**Introduction**

I wish to make clear that the purpose of these selections from Martin Luther aims at providing a historical and scholarly source for study of anti-Semitism, religious thought, and how it has influenced the German population and their outlook on Jews.

There will always exist a potential for misuse of any information. However, it has come from observation that hiding such information from view can lead (and has led) to unconscious support of underground movements of anti-Semitism that use these texts for their various nefarious purposes. Bringing this information to light will allow critical analyses by not only scholars, but also by everyday people to help dispel the myths founded by unsupported beliefs and to help fight the tools used by anti-Semitic cults.

**A little about Dr. Martin Luther (1483-1546)**

Luther, a German theologian and religious reformer, initiated the Protestant Reformation and forever split Christianity from Catholicism. His influence extends beyond religion to politics, economics, education and language. In 1505, after receiving a bachelor's and master's degree, he suddenly abandoned his studies, entered the Augustinian monastery in Erfurt and became a monk. He became a controversial figure when he published his Ninety-Five Theses, opposing the indulgences (release from the penalties for sin through the payment of money by the Catholic Church). This resulted in his split from the Roman Catholic Church where he established unique Christian interpretations about the Bible and theology. His influence resulted in the major Protestant denomination of Lutheranism where their churches today use Luther's name.

Protestant Christians so admire Martin Luther that he stands as a respected "Patron Saint" to their beliefs and morals. Christians often quote him, theologians write books on him, and many name their children after him (Martin Luther King Jr., for example).

**Luther's anti-Jewishness**

Unfortunately few popular books on Luther go into detail about Luther's anti-Jewishness, or even mention that he had a hatred for Jews at all. This has resulted in a biased outlook towards Martin Luther and Christianity. This unawareness of Luther's sinister side, while honoring his "righteousness" leads to a ratcheting promotion of Luther which supports a "good" public image while also transporting his Jewish beliefs to those who carry the seeds of anti-Semitism. This will present an unwanted dilemma for many Christians because Luther represents the birth of Protestant Christianity as well as the genesis of the special brand of Jewish hatred that flourished only in Germany.

Although Luther did not invent anti-Jewishness, he promoted it to a level never before seen in Europe. Luther bore the influence of his upbringing and from anti-Jewish theologians such as Lyra, Burgensis, (and John Chrysostom, before them). But Luther's 1543 book, "On the Jews and their lies" took Jewish hatred to a new level when he proposed to set fire to their synagogues and schools, to take away their homes, forbad them to pray or teach, or even to utter God's name. Luther wanted to "be rid of them" and requested that the government and ministers deal with the problem. He requested pastors and preachers to follow his example of issuing warnings against the Jews. He goes so far as to claim that "We are at fault in not slaying them" for avenging the death of Jesus Christ. Hitler's Nazi government in the 1930s and 40s fit Luther's desires to a tee.

So vehemently did Luther speak against the Jews, and the fact that Luther represented an honorable and admired Christian to Protestants, that his written words carried the "memetic" seeds of anti-Jewishness up until the 20th century and into the Third Reich. Luther's Jewish eliminationist rhetoric virtually matches the beliefs held by [Hitler](http://nobeliefs.com/hitler.htm) and much of the German populace in the 1930s.

Luther unconsciously set the stage for the future of German nationalistic fanaticism. William L. Shirer in his "[The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich](http://www.amazon.com/dp/0449219771?tag=freethinkers&link_code=as3&creativeASIN=0449219771&creative=373489&camp=211189)," puts it succinctly:

"Through his sermons and his magnificent translations of the Bible, Luther created the modern German language, aroused in the people not only a new Protestant vision of Christianity by a fervent German nationalism and taught them, at least in religion, the supremacy of the individual conscience. But tragically for them, Luther's siding with the princes in the peasant rising, which he had largely inspired, and his passion for political autocracy ensured a mindless and provincial political absolutism which reduced the vast majority of the German people to poverty, to a horrible torpor and a demeaning subservience. Even worse perhaps, it helped to perpetuate and indeed to sharpen the hopeless divisions not only between classes but also between the various dynastic and political groupings of the German people. It doomed for centuries the possibility of the unification of Germany."

In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler listed Martin Luther as one of the greatest reformers. And similar to Luther in the 1500s, Hitler spoke against the Jews. The Nazi plan to create a German Reich Church laid its bases on the "Spirit of Dr. Martin Luther." The first physical violence against the Jews came on November 9-10 on *Kristallnacht* (Crystal Night) where the Nazis killed Jews, shattered glass windows, and destroyed hundreds of synagogues, just as Luther had proposed. In Daniel Johah Goldhagen's book, [*Hitler's Willing Executioners*](http://www.amazon.com/dp/0679772685?tag=freethinkers&link_code=as3&creativeASIN=0679772685&creative=373489&camp=211189), he writes:

"One leading Protestant churchman, Bishop Martin Sasse published a compendium of Martin Luther's antisemitic vitriol shortly after *Kristallnacht's* orgy of anti-Jewish violence. In the foreword to the volume, he applauded the burning of the synagogues and the coincidence of the day: 'On November 10, 1938, on Luther's birthday, the synagogues are burning in Germany.' The German people, he urged, ought to heed these words 'of the greatest antisemite of his time, the warner of his people against the Jews.'"

No apologist can claim that Martin Luther bore his anti-Jewishness out of youthful naivete', uneducation, or out of unfounded Christianity. On the contrary, Luther in his youth expressed a great optimism about Jewish conversion to Christianity. But in his later years, Luther began to realize that the Jews would not convert to his wishes. His anti-Jewishness grew slowly over time. His logic came not from science or reason, but rather from Scripture and his Faith. His "On the Jews and Their Lies" shows remarkable study into the Bible and fanatical biblical reasoning. Luther, at age 60 wrote this dangerous "little" book at the prime of his maturity, and in full knowledge in support of his beliefs and Christianity.

Few people today realize that Luther wrote 'On the Jews and Their Lies.' (He also wrote such works like "Against the Sabbatarians.") Freethinkers should become aware of the anti-Semitic influence that Luther has brought on the world. His vehement attack on Jews and his powerful influence on the believers of the Germans has brought a new hypothesis to mind: that the Jewish holocaust, and indeed, the eliminationist form of anti-Semitism in Nazi Germany *may not* have occurred without the influence from Luther's book "On the Jews and Their Lies."

Walter Buch, the head of the Nazi Party court, admitted Luther's influence on Nazi Germany:

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|  | When Luther turned his attention to the Jews, after he completed his translation of the Bible, he left behind "on the Jews and their Lies" for posterity.  **-**cited from Richard Steigmann-Gall's [*The Holy Reich*](http://www.amazon.com/dp/0521823714?tag=freethinkers&link_code=as3&creativeASIN=0521823714&creative=373489&camp=211189)]  Many people confess their amazement that Hitler preaches ideas which they have always held.... From the Middle Ages we can look to the same example in Martin Luther. What stirred in the soul and spirit of the German people of that time, finally found expression in his person, in his words and deeds.  **-**"Geist und Kampf" (speech), Bundesarchiv Berlin-Zehlendorf, [cited from Richard Steigmann-Gall's [*The Holy Reich*](http://www.amazon.com/dp/0521823714?tag=freethinkers&link_code=as3&creativeASIN=0521823714&creative=373489&camp=211189)] |

Hans Hinkel, a Nazi who worked in Goebbels' Reich Chamber of Culture said:

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|  | Only we can enter into Luther's spirit.... Human cults do not set us free from all sin, but faith alone. With us the church shall become a serving member of the state.... There is a deep sense that our celebration is not attended by superficiality, but rather by thanks to a man who saved German cultural values.  *-Konigsberg-Hartungsche Zeitung*, 20 Nov. 1933, [cited from Richard Steigmann-Gall's [*The Holy Reich*](http://www.amazon.com/dp/0521823714?tag=freethinkers&link_code=as3&creativeASIN=0521823714&creative=373489&camp=211189)] |

Bernhard Rust served as Minister of Education in Nazi Germany. He wrote:

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|  | Since Martin Luther closed his eyes, no such son of our people has appeared again. It has been decided that we shall be the first to witness his reappearance.... I think the time is past when one may not say the names of Hitler and Luther in the same breath. They belong together; they are of the same old stamp [*Schrot und Korn*].  **-***Volkischer Beobachter*, 25 Aug. 1933, [cited from Richard Steigmann-Gall's [*The Holy Reich*](http://www.amazon.com/dp/0521823714?tag=freethinkers&link_code=as3&creativeASIN=0521823714&creative=373489&camp=211189)] |

Today, white-supremacists and Neo-Nazis continue to spread Luther's Jewish hatred and use quotes from this book as "proof" of their convictions. I trust that readers will see the horror and danger of Luther's book and will realize the potential threat that might come from belief in   If you wish to read the entire unabridged book online, click [here](http://www.humanitas-international.org/showcase/chronography/documents/luther-jews.htm).

The following gives a few quotations from Luther's dirty little book

Quotes from Martin Luther's "On the Jews and their lies," 1543

**Luther's Introduction:**

I had made up my mind to write no more either about the Jews or against them. But since I learned that these miserable and accursed people do not cease to lure to themselves even us, that is, the Christians, I have published this little book, so that I might be found among those who opposed such poisonous activities of the Jews who warned the Christians to be on their guard against them. I would not have believed that a Christian could be duped by the Jews into taking their exile and wretchedness upon himself. However, the devil is the god of the world, and wherever God's word is absent he has an easy task, not only with the weak but also with the strong. May God help us. Amen.

-Martin Luther (On the Jews and Their Lies)

Moreover, they are nothing but thieves and robbers who daily eat no morsel and wear no thread of clothing which they have not stolen and pilfered from us by means of their accursed usury. Thus they live from day to day, together with wife and child, by theft and robbery, as arch-thieves and robbers, in the most impenitent security.

-Martin Luther (On the Jews and Their Lies)

...Christ and his word can hardly be recognized because of the great vermin of human ordinances. However, let this suffice for the time being on their lies against doctrine or faith.

-Martin Luther (On the Jews and Their Lies)

Did I not tell you earlier that a Jew is such a noble, precious jewel that God and all the angels dance when he farts?

-Martin Luther (On the Jews and Their Lies)

Alas, it cannot be anything but the terrible wrath of God which permits anyone to sink into such abysmal, devilish, hellish, insane baseness, envy, and arrogance. If I were to avenge myself on the devil himself I should be unable to wish him such evil and misfortune as God's wrath inflicts on the Jews, compelling them to lie and to blaspheme so monstrously, in violation of their own conscience. Anyway, they have their reward for constantly giving God the lie.

-Martin Luther (On the Jews and Their Lies)

No, one should toss out these lazy rogues by the seat of their pants.

-Martin Luther (On the Jews and Their Lies)