....”); and p. 289 (“It was this intellectual element in Plato’s religion that led Christians – notably the author of Saint John’s Gospel – to identify Christ with the Logos. Logos should be translated ‘reason’ in this connection.”). See, also, William Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England* (1753), supra, p. 27 (“This law of nature, being coeval with mankind, and dictated by God himself, is of course superior in obligation to any other. It is binding over all the globe in all countries, and at all times: no human laws are of any validity, if contrary to this; and such of them as are valid derive all their force and all their authority, mediately or immediately, from this original.”)

¹⁵⁸ Leviticus 19:17-18 (“Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart... but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself: I am the LORD.”); Matthew 7: 12 (“Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.”); Matthew 22:37-40 (“Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”); James 2:8 (“If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well”); Romans 10:17-18 (Here, the universal moral law means the two-fold duty to honor or obey God and love neighbor); See, also, Robert F. Cochran and Zachary R. Calo, *Agape, Justice and Law: How might Christian Love Shape Law?* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2017). See, also, *The English Philosophers from Bacon to Mill* (New York, N.Y.: The Modern Library, 1994), [page number omitted]

In addition, much of Jewish and Christian eschatology revolves around end times events. And this is yet another reason to pay close attention to the Jews! But it would be my prayer that the Jews would also pay close attention to Christian eschatology, and to also recognize Christians as “spiritual Israelites.” When Judaism views Christians from this perspective – which I think is the correct and proper Jewish perspective – then the Jew will truly attain their realization as Abraham’s heir whose seed will bless all the nations upon the earth.¹⁵⁹

Indeed, the Jewish influence has created far more “spiritual Jews” than there are ethnic Jews. As the keepers and interpreters of this Torah [in the original Hebrew language], the Jewish people have been ordained by an Almighty God to do justice and judgement upon the earth; to teach the moral law of God; and to be a light unto the nations. To that end, Professor Feldman’s *To Be A Jew Today* attempts to remind his fellow Jews of the central theme in the Book of Deuteronomy; namely, that if the Jews possessed the land of Israel and subsequently failed to do justice and judgment – even to strangers or outsiders such as the Palestinian Arabs or the Beta Israel who exist within their presence – then God Almighty would spew them out from their Promised Land. Whether secular or Orthodox, Professor Feldman reminds present-day Jews and Israelis of their sacred covenant with Almighty God to do justice and judgment upon the earth.

— The End —

quoting John Stuart Mill’s essay on Utilitarianism, as stating: “[i]n the golden rule of Jesus of Nazareth, we read the complete spirit of the ethics of utility. To do as you would be done by and to love your neighbor as yourself, constitute the ideal perfection of utilitarian morality.”)

¹⁵⁹ See Footnote # 136.

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"THOUGHTS UPON ZIONISM AND THE JEWS"

APPENDIX 1

A Letter to the Reverend Jason Bradfield
Of the Christ Presbyterian Church
Regard The Jews (December 17, 2023)



December 17, 2023

Rev. Jason Bradfield
Christ Presbyterian Church
1820 State Road 520
Lakeland, Florida 33813

My Dear Brother Jason Bradfield:

I have re-reviewed Dr. Kenneth Talbot's book *Confirming Our Faith* since my last letter, and I felt the need to send you this *addendum* on my earlier comments about the Jewish religion.

Faith of Abraham

As you know, the patriarch Abraham-- who had no Mosaic law or orthodox Jewish religion-- exercised a type of *civil or natural justice*, when he took up arms against the ravishing kings of Shinar, Ellasar, Elam, and nations, who had taken Abraham's nephew Lot into captivity. (Genesis 14: 14-17).

After Abraham had armed his trained servants and successfully slaughtered these criminals and rescued his nephew Lot, he was visited by a mysterious king of Salem named Melchizek, who brought forth and administered the *bread* and *wine* to Abraham, blessed Abraham, and then received Abraham's tithe. (Genesis 14: 18-20).

Who was this king of Salem who is part and parcel of the Old Testament? Was he a type of Christ or Christ himself? See, e.g, Hebrews 7: 1-7, stating:

For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him;

2 To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace;

3 Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest

continually.

4 Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils.

5 And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham:

6 But he whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises.

7 And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better.

It would thus seem to me that in the faith of Abraham was the true religion-- the Christian religion-- established.

The Apostle Paul says, “[e]ven as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.... So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.... For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise.” (Galatians 3:6 -9, 18).

Judaism

Obviously, Judaism was instituted in order to lead an oppressed people who had been recently enslaved back to the original faith of their father Abraham.

When the descendants of Abraham’s grandson Jacob (i.e., Israel) fell into Egyptian slavery, they had attained a slavish mentality and a heathenish mode of living under Egyptian domination.

Moses’ expressions frequently alluded to this awful fact.

Therefore, what the formerly-enslaved Children of Israel needed was a formalized system of religion-- liturgical practices-- to bring them out from darkness into to the light of Christ.

Hence, the ceremonial, judicial, and moral laws of Moses were instituted, “four hundred and thirty years after” the covenant promise was given to Abraham. (Galatians 3 :17)

This is why the Apostle Paul wrote: “Wherefore the law [i.e., “Judaism”] was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.” (Galatians3: 24-25).

But was this ancient Israelite or Jewish “schoolmaster” teaching doctrines fundamentally distinct and different from that of the future Christian faith?

In Talbot's *Confirming Our Faith*, the following is observed:

Old Testament Sacraments

The Divines have little to say about the Old Testament sacraments. In [Westminster Confession of Faith] 28:5, they simply wrote:

The sacraments of the Old Testament, in regard of spiritual things thereby signified and exhibited; were, for substance, the same with those of the New....

What the Divines mean by this statement is that since there are only two sacraments ordained by God in the New Testament, only those sacraments common to the same purpose and application in the Old Testament are considered important for a contextual understanding of the New Testament sacraments. Keep in mind that the substance of the covenant of grace in the Old and New Testaments is the same; they point to salvation in and through Jesus Christ alone.

However, under the old and new administrations, the outward signs or symbols differed, even though they both spoke of the same 'thing signified,' Christ as our salvation. The former have been replaced by the latter. The two Old Testament sacraments that correspond to the New Testament [i.e., baptism and the Lord's Supper] are circumcision and the Passover.¹

But even in the religion of Judaism, Moses and the Prophets all emphasized the importance of *inner holiness*, *inner righteousness*, and a *circumcision of the heart* that corresponds directly to the "faith" of Abraham. (Deuteronomy 30: 6 "And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.")

Judaism and Christianity

The Christian religion, therefore, is the same faith of Abraham (Hebrews 7: 1 - 28), which Judaism was instituted, as a sort of schoolmaster, to train the Israelites in through the Law of Moses (Galatians 3:24).

Even the devout and orthodox Jews, who keep the Law of Moses to carry out the faith of Abraham, *unwittingly* worship the Christ -- although most Jews wittingly reject Jesus of Nazareth as their Christ!

Under this condition, I think, more and more Jews shall come into the light and the true knowledge of Jesus Christ, as prophesied.

In the meanwhile, I believe that Augustine of Hippo's theological interpretation of this set of circumstances is correct.

¹ Dr. Kenneth Gary Talbot, *Confirming Our Faith: A Reformed Covenantal Theology of the Sacraments* (Lakeland, Fla.: Whitefield Media Publishing, 2009), pp. 53-54.

The Jewish religion is not invalidated, according to Augustine, but rather there are “two walls of partition” between Jew (sons of Judah) and Gentile (sons of Israel). To that point, while commenting on the prophecy of Hosea, Augustine writes:

The prophet Hosea speaks so very profoundly that it is laborious work to penetrate his meaning. But, according to promise, we must insert something from his book. He says, ‘And it shall come to pass that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there they shall be called the sons of the living God.’

Even the apostles understood this as a prophetic testimony of the calling of nations who did not formerly belong to God; and because this same people of the Gentiles is itself spiritually among the children of Abraham, and for that reason is rightly called Israel, therefore he goes on to say, ‘And the children of Judah and the children of Israel shall be gathered together in one, and shall appoint themselves one headship, and shall ascend from the earth.’

We should but weaken the savour of this prophetic oracle if we set ourselves to expound it. Let the reader but call to mind **the corner stone and those two walls of partition**, the **one of the Jews**, the **other of the Gentiles**, and he will recognize them, the one under the term **sons of Judah**, the other as **sons of Israel**, supporting themselves by **one and the same headship**, and ascending from the earth.²

According to Augustine of Hippo, Judaism (or the sons of Judah) are like the proverbial older brother Essau; whereas Christianity (or the sons of Israel) are like the younger brother Jacob!

The elder shall serve the younger!

The fundamental question, then, is **whether Judaism and Christianity are two sides of the same coin**— in terms of theology and redemption— and the radical answer is that this appears to be the case, at least as both the Apostle Paul’s Epistles and Augustine of Hippo’s *The City of God* have described the existential state of Judaism.

Yours Faithfully,

Rev. Roderick Andrew Lee Ford

² St. Augustine, *The City of God* (New York, N.Y.: The Modern Library, 1950), p. 634.



"THOUGHTS UPON ZIONISM AND THE JEWS"

APPENDIX 2

A Commendation Letter to Deborah A. Ford
Of Jacksonville, Florida for Her Research into DNA links
Between Ancient Africans and African American Families
(February 27, 2025)



MEMORANDUM

TO: Ms. Deborah A. Ford
Of Jacksonville, Florida¹

CC: St. Clements University
Africa University
The Lemba Cultural Association
The Mackey & Ford Families (Suwannee, Florida)

DATE: 27 February 2025

RE: Citation for Excellence in Pan-African and DNA Research
On an African American Family from the United States and
On the Black Hebrew Israelites also known as the Lemba People

_____/

COMMENDATION LETTER FOR YOUR DNA RESEARCH ON THE LEMBA

Dear Madam Prophetess Deborah:

The hand of God has truly spoken through your research into the DNA-genetic origins of various members of an African American family from the United States, ultimately revealing that they share lineal DNA links to a

¹ Ms. Deborah A. Ford holds the bachelor of science degree from Edward Waters College and master of science degree in accounting from the University of Pheonix. She is also the sister of the author.

population of Black Hebrew Israelites known as the Lemba peoples of southern Africa.

I know that you have been trying to disclose this wonderful news to me for several years; but, like doubting Thomas, I did not wish to accept it, at least not until I could review your research together with its scientific evidence.²

During the meanwhile, the Spirit of the Lord moved me to conduct my own independent research that was separate and apart from yours. During this time, I learned about a special group of Black Africans living in Zimbabwe and South Africa, who had long ago claimed to be the lineal descendants from the ancient Israelites. (They are known as the Lemba people, but they also refer to themselves by different names). From this research, I was able to locate voluminous material, including the following:

1. **Jewish Virtual Library**

“Lemba” <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/lemba>

2. **Jewish Virtual Library**

“Zimbabwe’s ‘Black Jews’: The Lemba People”

<https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/zimbabwe-s-quot-black-jews-quot-the-lemba-people>

In other words, I had learned about the Lemba people long before we finally met, in person, on Christmas Day, December 25, 2023, at which time you revealed to me the scientific evidence of your “maternal mitochondrial DNA” research, to wit:

“Your Closest Genetic Modern Population”

- “1. Lemba (5.594)
2. Bantu (7.267)
3. Mandenka (9.552)
4. Bantu.S.W. (9.941)
5. Bantu.S.E. (10.58)
6. Sub-Saharan (11.78)
7. Yoruba (11.78)

² My focus then was upon the Y-Chromosome, which is passed down only from father to son, which naturally would exclude your DNA evidence from my area of focus. I was not aware of the “maternal mitochondrial DNA” testing allowing for location of genetic matches going back thousands of years! . [See, e.g., *The Library of Congress Research Guide* (online), stating, “Autosomal DNA captures roughly five to seven generations of the family tree, **whereas Mitochondrial DNA extends back to ancient origins.**”].

This revelation is the kind of knowledge that all African American families need in order to begin the process of *spiritual and psychological healing* from the long nightmare of *self-hatred* and *inferiority complexes* which the transatlantic slave trade set in motion more than 400 years ago.

In addition, this sort of information is inherently extremely liberating because, should the African continent ever begin the process of welcoming back its lost tribes in the Americas, we will no longer need to guess about the origins of our African roots, while always having to assume falsely that we only come from certain slave-trading outposts along the coasts of West Africa.

The truth of the matter is, rather, that our African lineage goes much further and is much deeper, reaching down into South Africa, and stretching up from there to the horn of Africa and the lower Nile Valley in Egypt. All of this you reported to me over the course of a few years, as you were conducting your original research; and all of this, in due time, I have eventually confirmed in the writings of great African and African American scholars, such as W.E.B. Du Bois, who wrote the following in *Black Reconstruction*:

In origin, the slaves represented everything African, although most of them originated on or near the West Coast. Yet among them appeared **the great Bantu tribes from Sierra Leone to South Africa**; the Sudanese, straight across the center of the continent, from the Atlantic to **the Valley of the Nile**; the Nilotic Negroes and the black and brown Hamites, allied with **Egypt**; the tribes of the great lakes; the Pygmies and the Hottentots; and in addition to these, distinct traces of both Berber and Arab blood. There is no doubt of the presence of all these various elements in the mass of 10,000,000 or more Negroes transported from Africa to the various Americas, from the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries.³

And in *The World and Africa*, Dr. Du Bois also wrote: "...the Bantus are not 'genuine' Negroes... [when based upon the standard of] so-called 'woolly' hair,

³ W.E.B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America* (New York, N.Y.: Harcourt, Brace, and Co., 1935), pp. 3-4.

thick lips, and nose....”⁴ “[T]he Bantu, who are a congeries of peoples, belonging predominantly to Central and South Africa and occupying the southern two-thirds of black Africa... are defined on purely linguistic criteria. The term ‘Bantu’ primarily implies that the tribes included speak languages characterized by a division of nouns into classes....”⁵

Within the Bantu family of African tribal clans are two groups with similar names: the “Limbas” and the “Lemba.” The Bantu-Limbas appear to have some ties to the Nile Valley. As W.E.B. Du Bois has written, when the Islamic-Arabs invaded the Egyptian Nile Valley during the 16th century, the said invasion resulted in “[a] vast migration of black people, **the Limbas**, [who] moved slowly westward from Central Africa. They were a part of the migration of the Bantu moving down from the Mohammedan invasion of the Nile Valley and the empire-building of the black kingdoms of the Sudan.... Migration and native wars lasted for a generation. This meant that the cheap labor of captives became available on the West Coast and opened the way for the beginning of the American slave trade.”⁶ This “Limbas” connection to the Nile Valley could explain why some African Americans with Bantu-Limba DNA, whose ancestors were taken from the Sierra Leone region of the western coast of Africa, may have links to ancient Egypt and the Sudan. Hence, this might explain how some of your research resulted in our ancestral links in the northeastern part of Africa.

On the other hand, the “Bantu-Lemba” is a separate and distinct group who claim links to the ancient Hebrews. As the Bible informs us, these ancient Hebrews were the slaves to the Egyptians who left there under the leadership of Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, and whose lineal descendants have been disbursed throughout the world, as described in the Bible.

According to the Lemba oral tradition, a dozen or more Levitical priests left Israel following the Babylonian captivity, moved down into northern Africa, and married Ethiopian wives. When these Levitical priests tried to relocate to Jerusalem following the Edict of Cyrus the Great in 539 BC, which allowed the

⁴ W.E.B. Du Bois, *The World and Africa* (New York, N.Y.: International Pub., 2015), p. 90-91.

⁵ Ibid., pp. 95-97.

⁶ Ibid., p. 48.

captive Jews to return to their homeland from Babylon, these same Levitical priests were rejected because of their black wives. They then migrated down into the Arabian Peninsula, into Yemen, then into Ethiopia, and then into what is now present-day Tanzania and Zimbabwe; and they founded several settlements along the way. They kept their ancient Hebrew/Jewish heritage intact! They claim blood lineage to present-day Ethiopians, particularly with the Beta Israel (i.e., Ethiopian Jews). Today, the Lemba people are *non-rabbinical* Jews and (or) Jewish-Christians (e.g., Messianic Christians or Jews who accept Christ). They are not particularly interested in converting to orthodox European-centered Judaism – although some of them have done so.

Obviously, the Bantu-speaking peoples are all God's children, no matter if they be "Limba" or "Lemba," and no matter their genetic connections to the ancient Hebrews or not! Nevertheless, this DNA evidence of our connection to the Lemba people, which you have uncovered, comes *as further divine revelation* – whereby I have called you a "prophetess" in my greeting – regarding the wickedness of the transatlantic slave trade! When in America we hear the words of white racial superiority and that slavery was necessary to bring the African heathen to Christ, your DNA evidence comes as a revolting refutation of such wicked untruths!

Wherefore, I have dedicated to you my paper titled, "*THOUGHTS UPON ZIONISM AND THE JEWS: A Review of Harvard Law School Professor Noah Feldman's To Be A Jew Today: A New Guide to God, Israel, and the Jewish People*," and I have presented this commendation letter to several of my dear friends and important colleagues on the continent of Africa.

Love Always Your Brother,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'RAF', is written over the printed name.

Roderick Andrew Lee Ford, LLD., Esq.

Copy Furnished:

St. Clements University E-Library

