

# The Birkat Ha Minim

by Robert Wurtz II

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*The sermon explores the historical and theological implications of the Birkat ha-Minim and its impact on the relationship between Judaism and early Christianity.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 10:22, John 15:18, Acts 14:2, Romans 11:28, Galatians 3:28, Ephesians 2:14, 1 Peter 4:12, Revelation 2:9

**Topics:** "Jewish Christian Relations", "Messianic Judaism"

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## Description

Robert Wurtz II delves into the historical context of the Pharisees and the challenges faced by believers in Yeshua (Jesus) within Judaism. He highlights the division caused by the Birkat ha-Minim blessing, a curse recited daily in synagogues to ostracize and create animosity towards those who accepted Jesus as the Messiah. This curse deepened the divide between Rabbinic Judaism and believing Jews, leading to alienation and hostility. The sermon also touches on the impact of anti-Semitism within the Catholic and Protestant Church, shedding light on the struggles faced by Jews in recognizing Jesus as their Messiah.

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## Transcript

According to the Encyclopedia Judaica there were 7 different types of Pharisees (Perushim). Two of them were after the order of Abraham and Job and the other 5 were hypocrites (?). The Pharisee's that fled to Yavneh would likely have included no Nazarenes as they were deemed a heretical sect within Judaism along with many others.

Note some things mentioned by Daniel Gruber concerning the "minim" (heretics) in his lesson "The Day the Rabbi's Were Wrong."

[http://www.beitsimcha.com/s\\_ser/s\\_ser\\_0009.asp](http://www.beitsimcha.com/s_ser/s_ser_0009.asp)

\* Minim may be a shortened, derogatory form of ma'aminim, believers (in Yeshua)

\* Rashi explains the minim referred to disciples of Yeshua (Jesus) "who did not believe in the words of the wise."

\* Determining who is a Jew was a very vital question, since if you weren't a Jew, you had to sacrifice to the Emperor, and if you didn't you were guilty of treason.

\* Minim were a threat because they could draw away followers of Pharisees (soon to be called Rabbis) by their teachings, writings and healings.

\* Pharisees (soon to be called)Rabbis forbade reading the writings of minim and sanctioned burning their books.

\* Birkat ha-Minim blessing (curse) developed and recited daily in every synagogue to weed out unknown Minim and their sympathizers and inculcate popular hatred of them (p. 156).

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When Jews assemble to pray they recite the Shemoneh Esreh (Eighteen Benedictions). It is the quintessential prayer in Judaism and

is also called the AMIDAH (which means standing). The insertion of a 12th benediction in

the late 1st-century against the "minim"(heretics) increased the number to nineteen and thus voided the original name. This benediction was aimed at the many Jews who had accepted the Messiah and is essentially a curse upon them. Under Rabban Gamaliel II there was a question asked if anyone knew a way to deal with the heretics... they found one... it was the Birkat ha Minim (12th ben.). Believing Jews had to endure synagogue services that essentially cursed them! This drove a deep wedge between what would eventually become Rabbinic Judaism and the believing Jews that still tried to coexist with their hostile non-believing non-believing friends and family. This addition is no doubt a landmark in the split between the Church and the non-believing Jews.

In our next lesson we will begin discussing how the Gentiles added to the alienation of the believing Jews by their behaviors, etc. Anti-semitism has long been a horrific problem among the Catholic and Protestant Church. Hearing these stories and understanding the issues heretofor presented will no doubt open many eyes to the reality of why so few Jews believe in their Messiah.

All references and info is readily available on thw web. Just use the various key words.

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