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### January 17, 2014: Barth, the Jews and the Crucifixion

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Title: Barth, the Jews and the Crucifixion

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1/17/2014—The theologian Karl Barth is rightly regarded as a hero by many Jews. It was Barth who stood by the Jews in Germany and opposed any accommodation to Hitler by the churches of Germany. Barth was the first Christian theologian to oppose the old supersessionism, by which the Old Testament covenant of God with Israel was seen as replaced by a new covenant in Jesus Christ. No, said Barth, the covenant with Jesus the Jew is the same covenant. The relationship of God with the Jewish people has not been displaced. The heroism of Barth in these insistentencies, proclaimed at the literal risk of his life in the 1930's, is authentic. But I wonder if Jews really understand the implications of Barth's thought. In my continuing study of Barth, I have now gotten to the material concerning these matters. Yes, the New Testament is a Jewish book, but part of its theme is the rejection of Jesus by non-Christian Israel, which is the majority of the Jewish people. That rejection is a continuation of the Old Testament, which, as the prophets noted, was a history of Israel's rejection—aside from a saving remnant—of the covenant with God. The rejection of Jesus culminates in the crucifixion of Jesus by the Jews (with plenty of help from Rome). You see, in Barth's understanding, human beings are always rejecting God. Israel's rejection of Jesus opened the way for the covenant to be extended in a definitive way to all of humanity, which it had been the charge of Israel to do all along, but which Israel has refused to do theretofore. Barth, who is a friend to the Jews, can and does say things that most Jewish people would not want to hear. He remains a hero but his is a message hard to listen to.