



# Healing the Jewish-Christian Rift: Growing Beyond Our Wounded History

*Ron Miller, Laura Bernstein*

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**How did a Jewish teacher, healer, sage and mystic become the vehicle for so much hatred and harm directed against his own people?**

"Dialogue is demanding and difficult. It is often painful. It entails deep listening, letting others define themselves and being willing to confront and transform deep-rooted prejudices in ourselves. It requires the courage to re-envision absolutely everything we tend to cherish and protect, and to relinquish our entrenched vainglorious ego attachments, our inflated sense of 'I, me and mine.' This challenge to grow beyond tribalism, to approach others in a fair and reasonable way, is an essential step in our human evolution."

?from the Invitation to the Reader

Judaism and Christianity have had a volatile relationship in their two-thousand-year history. Anger, rivalry, insensitivity, bloodshed and murder have marred the special connection these two Abrahamic faiths share. In the last several decades, scholars, activists, laypeople and clergy have attempted to expose and eliminate the struggles between Jews and Christians.

This collaborative effort brings together the voices of Christian scholar Ron Miller and Jewish scholar Laura Bernstein to further explore the roots of anti-Semitism in Christian faith and scripture. In a probing interfaith dialogue, Miller and Bernstein trace the Jewish-Christian schism to its very source in the first book of the New Testament, the Gospel of Matthew. Illuminating the often misunderstood context of Matthew's gospel—a persecuted Christian minority writing some sixty years after Jesus's death—this examination of a foundational Christian text discerns the ways in which the Jewishness of Jesus was forgotten and Jews and Judaism became Christianity's foil. More important, it takes a renewed look at Matthew with contemporary retellings that present a new and better future of conciliation and compassion between the two faith traditions.

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