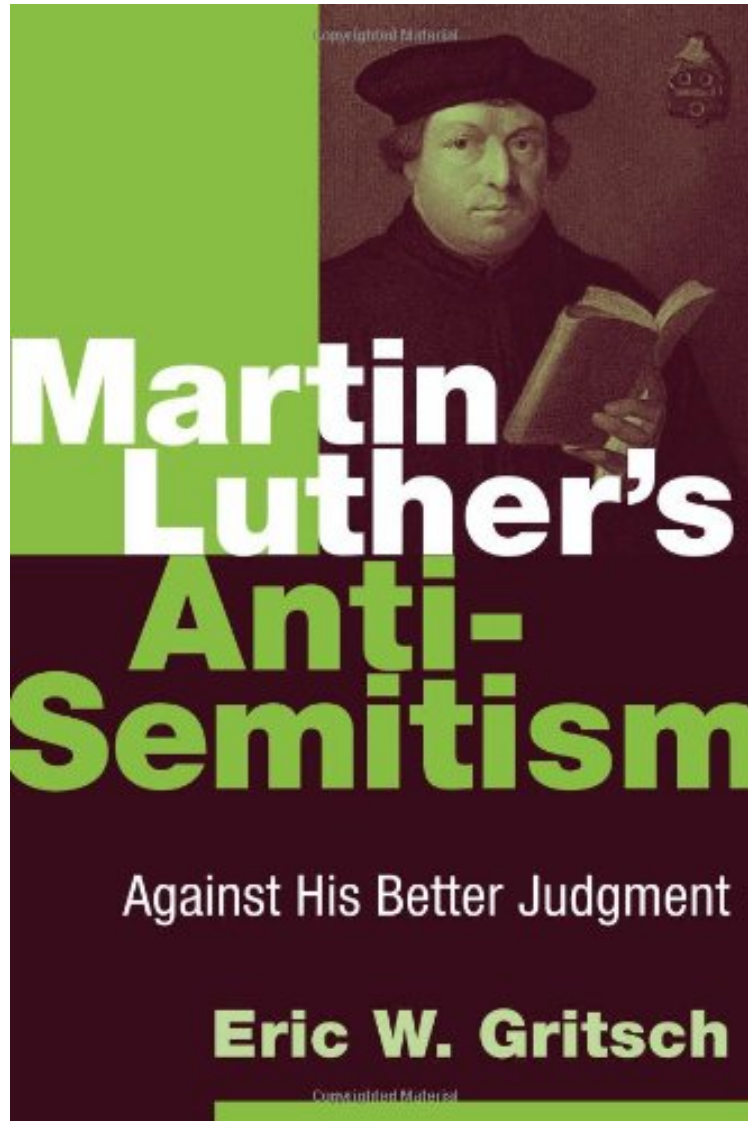


Martin Luther's Anti-Semitism: Against His Better Judgment

Eric W. Gritsch

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Eric W. Gritsch : Martin Luther's Anti-Semitism: Against His Better Judgment before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Martin Luther's Anti-Semitism: Against His Better Judgment:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Luther's late in life emotional errorBy Lup10Luther's late in life emotional error regarding God's continuing and promised future relationship with the children of Abraham, and ignoring his customary biblical approach to truth, led to five year outburst of antisemitism, with a thread attached to

five hundred years of continued pogroms, persecutions, and participation in Europe's most horrific war. Luther was a medieval man with medieval upbringing regarding the Jews living in the forced ghettos. While Luther corrected many pre-reformation errors that had crept into Christianity, he reinforced this error...against his better judgment. Gritsch handles this with thorough scholarship and in a near detached 'matter of fact' approach that is honest and yet kind. He remains a Lutheran while realizing Luther's great accomplishments are flawed in this regard. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. NEVER TO OLD TO LEARN SOMETHING BY GJ EXCELLENT REVELATION OF TRUE HISTORY. HOW INFORMATIVE AND HOW SAD WHEN YOU READ WHAT REALLY WENT ON IN HISTORY. SOMETIMES THE TRUTH HURTS BUT BETTER TO KNOW THE TRUTH SO THAT YOU DON'T STAND BACK AND LET HISTORY REPEAT ITSELF. THIS SHOULD BE REQUIRED READING IN HIGH SCHOOL - I BELIEVE THIS KIND OF LEARNING CAN CHANGE OR TURN THE DOWN HILL SLIDE OF OUR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM. WORTH WILD READING. AS ALWAYS, PRICE AND SERVICE IS GREAT. BUY IT (READ AND WEEP). HAVE A BLESSED DAY..... 19 of 21 people found the following review helpful. A sorry tale that needs to be told By Robert G. Leroe Martin Luther is likely the most colorful figure in Church History, and perhaps the most problematic. We admire and loathe him. He's like certain public figures we agree with but can't stand. At a clergy forum discussing another book on Luther and Erasmus, the consensus was that we agreed with Luther but couldn't abide his attitude; we'd much rather befriend Erasmus with whom we did not agree. And so to round out Luther's personality, this necessary scholarly work lays out in grim detail his anti-semitism. But first Gritsch does a masterful job of defining anti-semitism as a multi-layered hatred; meaning that one may have a form of anti-semitism, but not every one. The distinctions are very helpful in understanding different kinds of anti-semitism. Gritsch then covers Luther's own statements in great detail. This is no sensational uncovering of a revered figure, but a chronicle of a deeply flawed figure who spews hatred, "against his better judgment". This subtitle means that Luther should have known better from his understanding of the Apostle Paul. He chose to ignore or at best he didn't understand Paul. From what I've read of Luther, it seems like he pretty much hated anyone who disagreed with him. To what extent was he the product of an age of intolerance? Gritsch then discusses the historic aftermath of Luther's anti-semitism, which was largely overlooked till the 20th Century. Hitler found an ally in Luther and used Luther's scathing remarks to justify his "final solution". Our respect of Luther must be tempered by an understanding of his dark side; we need to see how anti-Christian anti-semitism is and be respectful of Judaism and our Hebraic roots. This is a must-read for anyone interested in Luther, the Reformation, and the topic of anti-semitism.

In this book Eric W. Gritsch, a Lutheran and a distinguished Luther scholar, faces the glaring ugliness of Martin Luther's anti-Semitism head-on, describing Luther's journey from initial attempts to proselytize Jews to an appallingly racist position, which he apparently held until his death. Comprehensively laying out the textual evidence for Luther's virulent anti-Semitism, Gritsch traces the development of Luther's thinking in relation to his experiences, external influences, and theological convictions. Revealing greater impending danger with each step, Martin Luther's Anti-Semitism marches steadily onward until the full extent of Luther's racism becomes apparent. Gritsch's unflinching analysis also describes the impact of Luther's egregious words on subsequent generations and places Luther within Europe's long history of anti-Semitism. Throughout, however, Gritsch resists the temptation either to demonize or to exonerate Luther. Rather, readers will recognize Luther's mistakes as links in a chain that pulled him further and further away from an attitude of respect for Jews as the biblical people of God. Gritsch depicts Luther as a famous example of the intensive struggle with the enduring question of Christian-Jewish relations. It is a great historical tragedy that Luther, of all people, fell victim to anti-Semitism -- albeit against his better judgment.

From Booklist William L. Shirers immense best-seller, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich* (1960), shocked many by representing Martin Luther as a precursor of the Nazis in anti-Semitic fury. Gritsch concisely and judiciously surveys Luther's record regarding the Jews and his disciples and historians reactions to his pronouncements. In doing so he gives libraries a superb first-resort source on Luther and his relationship with Judaism. The book's three long chapters review the history of anti-Semitism, Luther's writings on the Jews, and early and later reactions to those writings, respectively. Luther wasn't always anti-Semitic, Gritsch shows. He changed from exemplary tolerance of Jews (for his time) to extreme prejudice as they failed to convert at the pace he thought necessary to confirm the imminence of the Second Coming. Gritsch argues that Luther's impatience led him to betray the Christian inclusiveness of St. Paul and, hence, his own better judgment. His immediate followers upheld his tolerance and ignored his later viciousness, which came back into play only with the nineteenth-century rise of German nationalism that eventuated in Nazism. --Ray Olson Robert Kolb -- author of *Martin Luther: Confessor of the Faith* Concordia Seminary, Saint Louis "Against his background of growing up in the Third Reich, his participation in interfaith dialogue over the years, and his more than half a century of studying Luther, Eric Gritsch, a widely respected church historian, provides readers with a broad survey of those who used or ignored the Reformer's utterances on the Jews, and he critiques a large number of recent scholarly commentators on the subject, concluding that 'Luther's anti-Semitism is an integral part of his life and work . . . but his anti-Semitism is neither in harmony with the core of his theology nor with the stance of the Apostle Paul'

and is thus 'against his better judgment.'" Denis R. Janz -- Loyola University New Orleans author of *The Westminster Handbook to Martin Luther* "Gritsch brings to this project a lifetime of Luther study, and it shows. This foundation grounds the whole work, from its thorough rehearsal of the relevant texts, to its judicious account of Luther's impact, to its masterful use of the secondary literature, to its compelling conclusion. Highly recommended." *s in Religion and Theology* This book will serve well readers inside and outside of the academy, whether as an introduction to the issue or as another voice contributing to the ongoing discussion. *Booklist* A superb first-resort source on Luther and his relationship with Judaism. *Theology* A thorough study that is both accessible, and thus recommendable for clergy, and simultaneously engages deeply with its sources. *Sixteenth Century Journal* This carefully documented study goes far in providing a basis for an honest dialogue between Lutherans and the Jewish people. *Renaissance Quarterly* A thought-provoking historical and theological analysis of the German Reformers attitudes towards Jews and Judaism. This brief but dense book is especially valuable for its comprehensive appraisal of the textual evidence of Luthers hostility toward Jews and for its nuanced conclusions. . . . Excellent work. . . . Important reading. *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* Gritsch offers a useful survey not only of Luthers writings on the Jews but also of the historiography. *Common Ground* Here is a book worth reading to begin to discover another aspect of Luthers complexity. Moreover, this work carries a much-needed reminder of the importance of positive Jewish-Christian relations today.