The Jewish Civilization Samuel P. Huntington Forgot About: A Critique of “Judeo-Christian” Civilizational Values

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“JUDEO-CHRISTIAN” CIVILIZATIONAL VALUES

By

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The Clash of Civilizations: A Theory

After the use of state violence and terror during the 20th century’s First and Second World Wars, political scientists have developed theories to determine, explain, and predict what conflict between states would look like after the Cold War. The conflicts of the 20th century were defined by ideological motivations: fascism, communism, and marxism. Samuel P. Huntington's clash of civilization theory predicts that post-Cold War conflict would occur due to civilizational identity rather than the historic president of ideological conflict (Bendeck). Huntington’s ideas were developed in response to another 20th-century political scientist Francis Fukuyama, whose work titled The End of History and The Last Man, predicts that future global conflict would not happen at the global scale as seen throughout the 20th century. Fukuyama, a neo-liberal political scientist, argues that the global conflicts of the 20th century can be viewed as ideological conflicts. During WWII, fascism lost to the prevailing ideologies of liberalism and communism. After the end of the Cold War, liberal democracy was the prevailing ideology, which saw the spread of democracy around the globe. Fukuyama sees the end of the Cold War as the ideological end point of history, he argues history is the process by which democracy becomes universal and therefore large scale conflicts would no longer occur because democracies with perfect rationality would never engage in large scale conflicts with other democracies (Menand). Fukuyama explains that “for we are interested in what one could in some sense call the common ideological heritage of mankind” (10).
Fukuyama does concede that small scale conflicts will occur along ethnic lines but upholds that no large scale conflict can occur in a world where democracy is the governing ideology of big state powers. Fukuyama writes,

> There would still be a high and perhaps rising level of ethnic and nationalist violence, since those are impulses incompletely played out, even in parts of the post historical world. Palestinians and Kurds, Sikhs and Tamils, Irish Catholics and Walloons, Armenians and Azeris, will continue to have their unresolved grievances. This implies that terrorism and wars of national liberation will continue to be an important item on the international agenda. But large-scale conflict must involve large states still caught in the grip of history, and they are what appear to be passing from the scene (25).

Fukuyama proposes that liberal values and democracy will always win, just as it did during the Cold War. Huntington pushes back against Fukuyama, suggesting that Fukuyama’s theory on the end of history ignores cultural differences that contribute to conflict. Huntington suggests that large scale conflicts will not occur over ideological differences as is the 20th century, rather future conflict will be the result of fundamental differences in civilizational values. America prevailed as the hegemonic power at the end of the Cold War, and thus, Huntington suggests that future conflict will occur between the “West vs. the Rest” (32). Huntington proposes that the West’s next conflict will come from the Islamic world, he cites M. J. Akbar, “[conflict with the West is] definitely going to come from the Muslim world. It is in the sweep of the Islamic nations from the Maghreb to Pakistan that the struggle for a new world order will begin” (32). As referenced above, Fukuyama does concede that small scale wars for national liberation will occur, however, the war in Afghanistan in a post 9/11 world counters the prediction that large-scale conflict involving large states will no longer be the trend for global conflict. Many scholars have argued that 9/11 is best understood by the theoretical observation proposed by Huntington. The clash of civilizations theory “gained strength when the perpetrators themselves presented the 9/11 attacks as ‘jihad’, or Islamic holy war, against Christians and Jews, and the then US President George W. Bush reiterated the same spirit by using the word ‘crusade’ with its connotations of a Christian holy war against
Muslims” (Shahi). For liberal theorists like Fukuyama, the “end” point of mankind’s ideological evolution is the universalization and globalization of Western liberal democracy. Thus, Fukuyama and liberal theories look at the end of global conflict in terms of ideology. This paper reject’s Fukuyama’s theory on the end of history because he fails to address how ethnic, religious, or cultural identity affects international politics.

Contrastingly, Huntington looks at world conflict as motivated by cultural differences. Huntington identifies eight civilizations: (1) Western, (2) Latin American, (3) Islamic, (4) Slavic/Orthodox, (5) Confusion, (6) Japanese/Shinto, (7) Hindu, and (8) African which is named as a possible civilization (25). The clash of civilizations theory proposes that “the conflicts of the future will occur along the fault lines separating civilizations” (25). When thinking about international politics, Israel is one small country in the Middle East which often finds itself in the midst of controversy and conflict. Israel, the only Jewish state in the world, is constantly criticized by the West for their conflict with Palestine, and many fundamentally disagree with the existence of a Jewish state in the Holy Land. Despite Israel being the center of global conflict and debate, Huntington fails to classify Israel as part of an independent Jewish civilization. Rather, his thesis barely mentions Israel and only notes that it was a state created by the West and belongs in the Western civilization bloc due to shared “Judeo-Christian” values.

Civilizations: Religion, language, culture, and history

What is a civilization? Huntington writes, “A civilization is a cultural entity. Villages, regions, ethnic groups, nationalities, religious groups, all have distinct cultures at different levels of cultural heterogeneity” (23). Despite differences at the micro-level, a civilization is a common entity that describes a people group by its broadest common cultural similarities. What comprises a civilization? Common objective elements like history, language, customs, institutions, religion, and subjective self-identification of people all shape a civilizational identity. Huntington provides his reader with an example, “a resident of Rome may define himself with varying degrees of intensity as a Roman, an
Italian, a Catholic, a Christian, a European, a Westerner” (24). A civilization can include a collection of many nation-states, or a civilization can consist of one nation-state such as the Japanese/Shinto civilization. This thesis will propose Israel, like the Japanese/Shinto civilization, should be classified independent of other civilizations even if it is comprised of one state.

Huntington also includes the classification of sub-civilizations. For example, the West has two major variants, Europe and North America. The same can be observed in Islamic civilization, which comprises Arabs, Turks, and Mala subdivisions. Even in highlighting the subdivisions of Western civilization, Huntington fails to classify an Israel/Jewish subdivision of Western culture. The only mention of Israel can be observed in the following quote, “Several wars occurred between Arabs and Israel (created by the West)” (31). Huntington writes off any unique Jewish identity of Israel by claiming it to be a creation of the West, and in fact, he uses Israel’s conflict with their Arab neighbors to justify his theory on the Islamic civilization’s “bloody borders”. Huntington does not define what he means by “Judeo-Christian” values. His use of the term is mentioned once in a quote by Bernard Lewis, “we are facing a mood and a movement far transcending the level of issues and policies and the governments that pursue them. This is no less than a clash of civilizations—the perhaps irrational but surely historic reaction of an ancient rival against our Judeo-Christian heritage, our secular present, and the worldwide expansion of both” (32). Huntington’s thesis aims to not only describe the world after the destruction of Cold War hegemony but also aims to predict the West’s next confrontation (32). This paper suggests that defining Israel as a proxy for Western conflict fails to acknowledge the unique Jewish identity and how this influences the Jewish/Arab conflicts in the Middle East. As this essay will demonstrate, Israel and the broader Jewish identity is both religiously and historically diverse and deserves more consideration from Huntington.

Huntington acknowledges that civilizations are not permanent identities and claims they are dynamic and rise and fall throughout history (24). History, however, does play a critical role in modern civilizations. Huntington is proposing that future conflict will fall along civilizational lines similar to
ancient times where religion and cultural differences fueled conflict. Thus, modern conflicts will be dependent on ancient or historical conflicts, even if the civilizational identity is dynamic and has the ability to shift through time and history.

Section 1: Huntington defines Israel within Western civilization with the sole justification that Jews and Christians share fundamental “Judeo-Christian” values. This is both a religious and historical fallacy. This section will look at Jewish-Christian relations through the lens of religion and history, in order to demonstrate that Huntington grossly oversimplifies the differences in these faiths. Additionally, heretical teachings of Christianity have been employed to persecute the Jewish people since the early Church. Thus, the kinship between Jews and Christians is a new relationship that does not represent a shared identity, rather a political ideology.

H1: Huntington’s classification of shared “Judeo-Christian” values is not an adequate justification for Israel being part of the Western civilizational bloc, as the term “Judeo-Christian” incorrectly represents the kinship between these faiths and historic realities.

What exactly are Judeo-Christian Values?

When examining where Jews fall in Huntington’s classification of civilizations, examining religion is quintessential. For Huntington, the role of religion is the most important identity that will lead to civilizational clashes. In his work, The Clash of Civilizations published in 1993, Huntington writes, “differences among civilizations are not only real; they are basic. Civilizations are differentiated from each other by history, language, culture, tradition and, most importantly, religion” (25). Huntington categorizes Jewish identity as part of Western heritage and history due to what he represents as common “Judeo-Christian” values and beliefs (32). This assumption is telling of how scholars from the West view the role of Judaism in history due to a false understanding of Jewish ethics. Most Christians and Westerners assume that Jewish beliefs are simply the Old Testament without the acceptance of the New Testament books. This is an oversimplification. Most Jews read the Old Testament with a completely different lens than a Christian. Christians and the West have coined the term “Judeo-Christian” values because Christians have theological motivations that generate a feeling of kinship to the Promise Land and the chosen people. Due to this, Christians view the Old Testament as valid and just as important to
their faith as the New Testament. Jews, however, do not share this same feeling of kinship with Christians. The projection of shared “Judeo-Christian” values is a term and idea developed in the West that does not represent a belief held by Jews. In this modern age, Christian Zionism and support for Israel both politically and religiously seems to support Huntington’s classification. However, this essay seeks to demonstrate that modern Jewish-Christian relations is a new precedent not supported by a historic relationship, nor is the small Christian-Zionist community sufficient enough to generalize an entire civilization. This essay would also like to point out that the modern Christian-Zionist movement has gained influence after Huntington’s thesis written in 1993, and thus, this modern development is new and a smaller population of the larger Christian community that must not be generalized to represent all Jewish-Christian relations. Historically, the story of Jews after the diaspora has been a fight for ethnic and religious preservation rather than assimilation to Western identity or belief.

In his work titled *The Myth of the Judeo-Christian Tradition*, Arthur A. Cohen asks a thought-provoking question: “How can it be that Judaism, the precedent in principle and progenitor in history of Christianity, should have remained not only independent of but unassimilated by the doctrinal vision and historical pressure of Christianity?”. How is it possible to reconcile the beliefs of these faiths? Historically, tensions have occurred over the Jewish community’s rejection of Jesus as heretical and the Christian community’s condemnation of the unbelieving Jew. Cohen writes, “Jews regarded Christians as at best second-best, and at worst as execrable idolaters; Christians regarded Jews as at best worthy of conversion and at worst as deicides and antichrist”. The long history of tense relations between Jews and Christians begs the question, where did the term Judeo-Christian values come from?

The term first appeared on October 17, 1821, in a letter written by Alexander McCaul to describe recent Jewish converts to Christianity (Ruderman). Alexander McCaul initiated a debate during the 19th century on Jewish-Christian relations. A large part of his missionary work took place in Warsaw, where he became familiar with Jewish texts and beliefs (Ruderman). The term he coined “Judean-Christian” values was not meant to represent the similarities in beliefs held by the two religions but to describe the
relationship between Christians and Jewish converts. David B. Ruderman writes, “Converts who left the Jewish fold for Christianity rarely did so on their own but were encouraged or even harassed by clerics who specialized in missionary outreach, among whom were many former Jews” (49). The term’s evangelist origins still shape how modern Jews view the rise of Christian support for Israel. Dr. Faydra Shapiro, a specialist in Jewish-Christian relations, provides a Jewish perspective:

Increasingly there’s a tendency, particularly in Israel, to see Christian support for Israel, Christian efforts to combat anti-Semitism and Christian love for the Jews primarily through an evangelical, Christian Zionist lens. For many Jews, Roman Catholic priests taking Judaism seriously, celebrating Jewish holidays, honoring Torah and learning Hebrew is a shock (“Jewish-Christian”).

When a Christian visits Israel and partakes in a Shabbat dinner, the host family is often surprised to learn of the Christian’s interest in understanding Jewish tradition. This new love for Jewish tradition comes as a shock considering the historical precedent of Jews defending their faith and practices from Christian doctrine for centuries. Christians are often surprised at the astonishment of the Jewish host family, because to the Christian traveling to Israel the kinship between these religions seems inherent. The intrigue in bridging Jewish-Christian relations tends to be one-sided. Even if Christians do not view their desire to bridge the gap in Jewish-Christian relations as evangelistic in nature, the long history Jews have suffered at the oppression of groups claiming to be motivated by Christian values has no doubt left Jews suspicious of Christian motives.

During the interwar years, anti-Semitism was on a rise both in Europe and America, both Jews and Christians began circulating the term “Judeo-Christian” to encourage unity and interfaith dialogue to combat the dangerous racial ideologies and theologies discriminating against American and European Jewry. The National Conference of Christians and Jews was formed to indicate a common religious cause to defend Jews against both religious and political attitudes of anti-Semitism, “[the organization] served to signal opposition to pro-fascist America Firsters, who were increasingly using ‘Christian’ as a signature
term, giving their organizations names such as the Christian American Crusade, the Christian Aryan Syndicate, and the Christian Mobilizers” (Winters). In the years leading up to WWII, the term “Judeo-Christian” seemed to imply an alliance between these religions and people groups, rather than to suggest they were inherently one and the same as the term has evolved to be understood in a modern context. The popularity of the term “Judeo-Christian” waned until the 1980s when tensions heightened during the Cold War. It seems that the term “Judeo-Christian” came to imply a set of religious, ethical, or cultural values shared by Judaism and Christianity (Almond). Despite lacking a concrete definition, the term “Judeo-Christian” came to be an important rhetorical trope when appealing to traditional “Western” values. The motif of this apparently inherent set of shared ethics between Jews and Christians has become an appeal to conservative values and an originalist interpretation of the American Constitution. Since the end of the Cold War, the term has attempted to evoke a desire to uphold, or even restore, the ethics and morals of a conservative or traditional nature without directly pointing to any specific shared religious, ethical, or cultural values.

Thus, the term became symbolic of traditional American values, in the fight of the West against atheism and Communism. President Ronald Reagan came to office in the 1980s during a time of Christian fundamentalism. The term was used by President Reagan in 1983, “I know this may be laughed and sneered at in some sophisticated circles, but ours is a Judeo-Christian heritage, and ours is a loving and living God, the fountain of all truth and knowledge” (Holzel). The term became part of political vocabulary to reinforce Reaganite conservatism, and during a resurgence of conservatism in America today the term has come to symbolize similar sentiments of family and worship of the God of the Bible. President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s political interests have perpetuated the use of the term in political and religious circles. The political unity between the United States and Israel in recent years has also encouraged the growing use of the term “Judeo-Christian” values. This essay will demonstrate that Jews do not view their God as being represented or necessarily the same as
the Triune God worshiped in Christianity. This is a Western misunderstanding of Judaism and demonstrates the flaws of defining another identity or religious/ethnic group from a Western worldview.

Despite a western desire to marry the beliefs of Jews and Christians, very few Americans even have an understanding of Jewish beliefs and how it differs from Christianity. Michael Lipka published a study with the Pew Research Center that statistically measures the knowledge Jewish Americans have on their religion in comparison to what non-Jewish Americans know about Judaism. Lipka writes:

Jewish Americans do especially well on the questions about Judaism. But many also can correctly answer questions about other religions. For example, six-in-ten (59%) know that Jesus spent much of his early life in Nazareth, identical to the share of U.S. Christians who know this. Nearly nine-in-ten know that Ramadan is an Islamic holy month (89%) and that Mecca is Islam’s holiest city (86%), compared with about six-in-ten Americans overall who answer these questions correctly (60% and 62%, respectively).

Lipka’s findings demonstrate that Jews have a better understanding of their religion, in addition to Islam and Christianity. The same can not be said for Christians or non-Jews in America. The survey conducted by Lipka asks four questions about Judaism: two about religious holidays, one about a Jewish mystic belief, and a fourth on Maimonides (an important Jewish scholar). The survey also uses a Jewish sample and a non-Jewish sample to generate its findings. The results can be seen in the table below.
The results of Lipka’s research demonstrates that while the term “Judeo-Christian” is often a political or religious word used to describe a commonality between Judaism and Christianity, very few Americans have any understanding of the faith they claim to share cornerstone values with. U.S. adults could only answer with about 0.9 % accuracy (Lipka). Only 29% of U.S. adults knew that Shabbat, an important demonstration of the Jewish faith which happens weekly, starts on Friday at sundown (Lipka). These statistics prove that while Americans want to have a connection with their faith’s Jewish counterparts, they hold little understanding of Judaism’s beliefs or practices.

The phrase “Judeo-Christian,” in terms of its traditions and values, has evolved to mean something unifying for Jews and Christians. The term implies a wish to mend relationships between these religions, but in actuality, the term does not represent a common belief or thought. It is historically false to represent relationships between Jews and Christians as unified. The term became a symbolic idea during the Cold War in fighting Communism (Holzel). The Cold-War use of the term in reference to ideology is perhaps why Huntington decides to group the Jewish civilization with the West.
Critique of the term: “Abrahamic” vs. “Judeo-Christian”

The following section will provide two possible critiques of Huntington’s use of the term “Judeo-Christian”. The term “Judeo-Christian” is either an exclusionary term rooted in Xenophobia which Huntington fails to address in order to uphold his premise that the West’s next confrontation will be with the Islamic world. Though Huntington did not use the term “Abrahamic” in his thesis, the term like “Judeo-Christian,” infers some commonality or shared values between Judaism and Christianity with the inclusion of Islam. The second possibility is that the term “Judeo-Christian” is a fanciful presentation of the religious, historic, and political unity between Jews and Christians. This essay will demonstrate that the religious and historic evidence for “Judeo-Christian” is just as weak as the appeal to a set of shared “Abrahamic” values. What both these possible critiques have in common is that they undermine how Huntington’s thesis classifies and justifies what uniquely comprises a civilization. The following section will look at each critique.

While the term became more widely used in the 20th century, the definition of “Judeo-Christian” is vague and is often used to describe traditional moral values. Some advocates of “Judeo-Christian” values even go so far to claim that Judaism and Christianity are basically the same (Weiss-Rosmarin, 10). Much like the emergence of the term “Judeo-Christian” in the 20th century, the term “Abrahamic” became a tool for interfaith conversation. However, Jon Levenson, the Albert A. List Professor of Bible at Harvard’s Divinity School, argues that to present these three faiths as united in the patriarch of Abraham disregards the reality that Christianity and Islam claim their faith’s validity by rejecting the Jewish interpretation of Abraham and reinventing him in their faiths. Levenson’s observation can be seen in the following excerpt from David P. Goldman’s article titled Our Abraham, Not Theirs:

Misunderstanding is not what divides the image of Abraham in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, the misnomered “Abrahamic religions”; on the contrary, the founders of the younger religions well understood Abraham’s role in Judaism. St. Paul’s transformation of Abraham into the father of all who believe, and the
Quran’s recasting of Abraham as a Muslim prophet who prefigured Muhammed, both rejected the Jewish version by design, by inventing their own Abrahams to serve their own doctrinal purposes.

For Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, Abraham’s authority plays an important role in their respective doctrines. However, this shared identity rooted in Abraham reflects no shared dogma between these religions because they diverge on Abraham's interpretation and purpose. Indeed, Christianity and Islam reject the Jewish interpretation of the Abrahamic covenant. Abba Hillel Silver, a prominent American Jewish Zionist leader in the 20th century, conquers with this observation on the role of Abraham in Christianity and Islam. Silver writes, “Two world religions kindled their fires at the altars of Judaism. Both Jesus and Mohammed claimed no originality for their message. They did not come, they averred, to found a new religion but to restore the true faith of … both Christianity and Islam turned to the Bible to authenticate their own scriptures. Much typological dialectic was employed by the Apostles and the Church Fathers to prove that everything in their faith was prefigured in the Old Testament” (17). An appeal to a shared interpretation of Abraham cannot simultaneously exist with Christianity and Islam's claim to the true interpretation of the Abrahamic covenant.

The concept of shared “Abrahamic” beliefs would challenge Huntington’s civilizational classifications by proposing his theory redefine both Western and Islamic civilizations. This would dismantle Huntington’s thesis, which proposes that future conflicts will occur between the West and the Islamic worlds. For Huntington, Israel and the conflict with its Arab neighbors acts as a proxy for Western conflict. This paper will propose that the term “Judeo-Christian” helps further Huntington’s argument of Islam’s “bloody borders” with the West (34). Therefore, the term does not need to represent an actual kinship but helps justify his argument, which is perhaps why there is little evidence beyond the term “Judeo-Christian” being mentioned once in Huntington’s thesis. Huntington’s theory aims to demonstrate that current and future conflicts will occur along Western and Islamic lines. This is why he feels the need to classify Israel as a Western state. This classification appeals to the term
“Judeo-Christian” while conveniently ignoring similar scholarship which suggests the term “Abrahamic” better describes the shared patriarchal identity of all three faiths.

This thesis argues the term “Abrahamic” fails to represent any observable unity amongst all three religions any more than the term “Judeo-Christian” represents similarities in belief between Jews and Christians. This paper will suggest that addressing the term “Abrahamic” would have forced Huntington to confront the discrepancies seen in religious beliefs between Jews and Christians. The lack of recognizing differences between the two faiths has manifested into persecution and a historic precedent of Jewish segregation and discrimination from the West. The shallow application of the term “Abrahamic” appeals to unity between these religions that has never existed. The following section will suggest that Judaism and Christianity's claim, not only to Abraham, but to the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament points to vast differences in interpretation that prevent these religions from ever sharing a religious identity. The following sections will examine how Judaism and Christianity stand as their own unique religions with equally different religious identities. This thesis will concede that there are underlying points of unity in thought between these two religions, but to umbrella Jewish-Christian relations under the term, “Judeo-Christian” undermines the great differences that exist between these faiths. These fundamental differences should not be ignored, as they result in unique and distinct cultural norms and expectations.

Where Judaism Differs

On April 25, 2018, Ben Shapiro gave a speech at Liberty University discussing the importance of upholding “Judeo-Christian” values. With over 1.6 million views on YouTube and the audience cheering and clapping in Shapiro’s defense, one can see the popularity of “Judeo-Christian” values amongst modern evangelicals. However, what are these values? As addressed previously, a concrete and universally accepted definition of the term “Judeo-Christian” is hard to pin-point. Shapiro’s speech gives some clues as to what he personally believes to be part of that value system: the sanctity of human life, the importance of the family, as well as the importance of serving God instead of the secular collective.
Shapiro’s overall sentiment is that the shared belief in the Old Testament and to a “God” leads to a morality and ethical code by which Jews and Christians live their lives. Shapiro is specifically using the term “Judeo-Christian” to mobilize American Jews and Christians against secular ideology. Shapiro states the ethical responsibility of Jews and Christians is to recognize “what is good and what is bad, what is right and what is wrong, what is true and what is evil” (8:00). Defining a shared “Judeo-Christian” ethic by upholding what is good over what is evil is extremely broad, and Shapiro fails to demonstrate how this presumably shared ethic is set apart from other religious beliefs with a clear distinction between good and evil (Islam for example). Throughout Shapiro’s speech, the term “Judeo-Christian” serves the purpose of bringing unity amongst conservatives who uphold traditional “Old Testament” beliefs. Shapiro claims that Judeo-Christian values are “the values that resonate with human beings which are eternal... those values are embedded in the 10 commandments. If we return to those values we will be a virtuous citizenry” (10:15). Shapiro’s religious appeal seeks to represent the Jewish-Christian heritage in the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament as essentially one and the same. Shapiro’s example of the 10 commandments as an example of a shared moral code between Jews and Christians misrepresents the role the Sinai Covenant serves in Judaism and Christianity. For Jews and Christians, performing God’s will in the world looks very different in interpretation and application. These different perspectives also inform how these faiths keep commandments and how the implications of the law on being right with God looks different in Judaism and Christianity. Shapiro argues that the common heritage of Judaism and Christianity shared in the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament makes them similar. This is the appeal made by the term “Judeo-Christian”. While Judaism and Christianity share the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, it is the interpretation that divides as much as separates them.

*Bridge or a Barrier?: The Hebrew Bible and the Old Testament*

In modern Jewish-Christian relations, there seems to be an unspoken consensus to only acknowledge the similarities between the two religions without acknowledging the large differences that fundamentally
oppose each other. To truly ever be one, it would require both Judaism and Christianity to ignore the unbridgeable chasm between both faiths. These chasms include the differences in the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament interpretation, how both faiths practice their religion, and the fundamental difference in the need for salvation. Judaism from the beginning has been an ethnographic nationalist group, and the ethnic tie to the land of Israel has always played a role in how Jews view their covenant with God. Christianity rejects that God’s covenant is with the Jewish people alone, Jesus’ ministry and message of salvation was not only for the Jews but also gentiles. During early Christianity, when Jesus followers were a minority sect of Judaism, upholding Torah separated Jews who still upheld the Hebrew Bible and those who joined the new messianic movement. Jesus’ followers continue to uphold the Hebrew Bible as sacred believing, “indeed, the New Testament’s use of the Old Testament demonstrates a deep reluctance to posit any breach between nascent Christianity and the foundational document of Judaism. This reluctance is exemplified by Matthew’s use of fulfillment citations” (Kessler 763). Judaism and Christianity fundamentally diverge over the interpretations of the Hebrew Scripture, and therefore, is a barrier to religious unity, not a bridge to commonality or mutual faith.

In essence, Judaism is the religion of a people; in contrast, Christianity is defined by what you believe and who you believe in (Jesus). Thus, when terms like “Judeo-Christian” are employed to argue a shared identity between Jews and Christians, it fails to address not only differences in dogma but the different structures which have shaped the preservation and independent existence of these religions for centuries. Isaac Kalimi asks the question, is the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament a bridge or a barrier in Jewish-Christian relations and shared belief? Kalimi writes,

Throughout their long common history, Jews and Christians have shared many sacred texts in common in the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, which have profoundly shaped each of these rival sister-religions. Indeed, the relationship between Judaism and Christianity is unique. No other religions share and at the same time dispute with each other so much as do Judaism and Christianity. Thus, the question arises whether Jews and Christians are in reality bound tougher by common Scripture, and to what extent they share a common attitude towards it and a common interpretation of it (125).
Before discussing the differences in interpretation of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, it is important to emphasize the distinction in the labels of the “Hebrew Bible” and the “Old Testament”. Yes, the texts Jews and Protestants use are identical, however, even the title “Old Testament” implies an important theological difference between Judaism and Christianity. George Robinson writes, “one thing Jews most definitely do not call [the Hebrew Bible] is the ‘Old Testament,’ an appellation applied by Christians in distinction from their Scriptures, ‘the New Testament.’ Such a label implies that the Hebrew Bible has been superseded by its Christian successor” (263). The idea that the New Testament covenant through the sacrifice of Jesus renders the covenants made with the Jewish people in the Hebrew Bible void/having been fulfilled is the doctrine known as supersessionism. As expanded upon later in this thesis, the doctrine of supersessionism throughout history was easily manipulated to push theological and political movements of anti-Jewish people or anti-Semitism which escalates over the centuries into the anti-Semitism of the holocaust in the 20th century.

The differences between Jewish and Christian interpretations of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament can be seen in the function the law and the commandments play in both faiths. For Judaism, the authoritative interpretation of the Hebrew Bible is set forth by Rabbis and the oral Torah, which completes the written Torah. In Christianity, the authoritative interpretation of the Old Testament and Ten Commandments can be seen in the interpretation of Jesus’ teaching, and revealed to believers through a personal relationship with Christ. The fundamental differences found in Jewish and Christian interpretations result in the unique religious practices of the religions which diverge over the importance and practice of festivals and ceremonial laws found in the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament.

What is the function of the law and commandments in Judaism in contrast to Christianity? Judaism is the religion of Torah; the center of Jewish religious experience can be found in the oral and written interpretations of the law. According to Robinson, “the Jews are often called ‘the People of the Book’” (263). Torah, as the written law, can be observed in the first five books of the Hebrew Bible
(Pentateuch, Humash, Five books of Moses). The first five books of the Hebrew Bible establish God as creator and ruler of the world, God’s covenant with Abraham, and the focus is on the Sinai Covenant and the commandments that God gives Moses (Robinson 264). A Jewish life of righteousness is achieved in upholding the commandments (Mitzvot). The Tanakh is the Hebrew Bible, the same used by Protestant Christians as the Old Testament, and it comprises the Torah (Law), Nevi’im (Prophets), and Ketuvim (writings) (Robinson 263). As already established, the law is the Torah, in which Jewish traditions place emphasis on the commandments (Mitzvot). The Nevi’im are the writings of the Prophets, whom God uses to ward and encourage the Jewish people to uphold the Covenant. Robinson writes, “At the heart of the Tanakh are certain concepts that are basic to the nature of Judaism, some of which we have already encountered: Judaism is a covenant faith, based on a covenant between the Jews and the Creator, a cycle of transgression, exile, and redemption; the unity of God that is the bases for ethical monotheism with its system of reward and punishment” (267). For Jewish life, Torah and the Tanakh inform a righteous life; upholding the law is how a Jew is in right standing with God. In Christianity, the emphasis on the law is replaced with an emphasis on a personal relationship with Jesus as the way to righteousness and right standing with God. The third component of the Tanakh is the Ketuvim, further writing that reflects on the Covenant. The law, the prophets, and further writings reflecting on the covenant all comprise written Torah, the Jewish experience is also shaped by oral Torah, which shapes the tradition of integration and can be found in Rabbinic literature, the Talmud, and the Midrash. Jonathan Klawans writes, “ancient Jews did not, however, see the [Hebrew Scriptures] as the only source of law. As the Gospels and other writers indicate, first-century Pharisaic Jews in particular also followed non biblical traditions, such as hand washing before meals. Early on, the rabbinic sages, tracing a chain of tradition from Moses to their own day, demonstrated how the Torah expanded over time as sages from each generation contributed their own wisdom to it” (655). Therefore, the Jewish tradition is not static, it is expanding and changing over time as rabbinic tradition interprets and adds their own wisdom in following Torah. Abba Silver writes, “Torah is a compendium of moral instructions, a rule of life for all men, a pattern of behavior, a ‘way’
reveals in the life of a people through prophets and sages, which if faithfully followed, leads to the well-being of the individual and of society” (4-5). To live a righteous life as a Jew it comes with living in accordance to God’s commandments and upholding Torah in the world.

For the Christian tradition, the commandments of the Old Testament are viewed as a moral guidance. Due to the sin nature of man, humanity can never perfectly keep God’s commandments, and thus, Jesus is the only perfect attainment for the law which man cannot perfectly keep. The concept of original sin greatly divides the Jewish and Christian understanding of man’s ability to uphold Torah. The concept of original sin, which occurred in Genesis 3 with the fall of man, is the cornerstone to the need of a perfect and sinless Savior. This concept is completely missing from Jewish ethics. Weiss-Rosmarin writes, “Jewish ethics is predicated on the trust in man’s ethical freedom, the faculty of choice between good and evil... the authoritative Jewish sources emphasize that all human beings are endowed with freedom in the ethical sphere and are not constrained to pursue a certain path” (41). In accordance with Jewish authority, God directs man's path but does not interfere with the ethnic choices between good and evil. Weiss-Rosmarin explains that accepting the presence and inherent role of free will is the foundation for the concept of ethics, without temptation to sin, piety would not be “meritorious” (43). Living a righteous life in Judaism means living and doing Torah, and Christianity upholds that righteousness through works alone can never be achieved and perfect adherence to Torah falls short due to man’s sin nature. Therefore, to be a Christian is to believe in the salvation of Christ who is the only perfect atonement for the law, and therefore, does away with the binding ritual to Torah and upholding the law.

*Ritual Law: Jewish and Christian festivals, religious practices, and baptism*

The differences in Scriptural interpretation can be seen in how Jews and Christians uphold ritual laws and religious practices. In Judaism, festivals, dietary restrictions, and circumcision are all practices in observing and honoring the covenant God made with the Jewish people through Abraham. Observing the Sabbath is an important part of Jewish observance, it draws its origins from both the day of rest in Gen.
1:1-2:3 and the commandment of Sabbath in Ex. 20:8-11, which is the only day of observance mentioned in the Ten Commandments (Stern 670). On the Sabbath, the day of rest is supposed to usher in a day of peace. The prohibition of work is meant to make Jewish observers stop, and subdue the earth and everything in it (Robinson 87). Robinson writes, “the Sabbath was designed to be ‘a delight,’ as our liturgy tells us. It is a time when families and friends gather together for meals, songs, and stories” (89). It is clear in the Synoptic Gospels that Jesus and his disciples observed the Sabbath, as seen in Luke 23:56 and Matt. 16:1. The Sabbath plays an important role in the Passion narrative, “the Gospels refer to Friday as *paraskeue*, ‘preparation.’ as if its entire identity were to prepare for the Sabbath. In rabbinic culture, Friday preparations for the Sabbath consisted of cooking food, lighting lamps, and washing” (Stern 670). Thus, in Christianity Jesus was the preparation for the Last Supper, the fulfillment of the Sabbath law. Christians still look to the Ten Commandments for moral guidance to a pious life, but strict observance of all Ten Commandments is not followed by Christianity as seen with the faith’s divergence in following Sabbath tradition. The concept of a day of rest still exists in Christianity, typically observed on Sunday with church services. However, the rituals associated with observing the day of rest do not apply.

The prohibition against mixing meat and dairy can be found in Exodus 23:19; 24:26 and Deuteronomy 14:12 (Robinson 256). From these verses, “the sages erected a considerable edifice of dietary laws. Meats, meat fats, and products containing meat fats or other meat ingredients are considered *fleishig* (*basae* in Hebrew); milk, milk fats, products containing milk derivatives reconsidered (*halav* in Hebrew). Products that contain neither milk nor meat are considered natural” (Robinson 256). For the observant Jew upholding a strict observance of kashrut is important to upholding Torah. However, Christians do not observe these dietary laws. This is a uniquely Jewish tradition, which shapes the daily lives of observant Jews.

The ritual practice of circumcision is probably the best-known indicator of Jewishness in a male, and it is also one of the oldest most widely followed of Jewish ritual practices (Robinson 147). In Judaism, circumcision is important in recognizing the covenant God made with Abraham and his
household, which can be found in Genesis 17. Robinson writes, “The Eternal One speaks to Abraham, now ninety-nine, and tells him to circumcise himself and the male members of his household” as the symbol of God’s covenant with his household (147). The practice of male circumcision in Judaism is referred to as brit milah, which means “the covenant of the circumcision,” which has continued to be an important ritual of reforming God’s covenant with Abraham (Hoffman 673). Christianity no longer needed to observe the practice of circumcision because the blood sacrifice of Jesus had fulfilled the Abrahamic covenant which the practice of circumcision upholds.

The concept of baptism can be traced to Jewish roots. In the first century Jews would immerse themselves in water to purify their bodies. However, this practice of “ritual impurity” is temporal rather than permanent (Oliver 675). In Judaism, this immersion did not have eternal implications as in Christianity (Oliver 675). The practice of purifying sins through water immersion was seen in the apocalyptic Jewish sect, “a similar view to [Christian ideas of baptism] appears in the “Community Rule” found among the Dead Sea Scrolls” (Oliver 675). Perhaps the best-known figure of the New Testament associated with baptism, also found in the accounts of Josephus, was John the “Baptist”, who transformed the Jewish purity practice into a symbolic public display of an inner moral change (Oliver 675). Isaac W. Oliver writes, “John’s baptism was a ‘baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins’ (Mk1:4; Lk 3:3), necessary because of the imminent change in history. Moreover, John immersed people in the Jordan River, perhaps symbolically replicating the ancient Israelites’ crossing over the wilderness to the Promise Land (Josh 3:11-17)” (675). Thus, during the early Church, baptism was a public declaration of change for Jews who followed the messianic movement. While baptism has come to mean and be practiced in different ways across Christian denominations, baptism is the public declaration in faith in Jesus and his atonement. Baptism is a new birth in Christianity, for both Jews and Gentiles.

The Eucharist is another symbolic ritual in Christianity, and for Paul (and adopted by the Catholic Church) the components of the Eucharist represent the literal blood and body of Christ. Oliver writes, “many followers of Jesus, especially from the second century onward, came to identify the bread and
wine with the flesh and blood of Jesus in very real terms” (677). The belief that the wine and bread, which represent the sacrifice of Jesus’ blood and flesh, is the literal blood and body of Jesus is known as transubstantiation and is practiced by the Roman Catholic Church. Other denominations believe the elements of the Eucharist are symbolic. However, universally accepted by different denominations, is the belief that partaking of the Eucharist acknowledges the sacrificial imagery “when comparing the partaking the bread and cup with the consumption of sacrifices offered on the altar in the Temple of Jerusalem (1 Cor 10:18). Eating the bread and wine representing Jesus’ body was comparable in some way to eating the flesh of an animal sacrifice” (Oliver 677). Thus, the Eucharist acknowledges its Hebrew roots with symbolic themes of atonement through sacrifice. Paul emphasizes sacrificial imagery with the Eucharist, as blood covenants (for example, Abraham’s covenant of circumcision) is extremely biblical, to represent the new covenant of Jesus which supersedes the Hebrew covenants by fulfilling them. From a Jewish standpoint, the concept of transubstantiation is viewed as cannibalism, and the notion of consuming Jesus’ body stemming from Jewish ideas of sacrifice makes the concept an alien one to Jewish practice (Oliver 677).

The imagery of Jesus as the sacrifice is playing into the Christian belief that Jesus was the final sacrifice. Laws of the temple sacrifices were completed with the death of Jesus, the final sacrifice for atonement under Torah. Naphtali Meshel writes, “the relevance of the Temple and its sacrificial system, however, like the relevance of Jesus himself, did not end with their violent physical destruction by the Romans. Reflecting on the crucifixion, some of Jesus’ followers began to consider him the sacrificial offering par excellence. For the Jesus movement, the Jerusalem Temple, along with its rituals, would serve as a template- a model whose specific features are mapped onto a new system of beliefs and practices” (Meshel 660). In fact, traditionally, many Christians interpret the destruction of the temple as a divine sign of punishment for rejecting Jesus and killing him and his messengers, putting an end to Jewish ritual validity because they were invalid without a temple. However, after the destruction of the Temple in
70 CE, the shift from ritual sacrifices shifted to a focus on non-sacrificial acts serving as atonement for a righteous life. Meshel writes,

> Even before the destruction of the Temple in 70 CE, some Jewish texts described non-sacrificial acts such as prayer and piety in sacrificial term... in texts composed after the loss of the central Jewish institutions for divine worship, it is even more common to find prayer, fasting, and Torah-learning reconceived as apposite substitutions for sacrifice, and atonement is said to be attained by means of repentance, suffering and death, and through the power of the Day of Atonement. Prayers on weekdays, Sabbaths, and festivals were understood to be modeled after calendric patterns of sacrificial rituals of the Temple (660).

Thus, Judaism does not need a Temple to uphold a life of righteousness with God because atonement can come through the observance of Torah. For Christians, the need for sacrifices was permanently fulfilled through the blood sacrifice of Jesus. Living a righteous life is not atoned by acts of non-sacrificial atonement as in Judaism, rather, through the belief and personal relationship with Jesus. Living a life modeled after Jesus is the way to righteousness. Anti-Judaism ideas and theologies emerged after the destruction of the Temple, which Christians saw as an end to Jewish ritual validity.

*The Prophets in Judaism and Christianity*

Another key difference in textual interpretation between Judaism and Christianity can be seen in the role of prophets in the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament. God uses the prophets to call his people back into covenant with him. According to Robinson, “the prophets also represent a line of critical thinking that can be found throughout Jewish history, men and women willing to call to account those in power who strayed from the teachings of Torah” (294). The prophets speak out against injustice and call the Jewish people back to repentance and living a life that promotes Torah in the world. In Christianity, the prophets are pointing to Jesus. The book of Isaiah is often championed by Christian Biblical scholars as an important Hebrew prophecy of Jesus as the Messiah. Fulfillment scriptures in the Hebrew Bible are
often used as “proof-texts,” such as Isaiah 6:9-10 and Isaiah 53:1-12 (Sheridan 727). The frequent use of proof-texts “suggests that Jesus’ followers searched the Scripture to find both messianic predictions that Jesus was then seen to fulfill as well as materials that would explain why so many Jews did not accept his messianic role” (Sheridan 729). Much of the New Testament refers to the Hebrew Scripture to paint, not the replacement of the law, but the fulfillment (Matt. 5:17).

Indeed, Isaiah’s prophecies do include the prediction of the coming Messianic Age. However, Jews would reject the Christian interpretation that the age was ushered in by Jesus. Take for example Isaiah 7:14, “therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel” (“The Holy Bible”). The Gospel of Matthew references this prophecy in the account of Jesus' birth found in chapter 1 and 2. According to The Jewish Annotated New Testament, “Matthew's Gospel relies upon Israel’s Scriptures more than any other early Christian text, with approximately fifty quotations and allusions to the Septuagint” (Levine and Brettler 8). More than any other gospel account of Jesus, the Matthean narrative stresses the theme of Jesus’ Jewishness and connection to not only Hebrew prophecies but Jesus as fulfillment of the law (Torah). The Matthean author uses a persistent theme through his gospel of Jesus fulfilling the prophet’s vision of the Messiah, “. . . to fulfill what was spoken . . . by the prophet” (e.g., 1.22–23; 2.15; 4.14; 8.17; 12.14–17; 13.35; 21.4–5; 27.9–10) and depicts Jesus as the fulfillment of Torah and prophets (see 5.17; 7.12; 17.3,12)” (Levine and Brettler 8). The Matthean author desires to present Jesus as the fulfillment of prophets but the gospel also emphasizes Jesus as the new Moses.

The concept of Jesus as not only the fulfillment of Messianic prophecy, but also the second Moses and the “son of David” is important in the theological implications which the Matthean author is claiming about the supersessional role of Jesus to the commandments and Torah. The concept of Jesus as the second Moses is seen in the first chapter of Matthew, “with Mary’s miraculous pregnancy, Joseph’s resolve to divorce her, and the divine instructions to marry her, which bear some connection to midrashic accounts of Moses’ conception” (Levine and Brettler 8). Further accounts of Jesus as the second Moses
can be seen in Jesus praying on top of a mountain both before the Sermon of the Mount (Matt. 5:1) and calming the storm in (Matt. 14:23). The Matthean author’s motif of Jesus as the second Moses is perhaps best seen in the story of Jesus’ temptation in the desert. The story of Jesus in the desert not only reminds the reader of Jesus’ Jewish roots and ties to the Hebrew Bible, but it also presents how the new covenant of Jesus supersedes the Sini covenant and the need for the commandments. The story depicts how Jesus will open the favor of God to all the nations, rather than the covenant he has with the Jewish people alone as seen in the covenant given to Moses on Mt. Sinai. Jesus, as depicted by the gospels and partially highlighted in Matthew, supersedes the authority of Moses and Torah,

Matthew’s Jesus is not only depicted as the “new Moses” who interprets Torah for the people of Israel, but he is also Moses’ superior. For example, in Matthew’s temptation story (4.1–11), Jesus, like Moses, fasts for forty days and nights (4.2; cf. Deut 9.9), is challenged to command stones (4.3; cf. Num 20.8), and is shown “the kingdom” (4.8; cf. Deut 34.1). There, Jesus is shown “all the kingdoms” of the world, but Moses is shown only Canaan. Furthermore, whereas Moses dies outside the Promised Land, Jesus returns (28.16–20); whereas Moses leads the people to their earthly home; Jesus leads followers to the kingdom of heaven. Moses receives the Torah from God and gives it to Israel; Jesus is the fulfillment of Torah as well as its authoritative interpreter (Levine and Brettler 8).

The Matthean author also appeals to Jesus’ authority and fulfillment of the Hebrew Bible’s prophecy of a messiah through the use of the term “son of David” as a title for Jesus. Jesus is, for Matthew, “‘son of David,’ the long-awaited future ideal Davidic king, called messiah in Jewish post biblical literature (1.1; see the genealogy). The Gospel frequently uses phrases such as “son of David” as well as references to Jesus’ kingship (1.1; 2.2; 9.27; 12.23; 15.22; 20.30; 22.42; 27.11) (Levine and Brettler 10). The gospel of Matthew theme of Jesus not only as a Jew, but as having fulfilled the covenants of his Jewish faith is a distinctly Christian interpretation of the Hebrew Bible. The Messiah in Jewish thought is not meant to abolish the law, but to reign in a period of Torah being upheld by both Jews and non-Jews. The Messiah, for Judaism, is not even embodied in a person. Much of Jewish scholarship and thought refers to the Messianic Age, which greatly differs from the Christian interpretation of the Messiah.
Messianic Age vs. the Messiah

Judaism is less concerned with who the Messiah is, and more focused on what the Messiah will do. Judaism rejects the fundamental assumption of Jesus and Messiah, but also the Christian idea of supersessionism and completion of the law. In the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, an ideal Davidic king is one of the most common ideas held of the eschatological redeemer (Levenson 622). The idea that the Messiah will be a future king, an “anointed one,” is not a prevalent theme in the Tanakh. The one exception is found in Daniel 9:25-26, where the Messiah is presented as a ruler or a king. David B. Levenson writes, “after Davidic kingship did not succeed in reestablishing itself in the Persian period, expectation of an ideal Davidic ruler eventually projected into a future culmination of history” (623).

However, as stated above the Hebrew scriptures are less focused on who the Messiah is, but on what the Messiah will do. One major function of the Messiah is to defeat both the natural and supernatural agents of oppression as seen in Ezra 13:38 (Levenson 623). Levenson highlights the Jewish idea of a Messianic Age vs. the Christian belief in a Messianic figure, “following the Tanakh, the focus of the texts is less on the messianic figure than on the Messianic Age, the time when God’s justice, rather than cosmic earthly evil rulers, would prevail” (623).

When Jesus claimed to fulfill many of the messianic ideas that were prevalent in His time. Jesus is presented as a Davidic king, as a high priest, as a prophet, and as a heavenly divine being. Levenson writes, “in all these cases, Jesus is presented as superseding all earlier Jewish kings, priests, prophets, and heavenly beings. Nowhere, however, do Jewish messianic expectations reflect parallels to such ideas as the Messiah’s death as expiation for sins, of the distinctive message of the Gospel of John, equating to the Messiah of God” (623). Judaism not only rejected the belief in the need for a savior based on man’s inability to keep Torah, due to the sin nature of man, but Judaism rejects the concept of Jesus as Messiah because he did not usher in the Messianic Age Jews have been waiting on.
For all the theological differences between Judaism and Christianity, the belief in Jesus as the Messiah is perhaps the most widely recognized. There are many differences in theology, which can be quite nuanced and go outside the scope of this paper. However, these unbridgeable theological interpretations, and subsequent beliefs, highlight the great differences in these faiths. Abba Silver writes, “[Jews reject] the Messianism of Jesus, Paul’s onslaught on the Law, his gospel of redemption through the atoning of death and resurrection of Jesus, and the doctrine of God incarnate in man” (85). The coming of Jesus, read from a Jewish lens, utterly fails in fulfilling the Messianic Age prophesied in the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament,

As a Messianic movement Christianity failed, as have all such movements in Jewish history and in the history of other people’s. The new order of things, the kingdom of God, which was expected hourly, did not materialize. It has not materialized in the two thousand years which have elapsed since that time. The appearance of Jesus did not mark the end of history, and the mission and teachings of the Christian Church today are not greatly influenced by considerations of his Second Coming. The postponed Parousia has long since lost its theological import for considerable sections of Christendom, even as the coming of the Messiah has for considerable sections of Jewry (Silver 85).

Judaism lacks a consistent idea of what the Messianic Age will look like, but one thing is for sure, Jews reject Jesus as ushering in that period in history. To most Jews, if there are concerns about the Messianic Age, they are an idea for some future time (Levenson 628). Levenson writes, “since the nineteenth century, the Reform Movement, which represents a large percentage of American Jews, has rejected the concept of an individual Messiah and other features of traditional Jewish eschatology in favor of the idea found in the Tanakh of an age of peace and justice achieved through human efforts” (623). Thus, many Jews are still waiting on the Messianic Age, rather, than a Messiah.

This section has demonstrated the term “Judeo-Christian” is not based on any concrete religious similarity between Judaism and Christianity. While Huntington argues that the post Cold War world is more complex, his understanding of Jewish relations with the Western world and other civilizations is overly simplistic. His inability to expand upon the large disparities between Judaism and Christianity and
generate unique civilizational markers for Israel demonstrates negligence on his part as a scholar. For the purpose of this paper, the preceding sections were needed to demonstrate the vast differences between Judaism and Christianity. This paper serves to support the need for a classification of Jewish identity independent of Western civilization. The idea that one can blend the two religions together based on evidence of shared “Judeo-Christian” values is simply incorrect, especially when examined through a religious lens. Despite the fact that Huntington outlines religion as the most important aspect in classifying a civilizational bloc, he demonstrates a lack of understanding concerning both Jewish ethics and Christian dogma.

Section 2: To revisit the claim of this paper, Huntington defines Israel as a Western civilization with the sole justification that Jews and Christians share fundamental Judeo-Christian values. This is both a religious and historical fallacy. Recall that Huntington regarded religion as the most important benchmark for civilizational identity, but the role of history is also critical for shaping the civilizational and identifying how that civilization will interact with other identities. This section will demonstrate the history of strife and the role Christians played in facilitating discrimination and persecution against the Jewish people in the 20th century.

Supersessionism/Replacement Theology

Replacement theology, also known as supersessionism, became a prevalent belief in Europe which justified Christian racism towards Jews. In short, replacement theology attempts to “de-Judaize” the Bible and take away Jew’s claim to God and Israel through their covenant blessings with God. In Genesis 17:7, God establishes his covenant with the Jewish people, “And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant” (“The Holy Bible”). Judaism and Christianity view the covenants of the Old Testament differently; the most striking difference is that Christians read the covenants with the belief that Jesus fulfilled them. The cornerstone of Christian belief is that Jesus fulfills the Hebrew Scriptures and ushers in a New Covenant. Thus, Christianity is inherently anti-Judaism, at the very least in believing that the messianic movement of Jesus is the one true salvation. Supersessionism, or the idea that God's covenant is with all people and not
simply the Jews, is not inherently anti-Semitic. Theologians like Martin Luther, evolved their anti-Judaism theology into a hatred against the Jewish people themselves. This is where persecution and discrimination both by the church and governments throughout history can be seen.

As this paper has highlighted, Jews and Christians share common texts but interpret them very differently. Instead of having shared text at the center of a common identity, historically, it can be observed that these theological differences have been the root of persecution. “Supersessionism” or “Replacement theology,” claims that Christianity (and the Church) has replaced Israel Judaism and the once True Israel (Kessler 764). This theology became widely accepted, it was a way for Christians to explain not only why Jews rejected Jesus, but the differences in Scriptural interpretation. The theologies coined “Supersessionism/Replacement theology” took root in the Protestant church after the Reformation, however, these ideas were prevalent throughout the early church and present in Catholic teachings which often failed to address Christian roots in Judaism.

The following history on anti-Jewish teachings from early Church leaders laid the foundations for anti-Semitism in the 20th century. It is false to present the history of Jews and Christians as united, as the following sections will illustrate a long history of Jewish persecution by the hands and theology of Christians. The origins of persecution can find roots in an early Church apologist’s theology, Justin Martyr, “[he claimed] that Jews had lost the covenant because only Christians could correctly interpret the Scriptures” (Kessler 764). This condemnation that Jews were punished by God and removed from His favor for not recognizing the Messiah lead Justin and other Church Fathers to call for the “Adversus Judaeos (“Against the Jews”) tradition or the ‘teaching of contempt,’ continued to proliferate as Constantine gained control of the Roman Empire and later Christian rulers began their systematic persecution of Jews” (Kessler 764). This tradition of Jewish contempt by the early Church leaders set the culture and tone of future theologians when addressing Judaism, and perhaps even more important, the Jewish people themselves. Ed Kessler writes, “Such teachings include supersessionism, but it also included polemics against Jewish teachings and indeed against Jewish teachings and indeed against the
very nature of the Jewish people” (764). The fine line of disagreeing with the Jewish interpretation of Hebrew Scriptures, and discriminating against those who still adhered to the Hebrew Bible’s interpretation, lead to accusations such as the Jews as “Christi Killers.”

In the second century, Bishop Melito of Sardis offered an Easter homily, *Peri Pascha*, which marked “a new low in anti-Jewish teaching: Melito directly accused the Jews of being responsible for the death of Jesus, which he takes also to indicate the death of God... from the second century onward, the charge against Jews as being the killers of Christ became accentuated. With good justification, the Jewish scholar Eric Werner called Melito the ‘first poet of deicide’” (Kessler 765). This accusation of being “God killers” followed the Jews throughout the centuries, becoming a prevalent idea in post-Reformation thought.

The archbishop of Constantinople, John Chrysostom, furthered this cursed idea of the Jews and implemented it into his own theology. This concept of biblical curses against the Jews and blessings for the Christians becomes a prevalent worldview for Christians addressing the role and function of Jews in their faith, and even the role of Jews in their societies. The Christian idea that the Temple’s destruction marked the Jewish people’s permanent rejection from God, which was mentioned earlier in this paper, finds origin in Chrysostom’s theology (Kessler 765). Kessler writes,

> The impact of Chrysostom’s sermons, Melito’s homely, and the *Adversus ludeaos* tradition was felt by later generations. Sections of Chrysostom’s sermons, for example, were excerpted into the Byzantine liturgy for Holy Week. They were translated into Russian in the eleventh century and were read in medieval Europe, in Byzantium, and in Russia when Christianity was the dominant religion and Jews were subjected to repressive laws. The accusation of deicide remains in place in the Holy Thursday liturgy of the Orthodox Church, still recited in many, though not all Orthodox churches: ‘the murderers of God, the lawless nation of the Jews’” (765).

Discrimination against Jews and anti-Jewish theology emerged very early in Church history, as Christianity shifted from being the minority Jewish messianic sect to a majority religion in its own right.
This resulted in a long history of Jews falling victim to religious discrimination and set the tone for larger discrimination in society and enforced by repressive laws.

Many Christians know Martin Luther, the father of the Reformation, for his historic act of defiance against the Catholic Church by nailing the 95 Theses to the doors of the Wittenberg Castle. However, fewer Christians are aware of his published work entitled *The Jews and their Lies* (1543), where Luther made known his anti-Judaic theology which he developed over the course of his life.

Luther’s influential role in the Church yielded him a lot of power and influence, and his work which preached of a deep Jewish hatred would not only revive medieval myths and perceptions of Jews but also perpetuate anti-Semitic beliefs that influenced Christian worldviews throughout history until the rule Adolf Hitler. It is important to note that Luther was not the first to preach such beliefs. In fact, the church Luther preached at in Wittenberg adorns an anti-Semitic sculpture on the exterior of the church which depicts Jews nursing off of a swine (Moulson and Spoke). The sculpture has been called “Judensau,” or “Jew pig,” and dates back to 1300, a couple of hundred years before Luther. The sculpture still remains on the outside of the church today and is one of 20 relics of anti-Semitic art from the Middle Ages that can be found in Germany and across Europe (Moulson and Spoke). The relic represents the bigoted sentiment Christians held towards Jews in the Middle Ages. Luther perpetuated those beliefs and even gave them more power by using his platform to make replacement theology more prevalent and accepted among Christians. The relic remains on the church today and is a reminder that sentiments like this still exist today.

Despite the medieval anti-Semitic sentiments that existed in Luther’s time, he did not always preach hatred towards the Jews. As an Old Testament scholar and professor at the University of Wittenberg, he understood the beliefs of Jews from the Old Testament and believed that if Jews were taught the Old Testament “properly” then Jewish-Christian relations could at least serve the purpose of evangelism (Marans). His earlier work titled *That Jesus Christ Was Born a Jew* published in 1523 held sentiments about Jewish-Christian reconciliation which mirrors modern Jewish-Christian relations.
However, Luther became disillusioned in his attempts to help Jews “properly” understand the Old Testament (Marans). Of course, the truth was Jews simply did not, and still do not, read the Old Testament through the same lens as a Christian. His disillusionment towards Jews turned to hatred which led him to write “The Jews and their Lies” in 1543. He wrote candidly about his hatred, and even encouraged Christians to act violently against Jews:

> And so, dear Christian, beware of the Jews . . . you can see how God’s wrath has consigned them to the Devil, who has robbed them not only of a proper understanding of the Scriptures, but also of common human reason, modesty and sense. . . . Thus, when you see a real Jew you may with a good conscience cross yourself, and boldly say, “There goes the Devil incarnate.” (Marans).

Luther encouraged his vast amount of followers to engage in violence against Jews in their communities. Luther recommended in his book *On the Jews and Their Lies* that Christians should “set fire to their synagogues or schools” (Gritsch). Jewish houses should “be razed and destroyed,” and Jewish “prayer books and Talmudic writings, in which such idolatry, lies, cursing, and blasphemy are taught, [should] be taken from them.” In addition, “their rabbis [should] be forbidden to teach on pain of loss of life and limb” (Gritsch). Luther’s theology turned dangerous because he not only expressed a difference in belief towards Jews but marked them as less than and demonized them with terms like “real Jew” and “Devil incarnate”. Luther’s religious influence also encompassed political influence; he engaged in violent acts against Jews which were justified as Christians “protecting” themselves from the Jews. This included “burning or razing synagogues, destroying Jewish homes, confiscating Jewish holy books, banning Jewish religious worship, expropriating Jewish money, and deporting Jews” (Marans). If this sounds hauntingly like a precursor to Nazi book burnings, destruction, and the vandalism of Jewish communities, it is because Hitler himself was inspired by the teachings of Luther.

*The Aryan Jesus*

The role of Christianity in the Third Reich is a notable topic when discussing modern Jewish-Christian
relations. It is important to acknowledge that while Christianity in Germany helped propagate anti-Jewish beliefs and sentiments, this theology does not reflect Christianity as a whole. However, the aftermath of the Holocaust still colors how Jews view their relationship with God and their relationship with Christians, who played a large role in the theological justifications for the Holocaust. The use of Christian anti-Jewish propaganda was not a top-down initiative of Hitler or the Third Reich; Christian hatred towards Judaism pre-existed the rise of Nazi power. By the time Hitler came to power, anti-Jewish sentiments were historically accepted and demonstrated in theology across Europe. However, Germany, in particular, sought to align German Christian doctrine with Nazi ideology. In the inter-war years, as Hitler gained power, prominent German theologians actively sought to equip Hitler with anti-Jewish propaganda from a “biblical” authority and perspective. Support for Nazi ideology from prominent Christian men like Walter Grundmann meant a theological justification for Jewish hate and ultimately the final solution (“Nazifying” 594). During the inter-war years (1933), Grundmann himself offered three solutions to the Jewish problem: (1) expel them, (2) grant them guest status, (3) murder them. Nazifying Christianity in Germany would involve employing heretical theology that evolved into Nietzschean Social Darwinism (Metaxas 173). Evidence like this demonstrates that theologians like Grundmann and the Deutsche Christen denomination (DC) had an agenda of their own to eradicate the Jewish roots of Christianity, this legacy of anti-Jewish theology is part of Luther’s legacy and the climax of a long history of anti-Jewish thought in the Church.

Grundmann took Luther’s anti-Jewish theology to an extreme end, which resulted in a large portion of German-Christians believing and supporting the Nazi efforts to persecute and eradicate the Jewish population. In a modern context, it is important to understand the way Christianity was used as a holy justification for Jewish eradication. The result of Christian support for the Nazis has lasting modern implications. Many Jews today believe that Christianity fueled and justified the Holocaust. This is partially true; the DC and men like Grundmann did help in the Third Reich’s efforts and provided
biblical propaganda for political use. However, it would be false to claim that all Christians supported the Nazis. Unfortunately, the lasting mark of the Holocaust means that many Jews today do not know the difference between the heretical teachings of Grundmann and that of actual Christianity. Men like Grundmann were all too eager to prove their loyalty to Hitler and the Third Reich (Metaxas 166). In an attempt to Nazify Christianity and advance their own anti-Jewish sentiments, German clergy from the DC started the Institute for the Study and Eradication of Jewish Influence on German Church Life.

The Institute was intent on making the German church void of any connection to Jewish roots found in the Old Testament in Jesus’ lineage. Eric Metaxas writes, “step one was to define Germanness as inherently in opposition to Jewishness. To make Christianity one with Germanness meant purging it of everything Jewish. It was an absurd project” (172). This meant purging the Bible of the Old Testament and any mention of Judaism in the New Testament. However, this would then pose a deep theological problem as Jesus himself was Jewish. Without worry, men like Grundmann had an answer to the problem concerning Jesus’ Jewishness. In his 1940 publication *Life of Jesus*, Grundmann declared that Jesus himself was not Jewish but Aryan (“Theology” 153). Grundmann was not the first to introduce this racial theory to Christianity. Adolf Schlatter, in his *History of Israel* argued that whatever Jewish identity that existed in the Galilee region during Jesus’ time was the result of forced conversion of non-Jews to Judaism during the Hasmonean era (“Nazifying” 597). Part of the racial theory surrounding Jesus’ ethnic identity claimed that the Galilee region of Israel was not Jewish, but that Aryans occupied the region after the Assyrian conquest of the Northern kingdom during the 8th century B.C.E. which is recorded in 2 Kings 17 (“Nazifying” 588). Thus, during Jesus’ time, the region was occupied by Aryans who moved into the territory after the Assyrians conquered the land, not Jews. Ernst Lohmeyer developed the theory of a two-site origin of Christianity. In the Galilee region “a universalistic son of man eschatology prevailed” whereas in Jerusalem the Jews rejected Jesus because of a “nationalistic Jewish eschatology” (“Nazifying” 597). The conclusion of Lohmeyer’s racial theory is that the Jews rejected Jesus as the Son of Man because he was not one of them. While completely incorrect, the
German clergy were willing to revise the Bible to remove the Jews from any connection to Christianity.

Grundmann, and others in the Institute, saw their violent fight against Judaism as a holy war. The Institute was successful in propagating history to bring evidence of Jew’s attempts at world domination, which justified their desire to eradicate the Jews. Meyer-Erlach argued that the Jews were responsible for poisoning England during the Reformation, which is why England started the war against Germany (“Nazifying” 596). The war they were fighting was just as much a physical war as a holy war against the evil teachings the Jews had indoctrinated the “enemy”. Meyer-Erlach writes, “today we know that through the so-called English Reformation... Christianity was not only ‘englandized,’ but that England’s spirit and England’s soul was deeply Judaized... England is the true Israel” (“Nazifying” 596). The idea of spiritual warfare motivated the Institute’s wartime propaganda. By the time the war started, the Institute and the DC had gained support from Hitler and the Third Reich, not for their shared theological beliefs but for their mutual benefit. The Institute provided theological justification for the Third Reich, as well as a large portion of support from the German church population (“Nazifying” 596). The Third Reich provided the power and arms to fulfill the ultimate theological end: the eradication of the Jews. The relationship formed between these two parties was one born out of mutual benefit and a shared end game, albeit one political and one religious.

Holocaust-era theology fueled by the Institution left a lasting mark on Jewish-Christian relations. First, the propaganda pushed by Grundmann and the Institute legitimized the Third Reich’s discrimination against the Jews, which led to their slaughter. Second, the Holocaust-era theology changed how the Jewish people viewed their connection to God, leading many to wonder if the covenant with God and his people had been broken. Many survivors could not justify a world where God and the evils of the Holocaust could co-exist. Lesli Koppelman Ross writes,

Until the Holocaust, the traditional view of God and His connection with Israel had remained intact: God was our Provider and Protector. As the Passover haggadah expresses it, “in every generation enemies rise up seeking to destroy us, but God delivers us from their hands.” This expectation carried the Jews
through the failed Bar Kokhba revolt, the Crusades, repeated humiliations and expulsions, pogroms and myriad persecutions, even the Spanish Inquisition. But it was shaken (and for some, completely shattered) by the success of the Nazis in decimating European Jewry.

The conclusion of many Jews continues to be that God abandoned them or is non-existent. One can assume as long as they are persecuted in the land of Israel and not given their own identity, they will feel that way. The Holocaust was effective in severing many Jew’s belief in God’s covenant, which is a legacy the German church and Martin Luther’s teachings is responsible for.

Robinson writes, “The history of the Jewish people is filled with martyrs, men and women who died because of their religious convictions... what sets [the Holocaust] apart from those other martyrdoms, from the victims of the Crusaders, of the Inquisitors, of rampaging Cossacks? Indeed, a very few Jewish theologians argue that the [Holocaust] is merely more of the same, but her are significant differences” (494). The Holocaust stands as a unique example of Jewish persecution, it was the industrial annihilation of a Western civilization against a minority identity living within that civilization. Robinson writes, “the [Holocaust] was not the first genocide in modern history. But it is the first, to date, only example of genocide committed by a cultured, industrialized Western nation against its own citizens and neighbors” (495). The Holocaust reframed what constitutes ‘Western civilization’. Thus, the historic examples of Jewish persecution, culminated in the unprecedented genocide of Jews in Poland, dismantles Huntington’s presentation of Jewish identity being inherently Western. The Jewish community has always been inherently Jewish, even in the unique languages, culture, and art that stands independent of religious identity.

The Catholic Church’s Neutrality

As examined in the last section, the DC, the Institute for the Study and Eradication of Jewish Influence on German Church Life were active players in fueling propaganda against Jews prior to and during the Second World War. The heretical theology practiced by these individuals and churches was a practice in
hatred and evil. Theologians like Walter Grundmann actively sought to use their power to reform the church in Germany, revise the Bible to fit an anti-Jewish agenda, and rally German support for the Nazis as they attempted to eradicate the Jews. What about other Christians? The Holocaust is an example of the failure of the global Church in exercising love as demonstrated by Jesus and the Gospels. The Holocaust occurred in Europe, one of the world’s epicenters of Christianity and Church history. Indifference is a position that many Christians chose to take during the persecution of the Jews, not just during the Holocaust, but in the interwar years when anti-Semitic ideology took root in Europe. Where was the Catholic Church during the interwar years when apathy enabled anti-Semitic theology and policies across Europe? Catholic and Protestant leaders alike failed to condemn the Nazis in the interwar years. The time to prevent the Holocaust was not when it happened, rather in the decade before when the Institute was revising the Bible and nazifying Christianity in Germany.

The role of the Catholic Church during WWII has always been ambiguous, as the Vatican took the position of neutrality during the war. Members of the Catholic faith fought on both sides of the war, the position of the Church was gray in comparison to the DC in Germany. However, indifference or neutrality is a position. Turning a blind eye to the horrors of the Holocaust is a form of support. In hindsight, history has proven that Pope Pius XI, the Pope during the war, was sympathetic to Hitler and the Nazi cause. For Hitler, Pius XI was the perfect head of the Catholic Church. His neutrality and failure to condemn the Final Solution was, for Hitler, a nod of approval from the head of the world’s largest denomination of Christians. However, the relationship between Pius XI and Hitler started in the inter-war years (Krieg). Prior to becoming Pope Pius XI, Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli served as the Vatican’s secretary of state. As the Nazis came to power after the 1933 elections in Germany, Pacelli and Germany’s vice-chancellor Franz von Papen signed a concordat between the Holy See and the German Reich (Krieg). While the concordat was not an official endorsement from the Catholic Church for Nazi anti-Semitism or the Final Solution, it was an official recognition of the Nazi party which lent the regime legitimacy at the beginning of their reign.
Along with recognizing the Nazi government with the treaty in 1933, Pope Pius XI looked the other way when the Nazis rounded up Jews from the Roman ghetto upon the orders of SS Captain Theordo Dannecher on October 16, 1943 (Laskin). Pope Pius XI’s failure to speak out against the deportation of Jews came at a critical time in WWII history and is an important example of apathy among important Christian leaders when confronted with the genocide of Jews.

**Christian Silence in Jewish Persecution**

The previous sections on the role of Christianity in the Holocaust and the policy of apathy adopted by the Catholic church highlights an important period of religious tension in Jewish-Christian relations. Replacement theology and radical Christianity seeks to advance anti-Jewish ideas. The motives for doing so are hard to pinpoint because who knows the human heart but God? However, as extensively covered in the first section of this paper, the irreconcilable differences between Judaism and Christianity might leave some Christians (the newer religion) feeling the need to diminish the Jewish faith in order to justify the core theological differences in religions. From the interwar years to the Holocaust, Christians around the world were guilty in their silence and apathy towards anti-Jewish thought and teachings. Professor Eva Fleischner writes,

> I believe here is ample evidence that the centuries-old Christian anti-Judaism prepared the soil for modern anti-Semitism and the Holocaust; that the Holocaust could not have happened if Christians of Germany, Europe, and the world, had taken an unequivocal stand against the Nazi program of persecution and eventual discrimination of the Jews. The reason why no such stand was taken... is the strong anti-Semitism of the West, one of the roots I perceive to be in Christian teaching (Cargas 33).

Why the global Church kept silent during the Holocaust is a dimension of Holocaust and Christian history that many modern Christian Zionists acknowledge, but it is hard to grapple with such a horrific sin against humanity. Supersessionism was a prevalent theology in most Christian denominations until after the Holocaust. Kessler writes, “reflecting on a history of anti-Jewish teachings and preaching, coupled with
the complicity of Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox Christians in the atrocities of World War II, a number of Christians came to repudiate the teaching of contempt. The process of repudiation was accomplished by a reawakening among Christians to the Jewish origins of Christianity” (765). Despite modern Christian attempts to apologize and reconcile a relationship with modern Jews, the encounters leave many Jews questioning the motives and the theology of Christians trying to bridge a relationship with Jews and Israel today. From the Jewish perspective, either the very nature of Christianity predisposed the global Church to the coexistence an acceptance of Nazi genocide, or the inhumanity of Nazi secular ideology is liked to the anti-Semitic component of Christian theology. Many Christians must grapple with this in hindsight today. Plaguing the modern Church is a continued attitude of apathy towards Jews and Israel. While Jewish-Christian relations through conservative politics and Christian Zionism has improved and advanced towards some reconcilable future, the Holocaust, particularly from the Jewish perspective, permanently altered the relationship between Jews and Christians.

In 1943, David Bronstein, editor for The Hebrew Christian Alliance Quarterly wrote an article about Hitler and the genocide of Jews in Europe. His call to “we Christians” reads as follows: “What do these revelations of German atrocities do to you? Are you not sick at heart? Are you indignant? You should be. Too long have we Christians been silent. Our voices or protest should have been heard long before this happened” (Cohen 195). This silence Bronstein writes about was not the fault of ignorance or lack of information. Christians knew what was happening. To say Hitler’s intentions were unclear at the time of World War II, especially by 1943 is just a false appeal to ignorance. Men like Bronstein were unsuccessful in persuading the American public or gaining support in condemning the treatment of Jews under the Nazis. J.H. Oldman wrote on May 20, 1945, “a few courageous individuals raised their protest and did what they could to succor the victims, but the public as a whole was apathetic and the disposition in influential quarters was to hush things up” (Ross 202). In other publications following the war, a Jewish monthly magazine called the Opinion, brutally condemned the apathy of Christians towards Jews in World War II. The article published in 1945 reads, “the most shocking of the war, indeed all of history,
is the extermination of close to five million European Jews! Almost equally shocking is the indifference of the civilized world... Hitler certainly has scored a superlative success in at least one field of the war on the Jews” (Ross 203). The purpose of this essay is to highlight not only the theological differences between Jews and Christians but also demonstrate the vast history of Jewish persecution. The discrimination towards Jews for centuries enabled a evil man like Hitler to exterminate the Jewish people without any fear of opposition. Hitler did have one victory: the extermination of the Jews. The apathy that caused silence as a reaction to the Holocaust still exists today. Therefore, for Huntington to classify Israel and Jewish identity as “Western” undermines the uniqueness of Jewish identity while also giving them back to the very people and culture which oppressed and persecuted the Jewish faith, ethnicity, and culture for hundreds of years.

**Jewish-Christian Relations from an American context**

It would do this paper a disservice to use the Holocaust as an example of Jewish-Christian relations, without addressing other points in history. One must also look at the role America, an important member of the West, has in the interactions with Jews and the emergence of Israel. In fact, it could be argued that Christian-Zionism coming from America has driven the political alliances between conservative American political leaders and their Israeli counterparts.

The role of Protestant theology such as replacement theology not only influenced the European idea of the Jew, but this same prejudice and ambivalence existed in the United States. In her essay *The Ambivalent Image*, Louise A. Mayo discusses discrimination towards Jews in America during the 19th century. Mayo writes, “the view that the Jew was the Christ-killer, rejected by God and justly punished for his transgressions, was widely accepted. A related popular idea was that the Jewish religion was merely a precursor of Christianity and, therefore, no longer relevant in the modern world” (106). In America, the goal of conversion in the 19th and 20th centuries became the mission of Protestant leaders; a goal that colors the motives of some Christian Zionist movements today.
While America is proud of the Constitutional decree of a separation between Church and State, indeed social perceptions of the 19th century were heavily influenced by religious narratives and ideals. It was during the Civil War that anti-Semitism and hatred towards Jews escalated beyond the theological teachings of some Protestant leaders. Naomi Cohen writes, “in the fall of 1862 General Grant expelled Jews as a class from military territories... American Jewry was stunned. This act was qualitatively different from the more typical slights they suffered when Lincoln ordered strict observance of Sunday in the armed forces (and did not consider privileges for Sabbath observers) and when Congress decided against providing for Jewish chaplains” (131). Fueled by religious and Christian theological undertones, American Jewry began to experience acts of prejudice against them during the Civil War. This continued to push a growing fear that Christian anti-Semitic views would spill over into the political arena. In the midst of the Civil War, the period of immense change politically and militarily created an environment for major Christian theologians to push for the Constitution to declare God as Jesus (Cohen 133). As a result, the Board of Delegates of American Israelites formed a petition before the Senate to not amend the Constitution to alienate all other religious beliefs and expressions. One clergyman rejected this opposition of American Jewry to the amendment, stating, “the enemies of our movement naturally draw into their ranks all infidels, Jews, Jesuits, and all opposers of Him who is Lord over all, our Lord Jesus Christ” (Cohen 133). The Constitution was not amended, but this marked one of the first times in United States history when Jews felt the theological partiality of Christians bleeding into politics and social attitudes.

A decade after the proposed amendment to the Constitution, Reverend Dwight L. Moody embarked on his crusades which not only slandered Jews and Judaism but aimed at their conversion. Moody’s anti-Semitic theology mirrored that of other theologians, however, what sets Moody apart is the influence over social perception of Jews as a result of his large following. As the 19th century saw major transportations with industrialism, the emergence of new markets, and the middle class, the theology preached by Moody became equipped with social motivations for discrimination against Jews. Cohen writes, “Moody’s religious message may well have intensified the feeling of those Christian businessmen...
competing with the Jews for social status (135). By the 1880s, the prevalent anti-Semitic ideas both in religious and secular communities were widespread in the United States, as in Western and Eastern Europe.

The question of “Jewish-Christian” relations emerged at this time, opening a new category of scholarship to address the issues and roles of Jews and Christians existing in the same space; a conversation that still exists today, although in a very different way. The positive attitudes in Jewish-Christian relations today does not reflect the discrimination Christians encouraged against Jews in the 19th century. Cohen writes, “At that time, a new note was increasingly heard from Christians who spoke out on reasons for discrimination. The fault lay, they said, in the exclusiveness and separatism practice by Jews” (143). At the turn of the century, despite efforts of American Jewry, anti-Semitism motivated by religion but adopted by secularism was hard to combat.

Fast forward to the end of World War II, the survivors of the radical and genocidal racial ideology of the Holocaust found themselves not only dealing with the trauma of such abuse but also with being displaced in European countries and society that advocated for their annihilation. Those who returned home after the Holocaust found their neighbors in their homes, running their businesses, or socially estranged them from society. The racial ideology of World War II did not disappear at the end of the war. In Poland, for example, “there were a number of pogroms (violent anti-Jewish riots). The largest of these occurred in the town of Kielce in 1946 when Polish rioters killed at least 42 Jews and beat many others” (“The Aftermath”). Despite the circumstances of most displaced European Jewry, immigration to other countries was limited. As a result, tens of thousands of homeless Jewish Holocaust survivors entered refugee centers and displaced persons camps, such as Bergen-Belsen in Germany (“The Aftermath”). The occupying armies facilitated these camps, as a result of so many displaced Jews, and the Jewish Brigade Group was formed to facilitate the “flight” or “escape” to Palestine a year before the end of the British Mandate and the United Nations Resolution 181. This granted Jews sovereignty as the Jewish land of Israel. The United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) was tasked with figuring out a
solution to Palestine after the British failed under the British Mandate (Gordis 145). Even today, 70 years after Jewish independence, the Jewish people have to continually defend their right to exist. Many Israelites are growing tired of having to defend the present with the past. Their occupation of Palestine as the state of Israel requires the Jewish people to continually defend their ancestral and religious claim to the land. Jewish persecution is far from over, and this essay will even boldly suggest that the state of Israel and the city of Jerusalem offers the perfect empirical case study for Huntington’s clash of civilizations theory.

Conclusion: The Case for a Jewish Civilization

This essay has critiqued Huntington’s use of the term “Judeo-Christian” values as the sole justification for classifying Israel as a member of Western civilization. Huntington only discusses Israel in reference to conflicts with its Arab neighbors. He proposes, as Bernard Lewis does, that these modern conflicts are rooted in the desire for the West to uphold “Judeo-Christian” values in the face of threats from the Islamic (Muslim) world. Huntington does not even directly address the term “Judeo-Christian.” Instead, he quotes Bernard Lewis’ defense of western values, “we are facing a mood and a movement far transcending the level of issues and policies and the governments that pursue them. This is no less than a clash of civilizations—the perhaps irrational but surely historic reaction of an ancient rival against our Judeo-Christian heritage, our secular present, and the worldwide expansion of both” (32). Huntington’s classification of shared “Judeo-Christian” values is not an adequate justification for Israel being part of the Western civilizational bloc, as the term “Judeo-Christian” incorrectly represents the kinship between these faiths and their historical interactions. While critics of the argument presented in this paper may point to Jews settled in the western world as evidence for Huntington's classification, this paper acknowledges that Jews for centuries have existed outside of Palestine. To argue Jews over the centuries have fully assimilated to western life overlooks the historic prejudice which has segregated Jews within western cultures. Additionally, Jews have also existed in other non-western cultures, such as Mizrahi Jews
who settled in Northern Africa, other areas of the Middle East, and Asia. This paper upholds that Israel, like Japan, should exist as their own civilization despite being a single nation-state. Today, a Jewish state exists as the homeland for Jewish civilization, even if Jews exist within other cultures. Japan serves as a comparable civilization to Israel, in that a single nation-state is sufficient for a unique civilizational identity to be acknowledged.

This essay has demonstrated that there is little religious or historical precedent to defend the justification of the term “Judeo-Christian”. Religiously, these faiths are not basically one and the same but are, as Carl J. Friedrich points out, “fundamentally opposed to each other” (Weiss-Rosmarin 10). These irreconcilable differences in faith between Judaism and Christianity contradict any shared values or ethics Huntington proposes in his clash of civilizations theory. According to Huntington, religion informs the worldview of a civilization’s relationship between God and man (25). As this paper has extensively demonstrated, Judaism and Christianity understand the relationship between God and man to be very different. Indeed, it is the Christian conviction of God as Jesus and the need for salvation, which lead to a long history of Jewish persecution. Additionally, Huntington upholds that civilizational values are the product of centuries; his classification of civilizations is greatly dependent on a shared history. Thus, this paper has also demonstrated that Jewish-Christian history is anything but united.

This paper concludes that the term “Judeo-Christian” is an unsubstantiated justification for Huntington to define Jewish identity as inherently western. Future scholarship can address the relationship between evangelical Christians and support for the state of Israel politically. Amy Kaplan writes, “the providential narrative has made the special relationship seem inevitable, as though it primed Christian Americans to embrace Israel long before the founding of either nation-state. In reality, it took many changes in twentieth-century America- the emergence of the idea of the Judeo-Christian tradition, post-Holocaust theology, and the politicization of evangelical Christians- to generate new stories and forge modern bonds between American Christianity and the Jewish state” (3). Many Protestant Christians believe that the land of Israel plays a role in the return of Jesus. Thus, while this theology rejects Judaism
as valid, it upholds the importance of Jews ethnically and their covenantal tie to the Holy Land. 19th century theologian John Nelson Darby “expected that, in the near future, the Jews would re-establish themselves in Israel, would control Jerusalem and rebuild the temple there. After being persecuted by the Antichrist, a remnant that remained would embrace Christianity and await the return of their now-recognized Messiah, Jesus Christ” (Almond). This desire to be restored to the Holy Land during the end times has taken on a uniquely conservative political alliance between Christian conservatives in the United States and political leaders in Israel. While this paper was unable to delve into this complex dimension of Jewish-Christian relations, this would undoubtedly be an interesting phenomenon to observe through the lens of Huntington’s clash of civilizations theory in future research.

This essay will also make a brief observation on how the modern state of Israel fits all the parameters Huntington lays out to justify a civilizational identity. In many ways, the Jewish people are the perfect archetype for a unique civilizational identity. The following excerpt is taken from Huntington’s _The Clash of Civilizations_ essay written in 1993. Huntington outlines the criteria for a civilization,

A civilization is a cultural entity. Villages, regions, ethnic groups, nationalities, religious groups, all have distinct cultures at different levels of cultural heterogeneity. A civilization is thus the highest cultural grouping of people and the broadest level of cultural identity people have short of that which distinguishes humans from other species. It is defined both by common objective elements, such as **language, history, religion, customs, institutions** and by the subjective **self-identification** of people (24).

This essay has demonstrated that the Jewish people have a unique religion and identity. Despite political or religious motivations for grafting Judaism into a Christian legacy or identity, the Jewish people have successfully preserved their faith even over 2,000 years after the diaspora. This unique religious experience is also equipped with a unique ethnic identity. Judaism is not only a religion but an ethnic heritage that ties the Jewish people to the land of Israel. Even prior to the creation of the state of Israel, the Jewish people looked to the land as a promise to one day be restored to the birthplace of their faith. This unique religious identity contrasts Islam and Christianity since it is not proselytic. Rather, Judaism is
homogeneous, meaning that Jewish families and communities have always maintained their own unique identity even when living in different cultural landscapes. The close ties for Jews between their faith and their history means that the justification for a unique Jewish civilization can also be made from a historical standpoint. This essay has looked at the unique history of Jews in relation to Christian persecution, primarily from the 19th century to the present. However, there is an even older history of Jewish persecution and unique historical experiences that shape their civilization’s identity and modern existence, which could provide even further evidence for a unique Jewish civilization according to Huntington’s criteria.

The Jewish civilization can be justified, according to Huntington’s criteria for his other classifications that this paper has not extensively touched on. It can also be observed in the modern use of the Hebrew language. While opposition to this justification might point out that modern Hebrew use has only been practiced since the end of the 19th century, the use of modern Hebrew is a powerful tool for civilizational unity. Even in the diaspora, Jewish communities invented two languages, which helped preserve their Jewish ethnic identity even outside of the Holy Land. The Ashkenazim settled in France, Germany, and Eastern Europe, and developed their own unique culture and spoke Yiddish (Schoenberg). The Sephardim settled in Spain and Portugal, and unlike the Ashkenazim, they mixed with and borrowed from the cultures they settled in and spoke Ladino (Weiner). An astute observation would point out the importance language has played in preserving new Jewish cultures in Europe. Language both preserved Jewish ethnic identity in the diaspora and united Jewish identity with the formation of Israel.

Rabbi Mordecai M. Kaplan, whose book titled *Judaism as a Civilization*, published in 1934, predated Huntington’s clash of civilizations theory by decades but argued for a unique Jewish civilization. Under the teachings of Rabbi Kaplan, Reconstructionist Judaism emerged as a denomination of Judaism in America, which pushed back against Jewish assimilation. Reconstructionist Judaism understands Judaism as the “evolving religious civilization of the Jewish people” (“What is Reconstructionism”). For Rabbi Kaplan, the concept of a Jewish civilization can not exist apart from Palestine (“Judaism as a
Civilization” 186). Israel was not yet a nation when Rabbi Kaplan first published his book *Judaism as a Civilization*, but the concept of a primary Jewish civilization is closely tied to the creation of Israel. Rabbi Kaplan argued that a Jewish civilization is not merely justified on the grounds of religion but by other aspects of Jewish life such as language, culture, and social organization, which Huntington proposes in his thesis as defining a civilization's features. Rabbi Kaplan writes,

> Like all other ancient civilizations, the Jewish civilization was structurally undifferentiated, with religion as the all-dominating factor. The various aspects into which the Jewish civilization may be analyzed were little more than “the application of the religious point of view to the functions of daily life.” But as a modern civilization, each aspect of Judaism, its language and literature, its ethics, its art, its social organization, will acquire not independence but its own structural reality, apart from religion. Religion will still occupy a position of primacy, but it will be a premium inter pares (“Judaism as a Civilization” 214).

Rabbi Kaplan argues that a unique culture surrounding the Jewish religion has developed to substantiate a unique Jewish civilization, with religion as the nexus of all cultural life. Most scholars of civilization ignore the concept of a Jewish civilization. This paper acknowledges the work of Rabbi Kaplan because his book *Judaism as a Civilization* is the only significant piece of literature that argues for a Jewish civilization. Additionally, he addresses all the unique aspects of Jewish life, satisfying Huntington’s criteria for a civilization.

This essay has attempted to dismantle the inadequate justification of “Judeo-Christian” values provided as the sole justification in Huntington’s thesis for classifying Jewish identity as a member of the Western world. This essay does not discount any similarities in ethics or morals upheld by Jews and Christians. However, this essay does demonstrate the vast differences between these faiths and calls into question any argument made that these faiths are essentially the same. Even though Huntington discusses the extensive history and ethnic differences between the West and the Islamic worlds, he fails to demonstrate an understanding of the complex religious identities and relationships between Christians, Jews, and Muslims. This essay suggests that instead of using the criteria provided by Huntington to
formulate the civilizational blocs outlined in his thesis, one should understand that a unique Jewish civilization better represents Jewish identity in history and modernity than the Western classification provided by Huntington. This paper suggests the classification of “Judeo-Christian” values needs to be reevaluated because it is a Western understanding of Judaism and conceals the Western history of anti-Judaism (Almond). Additionally, the concept of “Judeo-Christian” values is potentially harmful to Jewish people by neglecting to recognize the unique aspects of their faith. Almond agrees with this observation when stating, “the term ‘Judeo-Christian tradition’ continues the suppression of Jewishness by hiding the essential differences between Judaism and Christianity, one of which is that each denies the validity of the other.” To finish with an observation from Rabbi Eliezer Berkovits: “Judaism is Judaism because it rejects Christianity, and Christianity is Christianity because it rejects Judaism” (Almond). This notion has been supported with the evidence outlined in this paper.
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