

‘Monuments’ to the truth of Christianity: Anti-Judaism in the Works of Adam Clarke

The definitive, peer-reviewed and edited version of this article is published in:

Simon Mayers, “‘Monuments’ to the truth of Christianity: Anti-Judaism in the Works of Adam Clarke,” *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, Volume 93, Number 1, Spring 2017, pp. 45-66, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7227/BJRL.93.1.3>

© 2017. Simon Mayers. Published by Manchester University Press.

Abstract

The prevailing historiographies of Jewish life in England suggest that religious representations of ‘the Jews’ in the early modern period were confined to the margins and fringes of society by the ‘desacralization’ of English life. Such representations are mostly neglected in the scholarly literature for the latter half of the long eighteenth century, and English Methodist texts in particular have received little attention. This article addresses these lacunae by examining the discourse of Adam Clarke (1760/2 – 1832), an erudite Bible scholar, theologian, preacher and author and a prominent, respected, Methodist scholar. Significantly, the more overt demonological representations (such as the Synagogue of Satan and the Antichrist) were either absent from Clarke’s discourse, or only appeared on a few occasions, and were vague as to who or what was signified. However, Clarke did portray biblical Jews as ‘perfidious’, ‘cruel’, ‘murderous’, ‘an accursed seed, of an accursed breed’, and ‘radically and totally evil’. He also commented on contemporary Jews (and Catholics), maintaining that they were foolish, proud, uncharitable, intolerant and blasphemous. He argued that in their eternal, wretched, dispersed condition, the Jews demonstrated the veracity of biblical prophecy, and served an essential purpose as living monuments to the truth of Christianity.

Introduction

The absence of flesh-and-blood Jews in England from 1290 to 1655 presented little impediment to the proliferation of religious representations of Jews as Pharisees, cursed wanderers, infidels, blasphemers, deicides, ritual murderers, Antichrists and servants of the Devil. These representations continued to thrive after the Jews returned to England in 1655 through to the end of the seventeenth century.¹ According to Todd Endelman, the leading social historian of Jewish life in Georgian England, these ‘medieval’ representations persisted

into the eighteenth century, but ‘the gradual desacralization of English life’, and the ‘evolution of an establishment Christianity in the eighteenth century that was moderate, worldly, and practical’, robbed them of their power, and increasingly confined them to the margins of society.² Furthermore, this ‘demonological’ anti-Judaism, in as far as it persisted, was counterbalanced by a religious narrative, traditionally regarded as ‘philosemitic’,³ which acquired respectability in England during the seventeenth century and persisted into the eighteenth. In this millenarian narrative, it was necessary to readmit and gather the Jews to England, in order to convert them to Christianity and return them to the Holy Land, all as a precursor to God’s millennial kingdom on earth. For reasons that are not made entirely clear by Endelman, these ‘philosemitic’ millenarian beliefs, though also a force in decline, purportedly fared the ‘desacralization of English life’ better than demonological anti-Judaism.⁴ However, the comparative resilience of these millenarian ideas would seem to require further explanation when combined with the argument that traditional religious representations of the Jew had been rendered fragile by the so-called ‘desacralization of English life’. Furthermore, as Alexandra Walsham has discussed, whilst the idea of a relentless march of ‘progress’, ‘secularisation’ and ‘desacralization’, with the Reformation as a key landmark and the Enlightenment as the destination, has shaped and continues to influence much of the historiography of the early modern period, it has been seriously challenged and problematized by recent historical research.⁵

A less sanguine picture emerges in Frank Felsenstein’s cultural history of English antisemitism during the ‘long’ eighteenth century (i.e. circa 1660 – 1830). According to Felsenstein’s extensive examination of pamphlets, chapbooks, jest-books, ballads, sermons, tracts, newspapers, learned volumes, and an assortment of other texts, representations of the infernal Jew remained a potent feature of English culture, and contrary to Endelman,⁶ were

not confined to any particular segment of society during the first half of the eighteenth century.⁷ They were especially prevalent during the heated debates that surrounded the Jewish Naturalisation Act (or Jew Bill) in 1753.⁸

According to Endelman and Felsenstein, the situation changed significantly after 1753. Endelman and Felsenstein both find that religious representations of Jews dissipated during the remaining years of the long eighteenth century.⁹ They did not vanish entirely, but they were far less common, and increasingly viewed with scepticism. The antipathy towards Jews did not disappear, but was transformed into secular rather than theological language (in particular, the stereotype of the economic parasite, and caricatures about Jewish physiognomy and odour). For example, according to Felsenstein, the religious myth that ‘the Jews emitted a diabolic foul odor (*foetor judaicus*) which could be purged only by the balm of baptism’, was translated into the stereotype of the unwashed, foul-smelling Jew.¹⁰ According to Endelman, ‘their chief crime was not, as it had previously been, their rejection of Jesus, but rather their embodiment of unrestrained, morally unfettered, economic individualism’.¹¹

Religious representations of Jews, though present in this historiography, are mostly neglected in the scholarly literature for the decades following the aborted Jewish Naturalisation Act. Theological texts have been similarly neglected. For example, whilst sermons are an important source in Felsenstein’s examination of anti-Judaism in English culture, he only refers to a handful of examples for 1754 to 1830.¹² Bible commentaries have received even less attention.¹³ These two neglects – religious representations and theological texts – are clearly interrelated. English Methodist discourses have also been neglected.¹⁴ The lack of attention that religious representations and texts have received, and in particular English

Methodist discourses, are significant lacunae in the existing historiography of anti-Judaism during the latter half of the long eighteenth century. This article, which presents some of the findings of a collaborative project between the Centre for Jewish Studies at the University of Manchester and the John Rylands Research Institute, aims to begin the task of addressing these lacunae by examining the discourse of Adam Clarke, a prominent, erudite and well-respected Methodist leader, theologian, Bible scholar, preacher and author.

Adam Clarke was born in either 1760 or 1762 (the exact year being unknown) in Londonderry. He died of cholera in London on 28 August 1832. Clarke met John and Charles Wesley at the Kingswood school in Bristol when he was approximately eighteen years of age, and was appointed by them to preach at Bradford on Avon in Wiltshire. His circuit soon extended to other towns and villages, and he was later assigned to the London Circuit. He was elected three times to the Presidency of the Methodist Conference. Significantly, Clarke was neither a religious fanatic, nor a marginal figure; he was a prominent, highly respected scholar. Clarke's learning and intelligence was even recognised by the British Government, which appointed him to search the archives of the United Kingdom for 'all the authentic State papers from the Conquest to the Accession of George III', and to arrange and illustrate them for publication as a multi-volume supplement to Thomas Rymer's *Foedera* (a massive collection of State papers).¹⁵

Clarke is probably best known today for his detailed eight-volume commentary on the Bible, which he worked on from 1798 to 1825.¹⁶ The first three volumes, which focused on the New Testament, were published in 1817.¹⁷ The other five volumes, focusing on the Old Testament, were published in 1825.¹⁸ As a testimony to their continued popularity, several print-on-demand and e-books contain edited versions or extracts from Adam Clarke's commentary.

However, the commentary of Adam Clarke has been modified in some of these unofficial versions. Significantly, some of these are based on a 'new edition' (revised and condensed) of the New Testament commentary 'by Adam Clarke', which was published in 1883. As a commentary 'by Adam Clarke', it was something of a misnomer, for in some places, by changing just a few words of the original commentary, the meaning of a passage was not merely revised but rather inverted.¹⁹ Naturally, this investigation has only used the original volumes, copies of which are held at the John Rylands Library. Approximately 60 of Adam Clarke's sermons have also been examined.²⁰ Several of these sermons were found as original manuscripts in the Adam Clarke papers at the John Rylands Library, whilst others were found in an anthology of his sermons, published in the final years of his life.²¹ Issues of the *Methodist Magazine* (held at the John Rylands Library) containing essays by Clarke have also been examined.

For the purpose of starting to address the aforementioned lacunae in the existing historiography of English anti-Judaism, Adam Clarke has proven to be a good and interesting choice. An examination of his religious texts has revealed a broad array of representations of Jews, which challenge the assumptions of the existing historiography of anti-Judaism and antisemitism during the final decades of the long eighteenth century. Significantly, Clarke rarely repeated non-religious stereotypes of the Jew, felt unsympathetic towards 'philosemitic' millenarian narratives, and believed that the Jews should be preserved as eternal pariahs scattered among the nations of the world. His representations of contemporary Jews were almost entirely derived from theological and biblical texts, and he provides no evidence of having had any personal encounters with flesh-and-blood Jews.²²

As a first impression, it seems that the aforementioned lacunae may have served to foster the idea that religious conceptions of ‘the Jew’ had largely disappeared from England during the so-called desacralized ‘age of reason’ – a time and place characterised by many historians as rational, stable, lacking in fanaticism, and tepid if not indifferent to religion and religious issues.²³ In reality, they may have merely declined (but not disappeared) from *non-religious* texts, whilst being preserved and communicated in new generations of sermons and Bible commentaries. Though an examination of the discourse of one individual, however well received in his time, can only be considered a beginning of the task of addressing the historiographical lacunae, and further investigations (such as the next step suggested in the conclusion) are essential to deal with them properly, the findings in this article hint at a religious anti-Judaism that was a more resilient feature of English discourse (and English Methodist discourse) during the final decades of the long eighteenth century than previously suspected.

The Synagogue of Satan and the Antichrist

Clarke’s Bible commentary contained only a handful of opaque references to the ‘synagogue of Satan’ and ‘the Antichrist’. Commenting on the two passages in the Book of Revelation that refer to the ‘synagogue of Satan’ (Revelation 2:9 and 3:9), Clarke observed that ‘there were persons there who professed Judaism, and had a synagogue in the place, and professed to worship the true God: but had no genuine religion; and they served the devil, rather than God’.²⁴ He also observed that the synagogue of Satan consisted of those ‘who say they are Jews, pretending to be of the synagogue of God, and consequently His true and peculiar children’.²⁵ Norman Cohn has observed that the Book of Revelation was ‘written for Christians who still felt themselves to be Jews – indeed, the only true Jews, the rest being “the synagogue of Satan”’.²⁶ It is however not entirely clear whether Adam Clarke had the Jewish multitude who professed Judaism and refused to embrace Christianity in mind as the

synagogue of Satan, or a particular sect of Jews, or non-Jews falsely professing to follow Judaism. No matter how Clarke conceived of the 'synagogue of Satan', it is notable that he only referred to it in passing on a few occasions.²⁷ It was not a reoccurring feature of his discourse about Jews.

Clarke also referred to 'the Antichrist' on a few occasions, though unlike some of his Methodist contemporaries (who associated 'Antichrist' with the 'Roman Church'),²⁸ he was unsure about who or what the term referred to. Commenting on Revelation 11:7, he observed that the beast from the pit 'may be what is called Antichrist', but he concluded that other than some power opposed to Christianity and under the influence and appointment of the devil, it was impossible to say what it is. He noted that the conjectures about the identity of the beast are manifold (as examples, he mentions 'some Jewish power or person', 'one of the persecuting Heathen emperors', and 'the papal power').²⁹ Conversely, towards the end of his commentary on Matthew 23, he hints that the Antichrist may be the pope of the Catholic Church.³⁰ Ultimately the identity of the Antichrist remains an uncertain and shadowy figure in Clarke's discourse.

Significantly, whilst these demonological representations were not a prominent feature of Clarke's sermons and Bible commentary, religious representations of biblical Jews (primarily as an assortment of diabolic villains), and religious representations of contemporary Jews (as reluctant monuments to the truth of Christianity), were reoccurring themes (and sometimes the anti-Judaism in his discourse combined and coalesced with anti-Catholicism).

Biblical Jews

Clarke believed that in their origins, the Pharisees had once been a ‘pure and holy people’ who separated themselves from the ‘pollution of the Jewish national worship’, but who ‘degenerated’ in the process of time.³¹ Hence when Clarke referred to the Pharisees at the time of Jesus, he described them as unspiritual, malicious, blind, rapacious, carnal, hypocritical, proud, vain, scheming, superstitious, corrupt, sinful and self-righteous.³² He also referred to the Pharisees and Scribes as ‘blind leaders’ and ‘false teachers’, arguing that they were responsible not only for condemning their own souls to perdition, but also for endangering the souls of those they taught.³³

Unlike the Pharisees, the Sadducees were only mentioned by Clarke on a handful of occasions. His representation of them was somewhat anachronistic. Clarke was in line with the writings of the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus, the New Testament, and even some rabbinic texts, when he asserted that the Sadducees rejected the idea of the resurrection of the dead, and an afterlife with rewards and punishments.³⁴ However, Clarke made a leap from that relatively sound ground to the unwarranted assertion that they were ‘the Materialists and Deists of the Jewish nation’, or ‘a kind of mongrel deists, and professed materialists’. He also described them as ‘infidels’ and ‘libertines’.³⁵ As there were bitter conflicts and polemics between Christians and deists during Clarke’s lifetime, and as he was also critical of deism on other occasions, it seems likely that he was projecting a contemporary conflict onto the biblical past. Notably, in his memoirs, Clarke was critical of the irreligion of sceptics, lamenting ‘a sort of Sadducean education now highly in vogue, that is laying the foundation of general irreligion and Deism’.³⁶ Though this projection of contemporary deism onto the historical Sadducees, and vice versa, was historically anachronistic, it was not entirely without precedent in the broader English discourse. During the eighteenth century, a number

of critics of deism associated deists with Jews (even though many of the English deists also published anti-Jewish literature³⁷). For example, in the 1740s, a Boyle lecturer, Leonard Twells, represented the Jews and deists as ‘enemies of Christianity’, with the Jews providing intellectual ammunition to the deists in their conflict with the religious establishment.³⁸ During the Jew Bill debates of 1753, a print entitled ‘Vox Populi, Vox Dei, or the Jew Act Repealed’, depicted Samson Gideon (a Jewish banker) and Lord Bolingbroke (a Tory politician and deist) as allies.³⁹ Ironically, Bolingbroke was no admirer of Jews, regarding them as superstitious, ignorant, unkind and immoral.⁴⁰ However, whilst Clarke was not alone in linking Jews with deists, his specific association of Sadducees with deists was unusual.

Clarke’s representation of Judas Iscariot was somewhat ambivalent, and maybe for his time, a little daring. On the one hand, Clarke suggested that Judas was rightly viewed as ‘infamous’ and ‘vile’. According to Clarke, Judas was a greedy thief and vile traitor, who sold out Jesus, which made him, Clarke concluded, ‘A thorough Jew!’ On the other hand, Clarke observed that whilst Judas was ‘indisputably a bad man’, he could have been far worse, and he noted that there is ‘no positive evidence of the final damnation of Judas in the sacred text’. Clarke argued that in his repentance, there was ‘much of the wisdom and goodness of God to be seen in this part of Judas’s conduct’. According to Clarke, Judas was a repentant and remorseful sinner, who may have believed that Jesus could not ‘be hurt by the Jews’, and that Jesus would ‘use his power to extricate himself from their hands’.⁴¹ Considering that ‘Judas’ was still a popular symbol in English culture for greed and betrayal, this was a little daring; and some of Clarke’s contemporaries found his portrayal of Judas to be peculiar, and perhaps a little too charitable.⁴²

There were also many references simply to ‘the Jews’, or the Jewish multitude, in Clarke’s discourse. The boundary between the biblical Jews in general, and the Pharisees in particular, was often blurred in Clarke’s biblical commentary. According to Clarke, the bulk of the Jewish nation was ‘on the side of the Pharisees’.⁴³ Similar to the Pharisees, the Jewish multitude was depicted as unbelieving, disobedient, perfidious, vindictive, hypocritical, malicious, sinful, proud, uncharitable and swinish.⁴⁴ Clarke explained in one sermon that whilst there were noble exceptions, including ‘prophets, priests, kings, historians, poets, statesmen, soldiers, heroes, and men deeply devoted to God’, they were few in proportion to the number of Jews who lived during the ‘Mosaic dispensation’. Furthermore, the sermon went on to explain that when ‘we turn our attention to the common people, those who formed the aggregate of the Jewish church’, we find ‘ignorance and indevotion; they were rebels against God, and all legitimate rule; murmurers, complainers, malcontents, cruel, and vindictive; scarcely ever having the form, and more seldom the power, of godliness’.⁴⁵ According to his Bible commentary, the Jews ‘preferred a murderer’ to Jesus, because ‘they were murderers themselves’, and ‘like cleaves to like’.⁴⁶ ‘There never existed a more perfidious, cruel, and murderous people than these Jews’, Clarke contended, and thus ‘no wonder they preferred a murderer to the prince of peace’.⁴⁷

On a number of occasions, Clarke’s reading of the New Testament, and his characterisation of the Jews he found there, contained a more acerbic or diabolic edge. For example, commenting on the Gospel of Matthew 3:7, when it records that John the Baptist referred to the Pharisees and Sadducees as a ‘generation of vipers’, Clarke observed that the Jews were ‘a serpentine brood, from a serpentine stock. As their fathers were, so were they, children of the wicked one. ... The Jews were the seed of the serpent’.⁴⁸ And commenting on Matthew 12:34 and 23:33, which record that Jesus referred to the Pharisees as a ‘generation of vipers’,

Clarke commented that: ‘These are apparently severe words, but they were extremely proper in reference to that execrable people to whom they were addressed’. According to Clarke, ‘they confessed that they were the children of those who murdered the prophets; and they are now going to murder Christ and his followers, to shew that they have not degenerated – an accursed seed, of an accursed breed’.⁴⁹ In his concluding remarks on Matthew 23, Clarke observed that the Scribes and Pharisees were condemned because, among other reasons, they ‘affected regret that their fathers had killed the prophets, while themselves possessed and cultivated the same murderous inclinations’, and that whilst ‘most hypocrites and wicked men have some good’, they were ‘radically and totally evil’.⁵⁰

In his commentary on the first epistle to the Thessalonians, Clarke stated that the Jews ‘slew the Lord Jesus, through the most unprincipled and fell malice’, and ‘there was no time in which this seed of the serpent did not hate and oppose spiritual things; they slew even their own prophets, who declared to them the will of God’. His most damning accusation was that their malice was so great that they even wished to see the souls of Gentiles condemned to eternal perdition:

They were contrary to all men; they hated the whole human race; and judged and wished them to perdition. They forbid the apostles to preach to the Gentiles, lest they should be saved; this was an inveteracy of malice completely super-human; they persecuted the body to death, and the soul to damnation! They were afraid that the Gentiles should get their souls saved, if the gospel was preached to them! ... It is to be reckoned among the highest mercies of God, that the whole nation was not pursued, by the Divine justice, to utter and final extinction.⁵¹

With the possible exception of his ambivalent representations of Judas Iscariot, and his anachronistic linkage of deists and Sadducees, Clarke's representations of biblical Jews repeated and emphasised traditional theological stereotypes that have been read into the New Testament since the time of the early Church Fathers. He was thus not so much a generator of new ideas about the Jews, but rather someone who combined and re-articulated existing ones from earlier centuries.

The Jews of the 'Present Day'

Stephen Haynes has observed that 'one particularly intriguing aspect of Christian homiletical discourse' has been 'the perennial failure of preachers to distinguish between biblical and contemporary Jews; between, that is, the heroes and antiheroes of the Bible and the persons who reside across town or down the street'. According to Haynes, 'the linking of biblical Hebrews and every subsequent generation of Jews is still quite common, and sermons are a medium in which it has thrived'. Haynes observes that one way this occurs is by subtle and inexplicable switches from past to present tense when discussing the villainy of Jews.⁵² However, whilst Clarke often similarly elided the distinction between biblical and contemporary Jews, he was sometimes explicit about a connection. For example, Clarke occasionally linked the Jews from the past to those of the present day, using phrases such as, 'and in the same spirit they continue to the present day'.⁵³

By referring to the Jews of the 'present day' in such a manner, Clarke suggested that contemporary Jews continued to manifest at least some of the alleged unsavoury traits and behaviours of their biblical ancestors. For example, according to his commentary on the epistle to the Hebrews, no one has benefited from the mere observance of the Jewish law, for

it ‘pardoned no sin’, ‘changed no heart’, ‘reformed no life’, ‘found men dead in trespasses and sins’, and ‘consigned them to eternal death’. Clarke concluded that ‘the Jews, who still cleave to it, are a proof that it is both weak and unprofitable; for there is not a more miserable, distressed, and profligate class of men on the face of the earth’.⁵⁴ In his commentary on the epistle to Titus, Clarke observed that the Jews refused to admit that any other people could also have a knowledge of God, or that God would ever reveal Himself to non-Jews, and thus they became ‘proud, uncharitable, and intolerant: and in this disposition, they continue till the present day’.⁵⁵ Similarly, Clarke observed that in Thessalonica, the Jews were driven by ‘implacable malice’ in their persecution of those who spread the gospel, ‘and in the same spirit they continue to the present day, though it is evidently the sole cause of their wretchedness’.⁵⁶ In a sermon delivered in 1825, Clarke argued that the Jews, recognising no ‘secular power’ in Jesus, had ‘maligned, persecuted, and at last crucified Him: and to vindicate their iniquitous conduct, they continue, by all kinds of blasphemy, to traduce Him and His religion to the present day’. According to Clarke, the Jews have made of Jesus a ‘stumbling-block’, and have ‘stumbled over Him, fallen, wounded themselves; and are now, no more able to take one step in the way of salvation: and in this wounded condition they have been lying for 1800 years’.⁵⁷ In other sermons, he stated that the ‘immaculate conception’ of Jesus ‘has been blasphemously represented by the Jews of old; and indeed by them and by many other infidels, to the present day’,⁵⁸ and that having rejected, blasphemed, and crucified their Lord, the Jews were displaced in favour of the Gentiles, and thus, ‘from that day to the present, no general offer of salvation has been made to them; & they continue to bear the fearful mark of God’s Reprobation’. Clarke concluded that ‘the Jews were not rejected till they had obstinately & finally rejected the Lord’, and that they ‘continue as a people in the same spirit to the present day, contradicting & blaspheming’⁵⁹

There has been a tendency in some Christian discourses to invest the continued survival of the Jews with religious significance. An example is the ‘philosemitic’ millenarian narrative mentioned in the introduction. In English versions of the millenarian narrative, the divinely-ordained role of England in the unfolding of this drama was often emphasised. Whilst they waned more than waxed during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, these narratives persisted, and continued to influence attitudes towards Jews.⁶⁰ Significantly, this millenarian narrative was not only absent from Clarke’s discourse, he was critical of those who put their faith in ‘an undefined and undefinable period, commonly called a millennial glory’.⁶¹ Furthermore, the idea of an ingathering of Jews ran contrary to Clarke’s belief in the importance of Jewish dispersion.⁶² Another occasional narrative in English discourse, and one more to Clarke’s liking, was that God had cast the Jews out of the Holy Land, dispersed them among the nations, and preserved them in a forlorn and wretched state, with no hope of ever returning to Jerusalem, as a perpetual monument to the truth of Christianity. According to Felsenstein, ‘the fate of the real Jews, as reflected in popular discourse in eighteenth-century England, ratifies their dispersion as the consequence of their crime against Christ, which has made them eternal outcasts throughout the world’.⁶³ For example, in 1753, Jonas Hanway, an English merchant, traveller and philanthropist, stated that the dispersion of the Jews is a ‘standing monument of the truth of the Christian faith’.⁶⁴ And in 1792, Jacob Bryant, a British mythographer, wrote that the Jews, in their dispersion, ‘are everywhere distinct and unconverted; and consequently enemies to the gospel’. Nevertheless, they are, Bryant suggests, ‘a continued miracle’ and ‘a lasting monument of prophetic veracity’.⁶⁵

Various formulations of this eternal ‘monument’ narrative can be found in Clarke’s discourse. In his commentary on Matthew 24, he argued that the Jews, preserved as ‘a people scattered through all nations, ... without temple, sacrifices, or political government’,

reluctantly stand forth, despite their attempts to ‘suppress the truth’, as ‘unimpeachable collateral evidence’ of the predictions found in the New Testament.⁶⁶ According to Clarke, whilst the Jews were born with ‘a legal right’ to Jerusalem, they had ‘forfeited that right by their iniquities’. He stated that Jerusalem, following the prediction of Jesus, was ‘trodden down by the Gentiles’, and ‘accordingly it has never since been in the possession of the Jews’. Reading the Gospel of Matthew as a prophetic text written before the sacking of Jerusalem, Clarke argued that ‘the destruction of Jerusalem’ had been foretold, and was a remarkable demonstration of ‘divine vengeance’ and a ‘signal manifestation of Christ’s power and glory’. Clarke concluded that, ‘thus has the prophecy of Christ been most literally and terribly fulfilled, on a people who are still preserved as continued monuments of the truth of our Lord’s prediction, and of the truth of the Christian religion’.⁶⁷ Similarly, in his commentary on Jeremiah 15:4, he argued that the statement, ‘I will cause them to be removed into all kingdoms of the earth’, was in respect to ‘the succeeding state of the Jews in their different generations’. According to Clarke, ‘never was there a prophecy more literally fulfilled; and it is still a standing monument of Divine truth. Let infidelity cast its eyes on the scattered Jews whom it may meet with in every civilized nation of the world; and then let it deny the truth of this prophecy, if it can’.⁶⁸ Referring to the infamous blood curse in Matthew 27:25, in which the Jews are portrayed as calling down the blood of Christ upon themselves and their children, Clarke observed that ‘their children or descendants have had the same curse entailed upon them, and continue to this day a proof of the innocence of Christ, the truth of his religion, and of the justice of God’.⁶⁹ In his preface to the epistle to the Romans, Clarke argued that the calamities endured by the Jews, and their continued survival as a distinct people despite a ‘dispersion of about 1700 years, over all the face of the earth, everywhere in a state of ignominy and contempt’, was evidence of a ‘standing miracle’, and the extraordinary will and intervention of God. According to Clarke, the continued presence

of the Jews as a distinct but dispersed people, ‘harassed, persecuted, butchered and distressed, as the most detestable of all people upon the face of the earth’, but nevertheless preserved, was in line with a prophetic statement in the book of Jeremiah, that God will make a full end of other nations, but not the Jews. Clarke concluded that ‘thus the very being of the Jews, in their present circumstances, is a standing public proof of the truth of Revelation’.⁷⁰ And in a sermon, Clarke stated that ‘the Jews, who on the preaching of Christ crucified did not believe, were reprobated; and continue till this day monuments of God’s displeasure’.⁷¹ Significantly, it was not only contemporary Jews but also Roman Catholics who played a role in Clarke’s religious discourse, and sometimes his representations of Catholics coalesced with his representations of Jews.

Anti-Judaism & Anti-Catholicism

English Catholics, like English Jews, have a long history of being vilified and diabolised. Prior to Colin Haydon’s study of the phenomenon, English anti-Catholicism during the eighteenth century, the so-called ‘age of reason’, had been largely dismissed by researchers as uninteresting.⁷² For example, according to Walter Arnstein’s study of anti-Catholicism in the Victorian era, ‘in the eighteenth century, it had seemed a waste of time for students of theology to court controversy with Rome and for clergymen to preach on the dangers of Catholicism. In the early nineteenth century, this reluctance visibly diminished’.⁷³ However, Haydon reveals that ‘No-Popery’ sentiment was alive and kicking in the eighteenth century, and motivated as much by theological concerns as social and economic factors. The popes were sometimes cast in the role of ‘the Antichrist’ (a dubious privilege they have shared with the Jews). Catholics were stereotyped as untrustworthy ‘papists’, as plotters and conspirators, and as bloodthirsty monsters, who would, given the opportunity, bring ‘Popery’ and the inquisition to England, and revive the fires of Smithfield. Catholic beliefs and practices, such

as the veneration of saints, purgatory and transubstantiation, were denigrated as irrational, heretical, and idolatrous.⁷⁴ This anti-Catholicism also persisted as a powerful force in English culture and society during the nineteenth century.⁷⁵ It was also a feature of English Methodist discourse during both centuries.⁷⁶ In addition to criticising aspects of Catholic beliefs and practices, there was an apocalyptic, demonological strand to Methodist anti-Catholicism. According to David Butler, John Wesley referred to the ‘Romish Anti-Christ’ in a letter to Joseph Benson in 1777, and in his commentary on the Book of Revelation in his *Explanatory Notes on the New Testament* (1755), he argued that Gregory VII was the Anti-Christ, that the papacy thereafter had been ‘the beast ascending from the sea’, and that the final pope ‘will be pre-eminently the Anti-Christ, adding to the wickedness of his predecessors “a peculiar degree of wickedness from the bottomless pit”’.⁷⁷ Charles Wesley also referred to the ‘Romish Antichrist’ in an unfinished letter, written in April 1754 – a few years after the London earthquakes of 1750 – to an unknown correspondent. In this apocalyptic letter, Charles Wesley referred to the labyrinth of scriptural prophecies that God had guided him through, and the arrival of the ‘Kingdom of our Lord’ on earth after certain imminent events: ‘the conversion of God’s antient people the Jews, their restoration to their own land; [and] the destruction of the Romish Antichrist’. Significantly, it seems from this letter that Charles Wesley embraced the millenarian narrative – in its premillennialist form – that Adam Clarke rejected.⁷⁸

Representations of Catholics were an aspect of Clarke’s discourse, and they sometimes resembled his representations of Jews. On occasion his anti-Judaism and anti-Catholicism coalesced. Clarke argued that Jews and Catholics were both superstitious, and engaged in profane, blasphemous and ridiculous legends and traditions. For example, in his commentary on the book of Revelation, Clarke asserted that ‘no nation of the earth spread their idolatries

so far as the ancient Romans; they were as extensive as their conquests. And Papal Rome has been not less active in disseminating her superstitions. She has given her rituals, but not the everlasting gospel, to most nations of the earth'. According to Clarke, 'Rome Pagan' and 'Rome Papal' have blended, for 'Rome Papal' has retained the language of 'Rome Pagan', and 'many of her Heathen temples' have been dedicated to 'saints, real or reputed'. Clarke concluded that Papal Rome has incorporated many of the 'superstitions and absurdities' of Pagan Rome into its 'professedly Christian service'.⁷⁹ Similarly, he observed in a sermon that 'the Church of Rome' has blended 'a pretended Christian devotion, with heathenish and Jewish rites and ceremonies: two parts of which are borrowed from pagan Rome, the third, from the Jewish ritual ill understood, and grossly misrepresented; and the fourth part from other corruptions of the Christian system'.⁸⁰ According to another of his sermons, 'the Romish church' is of a similar spirit to the Jews. He stated that 'the principal representatives and successors of the ancient Jewish sign-seekers are the heads and members of the Romish church'. According to Clarke,

the church of Rome out-did, by innumerable degrees, all that had been done in the Jewish church by the worst of its rabbinical fables, puzzling genealogies, forged traditions, and false glosses on the words of God. And thus the worship of the true God was absorbed and lost in that of the Virgin Mary, and of real or reputed saints.⁸¹

Commenting on a passage in Titus 3:9, on avoiding 'foolish questions and genealogies', Clarke observed that 'in these the Jews particularly delighted; they abounded in the most frivolous questions; and, as they had little piety themselves, they were solicitous to shew that they had descended from godly ancestors'. Commenting on the first epistle to Timothy, he

observed that no people possessed as many ‘idle fancies’ and ‘silly legends’ as the Jews. According to Clarke, the ‘Talmudical writings are stuffed with the most ridiculous and profane fables that ever disgraced the human intellect’.⁸² However, in his comments on Titus 3:9 and 1 Timothy, he also argued that as ‘ridiculous and trifling’ as the Jewish writers could be, they were matched or outdone by the works of the scholastics – by which term he had in mind Thomas Aquinas (and perhaps those who influenced his philosophy⁸³) – and the ‘legends’, ‘fables’ and ‘corruptions’ of the ‘Romish church’.⁸⁴ According to Clarke:

In no age of the world was Christianity more corrupted than in that of the school-men, who were all hair-splitting men; and the world wondered at their subtlety and dextrous sophistry, till religion itself became evanescent, and the works of Thomas Aquinas were put in place of the Bible.⁸⁵

In another sermon, Clarke observed that in neither of the two epistles of St. Peter, are to be found ‘any of the peculiar tenets of the Romish Church’, such as ‘[papal] infallibility’, ‘purgatory’, ‘penances’, ‘auricular confession’, ‘indulgences’, ‘masses’, ‘extreme unction’, ‘relics’, ‘worship of the Holy Virgin’, ‘intercession of the saints’, ‘prayers for the dead’, and ‘transubstantiation’. Clarke asked:

Now, as all these things have been considered by themselves, most essential to the being of that Church, is it not strange that He from whom they profess to derive all their power, authority & influence in spiritual & secular matters, should have said nothing of these most necessary things? Is it not a proof that they have mistaken their Patron; or rather, that those Doctrines are all false & forged?⁸⁶

In addition to representing Judaism and Catholicism as similarly profane, superstitious, ridiculous and blasphemous, Clarke also regarded contemporary Catholics and *biblical* Jews as two murderously anti-Christian forces. For example, Clarke stated in a sermon that:

Never was the wise & experienced Devil farther out in his calculations than when he countered on the destruction of Christianity by fire & sword. Under him, the Jews distinguished themselves in the first instance, & instead of casting down Christianity, they stumbled & fell, & rose no more. Heathen Rome followed in the same track; the sword, the fire, the axe, the gibbet, the fangs & teeth of ferocious beasts, were tried in vain; & at last by the power of Christianity, she & her idols, & her instruments of cruelty, were defeated & cast down, ... Papal Rome, having apostatized from the spirit & power of the Gospel, copied her ancient mother, & most grievously persecuted all who held the truth of God ... but she prevailed not.⁸⁷

And in his commentary on John 16:2, Clarke linked the first-century Jewish Sicarii ('they butchered any person in cold blood, whom they pretended to believe was an enemy to God, to the law, or to Moses; and thought they were fulfilling the will of God by these human sacrifices'), with Queen Mary I ('we had the same kind of sacrifices here in the time of our Popish Queen Mary').⁸⁸ 'Bloody Queen Mary' was a traditional theme in English anti-Catholic discourse – and one invoked by Charles Wesley during the Gordon Riots⁸⁹ – though Clarke was distinctive in combining it with references to the Jewish Sicarii. However, a significant theme that was absent from Clarke's discourse, was the notion that the Jews of his time were an active diabolic threat to Christian civilisation. Significantly, whereas Jews were

depicted by Clarke as having once been a major threat, the Jews of the ‘present day’ were depicted as old enemies, rendered not only harmless, but a useful monument to the truth of Christianity. Unlike the contemporary Jews, who Clarke considered an old and now neutered enemy, and a useful monument in their wretched condition, Catholics were portrayed as a clear and present danger, and the true heirs to the ‘malice’ of the ancient Jews.

Conclusion

Whilst this article, and the investigation upon which it is based, will hopefully serve to broaden our understanding of an interesting character from history,⁹⁰ its primary intent is to begin the work of addressing religious representations of Jews, and theological texts (such as sermons and Bible commentaries) in the final decades of the long eighteenth century. Previously, non-religious, economic and physiognomic stereotypes have been emphasised. Furthermore, Methodist discourses have been neglected. For the purpose of addressing these lacunae, Adam Clarke has proven to be a good choice. He was neither a religious fanatic, nor a marginal figure, but rather a prominent, highly respected Methodist scholar. His discourse contains many religious texts, an examination of which has revealed a broad array of religious representations of Jews, often in relation to Catholics.

The more overt demonological representations were either absent from Clarke’s discourse (for example, there were no instances of the ritual murder myth), or in the case of the synagogue of Satan and the Antichrist, only appeared on a few occasions, and were vague and uncertain as to who or what was signified (though Jews and Catholics were mentioned as possibilities). However, whilst his representations of Judas Iscariot were merely ambivalent (a vile traitor, but also a repentant and remorseful sinner), and the Sadducees escaped relatively unscathed (as ‘mongrel deists’, ‘materialists’ and ‘libertines’), he did diabolise the

Pharisees and the biblical Jewish multitude. According to Clarke, the Pharisees and the Jewish multitude were ‘perfidious’, ‘cruel’, ‘malicious’, ‘carnal’, ‘hypocritical’, ‘scheming’, ‘murderous’, ‘an accursed seed, of an accursed breed’, ‘the seed of the serpent’, ‘children of the wicked one’, and ‘radically and totally evil’. His most damning accusation against the biblical Jews related to their ‘inveterate’ loathing for the ‘whole human race’, which was so ‘completely super-human’ that they actively, and knowingly, desired to condemn the souls of all non-Jews to eternal perdition.

In comparison to these diabolising portrayals of biblical Jews, his accusations against the Jews of his own time were comparatively mild. According to Clarke, contemporary Jews were law-obsessed, blasphemous, proud, intolerant, selfish and uncharitable. He also suggested that contemporary Jews were foolish, superstitious, irrational, and obsessed with ridiculous legends and traditions – traits that according to Clarke, they shared with Roman Catholics. Significantly, the key difference between biblical and contemporary Jews in Clarke’s discourse was not that contemporary Jews were more or less malign than their ancestors, but rather that they were no longer in a position to be a major threat to Christians and Christian civilisation. Clarke thus stopped short of suggesting that medieval and contemporary Jews murdered Christians, but only just. According to Clarke, whilst the Jews in Christian lands were no longer in a position to murder Gentiles, they still considered themselves obligated by Jewish Law to leave a non-Jew in danger of death to their plight. In a sermon, Clarke stated that ‘a Jew is bound to suffer a Gentile to perish if he sees him in danger of death, though he could easily prevent this!’ And in his Bible commentary, he stated that ‘the Jews thought themselves authorised to kill any Jew who apostatised, and though they could not do injury to the Gentiles, in whose country they sojourned, yet they were bound to suffer them to perish, if they saw them in danger of death’. In both instances, Clarke

illustrated this by citing the medieval Jewish philosopher, Moses Maimonides, who (according to Clarke) stated that: ‘A Jew sees a Gentile fall into the sea, let him by no means lift him out’.⁹¹

Clarke believed that contemporary Jews, as a result of their rejection of Christ, were a miserable, broken, outcast people. This, he believed, was important, for in his mind, the eternal condition of the Jews as detested, scattered and forlorn pariahs, provided a testimony and monument to Christian prophecy. He rejected millenarian narratives, believed that Jews had forfeited their rights to Jerusalem, and though one can only speculate, he probably had little sympathy for calls for the emancipation of Jews; however, in an apparent case of cognitive dissonance, he rejected the religious (physical) persecution of the Jews as unchristian. Clarke suggested that it was not sincere Christians that persecuted Jews, but rather ‘Pagans and pretended Christians’.⁹² It seems likely that he had the Catholic Church in mind. Clarke often associated the Catholic Church with Paganism and unchristian superstition, and in one sermon, he observed that ‘persecution, on account of Religion, is, in the sight of Reason & Common sense, & in the sight of all men that profess Christianity, except those of the holy Roman Catholic Church, the most absurd & wicked’.⁹³ In the *Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine* in 1826, Clarke referred to accounts of the emperor Constantine ordering that Jews in Jerusalem who did not embrace Christianity should be put to death, and that the converts should prove their sincerity by eating a piece of swine’s flesh. According to Clarke, ‘Constantine was capable of such acts’, for he ‘not only confirmed the ancient modes of punishment in the empire, but instituted new ones’. Clarke suggested that Constantine was the origin of intolerance in the Catholic Church.⁹⁴ Whereas contemporary Jews were regarded as a neutered enemy, and a useful monument to be preserved in their current condition, Catholics were portrayed as a present danger, and the true heirs to the

‘malicious’ spirit of the biblical Jews. Thus in Clarke’s mind, Mary I – ‘Bloody Queen Mary’ – had taken on the mantle of the first-century Jewish Sicarii.

Clarke’s discourse provides a significant contrast to the existing historiography of anti-Judaism and antisemitism in England during the final decades of the long eighteenth century. Firstly, non-religious stereotypes were rare in his discourse.⁹⁵ Secondly, he was unsympathetic to the ‘philosemitic’ millenarian narrative of an ingathering of Jews and a return to the Holy Land, believing instead that the Jews should be preserved as wretched pariahs in all nations. And thirdly, his mental picture of contemporary Jewry was almost entirely derived from theological and biblical sources. Though this examination of the discourse of Adam Clarke is only a starting point, it does hint at a resilient religious anti-Judaism – like the potent anti-Catholicism that others have discussed – during the final decades of the long eighteenth century. These lacunae may have served to foster the impression that religious conceptions of ‘the Jew’ had dissipated in English culture during the ‘age of reason’, when in reality they may have merely dissipated from non-religious texts, whilst being preserved and communicated in new generations of well-received and well-circulated sermons and Bible commentaries. However, further investigation will be required to determine how prevalent and characteristic these religious representations were.

Significantly, the John Rylands Library contains a huge collection of Methodist letters, personal papers and publications from the eighteenth and early-nineteenth century, and it thus presents a number of additional opportunities to reduce the size of these historiographical lacunae. I would thus be remiss if I did not conclude this article with a suggestion for where to take this investigation next. For the final decades of the ‘long’ eighteenth century, there were, in addition to Clarke’s eight-volume set, three other major works of Bible commentary

by English Methodists, and, at least reputedly, all four were eagerly read and widely circulated.⁹⁶ Interestingly, their authors – Joseph Sutcliffe, Thomas Coke and Joseph Benson – were, unlike Adam Clarke, enthusiastic millenarians. Of particular interest is Joseph Sutcliffe, who constructed an elaborate millennial narrative in which the ‘Antichrist’ (identified as the Catholic Church) is defeated, and the Jews embrace Christianity, and play a special role in helping to convert ‘the heathen’. In this narrative, Satan attacks the Jews in Jerusalem, but is defeated when Christ appears in physical form to slay his enemies.⁹⁷ Thomas Coke also developed a vibrant millenarian narrative, in which the Antichrist already rules the earth (since 606 CE), but will be defeated (in circa 1866 CE), after which the Jews will embrace Christianity, and the millennium will begin.⁹⁸ It will be interesting to see how the representations of Jews in these and other narratives by Sutcliffe, Coke and Benson compare to Clarke’s discourse. An important next step will thus be an examination of sermons and publications for these authors, the three Bible commentaries, and the Thomas Coke and Joseph Benson papers held at the John Rylands Library.

Acknowledgements

This article is fruit from a recent collaboration between the John Rylands Research Institute and the Centre for Jewish Studies at the University of Manchester. The project, which examined representations of Jews in the works of the Methodist theologian and biblical scholar Adam Clarke, would not have been possible without the generous support of a JRRI Seed Corn Fellowship. I am also indebted to Dr Peter Nockles, rare books librarian and curator at the John Rylands Library, for advice and assistance throughout the project. Finally, my thanks to Daniel Langton, Professor of the History of Jewish-Christian Relations and co-director of the Centre for Jewish Studies, for having faith in me during this and previous projects.

Notes

¹ For representations of Jews in England from the expulsion through to the end of the seventeenth century, see Bernard Glassman, *Anti-Semitic Stereotypes without Jews: Images of the Jews in England, 1290-1700* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1975).

² See Todd M. Endelman, *The Jews of Georgian England, 1714–1830* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1979; Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999), chapter 3. See also Todd M. Endelman, *The Jews of Britain, 1656-2000* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), pp. 68–69.

³ In reality, these narratives were often marked by an ambivalence for Jews and a disdain for Judaism.

⁴ See Endelman, *The Jews of Georgian England*, chapter 2; Endelman, *The Jews of Britain*, pp. 19–25, 69–70, 186.

⁵ Alexandra Walsham, ‘The Reformation and “The Disenchantment of the World” Reassessed’, *The Historical Journal* 51, no. 2 (2008), pp. 497-528. Walsham draws attention to a number of important studies which highlight the resilience of beliefs in magic, miracles, the occult, divine providence, ghosts, witches and demons during the so-called ‘age of reason’ (p. 501). Rather than a linear process of desacralization culminating in the ‘eventual triumph of rationalism over “superstition”’, it seems that a complex ebb and flow (or ‘cycle’) of the sacred and the magical has been a persistent if not perennial feature of English social and cultural life (see pp. 497, 517, 526, 527). Colin Haydon has also observed that scholars have started to stress the vitality rather than the torpor of Georgian religion, and to present the age not in terms of ‘political stability, but as one in which ideological issues – including religion – were still divisive’. Colin Haydon, *Anti-Catholicism in Eighteenth-Century England, c. 1714-80: A Political and Social Study* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), pp. 20–21, 256–258.

⁶ Endelman found that this demonological anti-Judaism was mostly confined to, or spear-headed by, ‘increasingly smaller circles of High Church enthusiasts, ‘the High Church party’, ‘High Churchmen and country squires’, and ‘a fanatic fringe’. Endelman, *The Jews of Georgian England*, pp. 86, 87, 91, 94. Conversely, Felsenstein found that such vilifications were not confined to particular segments of society. They were prevalent in the ‘popular culture’ of the time’ (e.g. in chapbooks, pamphlets, jest-books, folklore, etc.), and were ‘intonated by the “learned” and the “great” no less than by the common man’, and found ‘lively expression as much in the august chamber of the House of Commons as on the streets in the *vox populi* of the mob’. Felsenstein also detects this antisemitism in the works of English authors whose religious allegiance included Puritan, High Church Anglican and Catholic. Frank Felsenstein, *Anti-Semitic Stereotypes: A Paradigm of Otherness in English Popular Culture, 1660–1830* (1995; London: John Hopkins University Press, 1999), pp. 7–8.

⁷ See Felsenstein, *Anti-Semitic Stereotypes*, chapters 3–8.

⁸ See Felsenstein, *Anti-Semitic Stereotypes*, chapter 8. See also Bernard Glassman, *Protean Prejudice: Anti-Semitism in England’s Age of Reason* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998), chapter 8; Isaiah Shachar, ‘Studies in the Emergence and Dissemination of the Modern Jewish Stereotype in Western Europe’ (PhD thesis, University of London, 1967), pp. 88–90, 100–101, 414–416.

⁹ However, whilst they both agree that 1753 was a turning point, they have very different ideas about when the changes began. For Endelman, the ‘relative weakness’ of ‘theologically derived anti-Semitism’ in England can be traced to ‘the absence of a visible Jewish presence during the three and a half centuries preceding the Cromwellian resettlement and to the concomitant lack of an ongoing tradition of concrete hostility on the part of Christians’. It was only the last remnants of ‘demonological anti-Semitism’ that disappeared between 1753 and 1830. Conversely, Felsenstein argues that stereotypes of the infernal Jew thrived until the Jewish Naturalisation Act of 1753. See Endelman, *The Jews of Georgian England*, p. 95; Felsenstein, *Anti-Semitic Stereotypes*, chapters 2–8.

¹⁰ See Felsenstein, *Anti-Semitic Stereotypes*, pp. 257–259.

¹¹ See Endelman, *The Jews of Britain*, pp. 70–71; Endelman, *The Jews of Georgian England*, pp. 97–105.

¹² For example, Felsenstein refers to a chapbook containing three sermons purportedly preached by an obscure (and perhaps fictional) convert to Christianity, ‘Moses the Jew’, in 1787, and a sermon entitled *Good Friday; or The Murder of Jesus Christ by the Jews*, published in 1830 at the expense of the rabidly anti-Jewish author William Cobbett. See Felsenstein, *Anti-Semitic Stereotypes*, pp. 231–238, 285 n.46. Felsenstein also discusses literature relating to the conversion of the Jews during the long eighteenth century, though most of the cited examples relate to 1753 or earlier (a notable exception being the eccentric writings of the ‘prophet’, ‘nephew of the almighty’ and ‘prince of the Jews’, Richard Brothers, which were published in 1798). See Felsenstein, *Anti-Semitic Stereotypes*, chapter 5 (and pp. 95–98 for Richard Brothers).

¹³ However, Felsenstein does cite a few entries from *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible* (originally published circa 1710), John Brown's *A Dictionary of the Holy Bible* (originally published 1769), and Alexander Cruden's *Unabridged Concordance to the Old and New Testaments and the Apocrypha* (originally published 1769). See Felsenstein, *Anti-Semitic Stereotypes*, pp. 126, 139, 276 n.16, 288 n.2–4, 292 n.46.

¹⁴ Though there are some essays that mention Jews – flesh-and-blood and theological stereotypes – in a Methodist context. See for example: John C. English, 'John Wesley and his "Jewish Parishioners": Jewish-Christian Relationships in Savannah, Georgia, 1736-1737', *Methodist History* 36 (July 1998), pp. 220–227; and Kenneth G. C. Newport, 'Methodists and the Millennium: Eschatological Expectation and the Interpretation of Biblical Prophecy in Early British Methodism', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 78, no. 1 (1996), pp. 110, 117–118, 121–122. <https://www.escholar.manchester.ac.uk/uk-ac-man-scw:1m2157> (accessed 2 June 2016).

¹⁵ See Jones, *Memoirs of the Life, Ministry, and Writings*, pp. 326–327.

¹⁶ The volumes for the Old and New Testament contain some essays which have their own page numbering, but the majority of the pages in the commentary are unnumbered. I have thus referred to the biblical book, chapter and verse being commented upon, when referring to these volumes. For example: Clarke, *The New Testament*, commentary on Matthew 15:14.

¹⁷ Adam Clarke, *The New Testament, of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; containing the text, taken from the most correct copies of the present authorised translation, including the marginal readings and parallel texts, with a commentary and critical notes. Designed as a help to a better understanding of the sacred writings*, 3 volumes (London: J. Butterworth, 1817). Henceforth referred to as Clarke, *The New Testament*.

¹⁸ Adam Clarke, *The Holy Bible, Containing the Old and New Testaments. The text carefully printed from the most correct copies of the present authorized translation, including the marginal readings and parallel texts. With a commentary and critical notes, designed as a help to a better understanding of the sacred writings*, 5 volumes (London: J. Butterworth, 1825). Henceforth referred to as Clarke, *The Holy Bible*.

¹⁹ The editor, Daniel Curry (a Methodist preacher and author), sometimes tweaked Clark's commentary to the extent of inverting the original meaning, even though he may have changed only a few words. For example, in the 'new' edition, the commentary on Matthew 6:2 stated: 'Do not sound a trumpet – It is *not likely* that this was literally practiced *even by* the Pharisees, who seemed to live on the public esteem, and were excessively self-righteous and vain' [my italics]. However, in the original 1817 edition, it stated: 'Do not sound a trumpet – It is *very likely* that this was literally practised *among* the Pharisees, who seemed to live on the public esteem, and were excessively self-righteous and vain' [my italics]. The changes were deliberate, for Curry believed that the expression, 'do not sound a trumpet', was intended 'metaphorically'. See Daniel Curry, ed., *The New Testament of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; the Text in the Authorized Translation, with A Commentary and Critical Notes, by Adam Clarke*, volume 1 of 2 (New York: Phillips & Hunt, 1883), commentary on Matthew 6:2, p. 41.

²⁰ Most of these were undated, but those that I have managed to date were written between 1800 and 1832.

²¹ Adam Clarke, *Discourses on Various Subjects Relative to the Being and Attributes of God*, 3 volumes (London: T. S. Clarke, 1828–1830).

²² Whereas there is evidence that he interacted with, and respected, two Buddhist monks from Ceylon. See Peter S. Forsaith, 'Adam Clarke: Wesleyan Syncretist?' Wesley and Methodist Historical Studies Working Group, Oxford Institute for Methodist Studies, 2013. <https://oimts.files.wordpress.com/2013/09/2013-2-forsaith.pdf> (accessed 2 June 2016).

²³ However, see note #5.

²⁴ Clarke, *The New Testament*, commentary on Revelation 2:9.

²⁵ Clarke, *The New Testament*, commentary on Revelation 3:9.

²⁶ Norman Cohn, *Cosmos, Chaos and the World to Come: The Ancient Roots of Apocalyptic Faith* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993), p. 212.

²⁷ The only other example that I found was in Clarke, *The New Testament*, commentary on Matthew 21:31.

²⁸ See Newport, 'Methodists and the Millennium', pp. 107, 110, 113, 117–119, 121.

²⁹ Clarke, *The New Testament*, commentary on Revelation 11:7.

³⁰ Clarke quoted a Bible published by Edmund Becke in 1549 to the effect that the Bishop of Rome was a 'plain Antichrist', because against the injunction to 'call no man your father upon the earth', he fashioned himself 'the most holy father'. In response, Clarke stated that: 'It is true, nothing can be plainer; and yet, in the face of these commands, the pope has claimed the honour'. Clarke, *The New Testament*, commentary on Matthew 23 (concluding remarks for chapter).

- ³¹ Clarke, *The New Testament*, commentary on Matthew 3:7. See also Clarke, *The New Testament*, commentary on Matthew 16:1.
- ³² Many of his remarks about the Pharisees appear in his commentary on the Gospel of Matthew. See for example, Clarke, *The New Testament*, commentary on Matthew 3:7, 6:2, 6:5, 12:25–28 15:12–14, 16:1, 22:36, 23:4, 23:25, 23:33, and his concluding remarks for Matthew 23. There are similar comments about the Pharisees in his commentary on the gospels of Luke and John. He also made similar remarks about the Pharisees in sermons and articles. See for example, Adam Clarke, ‘The Rights of God and Caesar’, in Clarke, *Discourses*, volume 3, sermon 36, pp. 309–316, 333; Adam Clarke, ‘On Kneeling in Public Worship’, *Methodist Magazine*, July 1811, p. 539.
- ³³ Clarke, *The New Testament*, commentary on Matthew 15:14.
- ³⁴ See Amy-Jill Levine and Marc Zvi Brettler (eds.), *The Jewish Annotated New Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 85, 153, 391, 549.
- ³⁵ Clarke, *The New Testament*, commentary on Matthew 3:7, 16:1. See also Clarke, *The New Testament*, commentary on Matthew 22:23–32, 22:36; Adam Clarke, ‘Love to God and Man, the Fulfilling of the Law and the Prophets’, in Clarke, *Discourses*, volume 2, sermon 23, p. 207; Clarke, ‘The Rights of God and Caesar’, volume 3, sermon 36, p. 333.
- ³⁶ Adam Clarke [‘One who was intimately acquainted with him’], *An Account of the Infancy, Religious and Literary Life of Adam Clarke, LL.D, F.A.S.*, volume 1, ed. J. B. B. Clarke (London: T. S. Clarke, 1833), pp. 44–45.
- ³⁷ See Leon Poliakov, ‘The English Deists’, in *The History of Anti-Semitism*, volume 3, translated by Miriam Kochan (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975), pp. 59–69; Glassman, *Protean Prejudice*, pp. 15–24.
- ³⁸ Glassman, *Protean Prejudice*, p. 12.
- ³⁹ Felsenstein, *Anti-Semitic Stereotypes*, pp. 212, 310 n.72.
- ⁴⁰ Glassman, *Protean Prejudice*, pp. 21–22.
- ⁴¹ See Clarke, *The New Testament*, commentary on Matthew 26:16, 26:47, 27:3; and his concluding remarks for Acts 1.
- ⁴² According to his biographers, some people were alarmed by a handful of controversial assertions, one of which was that Judas was repentant and saved. See William Jones, *Memoirs of the Life, Ministry, and Writings, of the Rev. Adam Clarke* (London, 1834), pp. 3, 586–589; *The Life and Labours of Adam Clarke, LL.D*, second edition (London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans, 1842), pp. 378–379; John Wesley Etheridge, *The Life of the Rev. Adam Clarke, LL.D.*, second edition (London: John Mason, 1858), p. 326; Robert H. Gallagher, *Adam Clarke: Saint and Scholar* (Belfast: Nelson & Knox, [1963]), p. 74; Maldwyn L. Edwards, *Adam Clarke* (London: Epworth Press, [1942]), pp. 32–33.
- ⁴³ Clarke, *The New Testament*, commentary on Matthew 23:15
- ⁴⁴ See for example, Clarke, *The New Testament*, commentary on Matthew 5:43, 27:21; John 5:16, 7:1, 8:23, 10:24, 16:2, 18:40; Luke 19:14; Titus 1:16; 1 Thessalonians 2:14–17. See also Adam Clarke, ‘Christ Crucified, a Stumbling-block to the Jews, and Foolishness to the Greeks’, in Clarke, *Discourses*, volume 2, sermon 25, p. 267; Clarke, ‘Love to God and Man, the Fulfilling of the Law and the Prophets’, volume 2, sermon 23, pp. 221–222.
- ⁴⁵ Adam Clarke, ‘The Glory of the Latter Days’, in Clarke, *Discourses*, volume 2, sermon 28, pp. 358–359.
- ⁴⁶ Clarke, *The New Testament*, commentary on Luke 19:14; Acts 3:14; John 18:40.
- ⁴⁷ Clarke, *The New Testament*, commentary on John 18:40.
- ⁴⁸ Clarke, *The New Testament*, commentary on Matthew 3:7
- ⁴⁹ Clarke, *The New Testament*, commentary on Matthew 12:34, 23:33.
- ⁵⁰ Clarke, *The New Testament*, commentary on Matthew 23 (concluding remarks for chapter).
- ⁵¹ Clarke, *The New Testament*, commentary on 1 Thessalonians 2:15–16.
- ⁵² Stephen R. Haynes, *Jews and the Christian Imagination: Reluctant Witnesses* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1995), pp. 4–5. For a similar observation, see Felsenstein, *Anti-Semitic Stereotypes*, pp. 14–15.
- ⁵³ Clarke, *The New Testament*, commentary on Acts 17:13.
- ⁵⁴ Clarke, *The New Testament*, commentary on Hebrews 7:18.
- ⁵⁵ Clarke, *The New Testament*, commentary on Titus 1:16.
- ⁵⁶ Clarke, *The New Testament*, commentary on Acts 17:13.

- ⁵⁷ Clarke, 'Christ Crucified, a Stumbling-block to the Jews', volume 2, sermon 25, p. 267.
- ⁵⁸ Adam Clarke, 'St. Paul's Glorifying; or the Gospel of Christ the Power of God unto Salvation', in Clarke, *Discourses*, volume 1, sermon 7, pp. 144–145.
- ⁵⁹ Adam Clarke, 'The High Commission', undated sermon in notebook, pp. 14, 25, James Everett and Adam Clarke MSS, John Rylands Library Special Collections, MAW MS 72.5.
- ⁶⁰ See Endelman, *The Jews of Georgian England*, chapter 2; Endelman, *The Jews of Britain, 1656-2000*, pp. 19–25, 69–70, 186.
- ⁶¹ Clarke, 'The Glory of the Latter Days', volume 2, sermon 28, pp. 372–373.
- ⁶² However, whilst Clarke rejected the millenarian worldview, he did share the idea about a special role for Britain. According to a sermon outline by Clarke, it was probable that the British nation had replaced the reprobated Jews as God's 'representative people, by and from whom all the nations of the earth are to receive the knowledge of the true God'. Adam Clarke, 'The Jews and the Egyptians', *The Miscellaneous Works of Adam Clarke*, ed. James Everett, volume 8 (London: T. Tegg, 1836-1837), sermon outline 1, pp. 413–414.
- ⁶³ Felsenstein, *Anti-Semitic Stereotypes*, p. 64.
- ⁶⁴ Jonas Hanway ['a Merchant who subscribed the Petition against the Naturalization of the Jews'], *A Review of the Proposed Naturalization of the Jews* (London, 1753), p. 42.
- ⁶⁵ Jacob Bryant, *A Treatise upon the Authenticity of the Scriptures, and the Truth of the Christian Religion*, (London, 1792; second edition: Cambridge, 1793), p. 41.
- ⁶⁶ Clarke, *The New Testament*, commentary on Matthew 24 (concluding notes for chapter 24).
- ⁶⁷ Clarke, *The New Testament*, commentary on Matthew 24:30–31.
- ⁶⁸ Clarke, *The Holy Bible*, commentary on Jeremiah 15:4.
- ⁶⁹ Clarke, *The New Testament*, commentary on Matthew 27:25.
- ⁷⁰ Clarke, *The New Testament*, 'preface to the epistle to the Romans', p. viii.
- ⁷¹ Adam Clarke, 'Life, the Gift of the Gospel: The Law, the Ministration of Death', in Clarke, *Discourses*, volume 1, sermon 9, p. 209.
- ⁷² See Haydon, *Anti-Catholicism*, pp. 1–2, 19–21.
- ⁷³ Walter L. Arnstein, *Protestant versus Catholic in Mid-Victorian England: Mr. Newdegate and the Nuns* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1982), p. 4.
- ⁷⁴ See Haydon, *Anti-Catholicism*, chapter 1 and passim.
- ⁷⁵ For anti-Catholicism during the Victorian era, see: Arnstein, *Protestant versus Catholic in Mid-Victorian England*; Denis G. Paz, *Popular Anti-Catholicism in Mid-Victorian England* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992); Edward R. Norman, *Anti-Catholicism in Victorian England* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1968); John Wolfe, *The Protestant Crusade in Great Britain, 1829-1860* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991).
- ⁷⁶ See Mats Selén, *The Oxford Movement and Wesleyan Methodism in England, 1833-1882: A Study in Religious Conflict* (Lund: Lund University Press, 1992), pp. 45–58; Peter Nockles, 'Charles Wesley, Catholicism and Anti-Catholicism', in *Charles Wesley: Life, Literature and Legacy*, ed. Kenneth G. C. Newport and Ted A. Campbell (Peterborough: Epworth, 2007), pp. 141-164; David Butler, *Methodists and Papists: John Wesley and the Catholic Church in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1995).
- ⁷⁷ Butler, *Methodists and Papists*, pp. 129–134.
- ⁷⁸ Unfinished letter from Charles Wesley to an unnamed correspondent, 25 April 1754, John Rylands Special Collections, DDCW 1/51. For a transcript and discussion of this letter, see Kenneth G. C. Newport, 'Charles Wesley's interpretation of some biblical prophecies according to a previously unpublished letter', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 77, no. 2 (1995), pp. 31–52. <https://www.escholar.manchester.ac.uk/uk-ac-man-scw:1m2365> (accessed 2 June 2016).
- ⁷⁹ Clarke, *The New Testament*, commentary on Revelation 14:8, 18:21.
- ⁸⁰ Adam Clarke, 'The Worship which God requires from Man', in Clarke, *Discourses*, volume 1, sermon 2, p. 50.
- ⁸¹ Clarke, 'Christ Crucified, a Stumbling-block to the Jews', volume 2, sermon 25, pp. 274–279.
- ⁸² Clarke, *The New Testament*, commentary on Titus 3:9; 1 Timothy 1:4, 4:7.
- ⁸³ Aquinas was influenced by the Jewish philosopher, Moses Maimonides. According to Clarke, 'Jewish philosophy' was characterised by 'vain deceit', and 'the Jews have ever been the most puerile, absurd, and ridiculous reasoners in the world. Even Rabbi Maymon, or Maimonides, the most intelligent of them all, is often

in his master-piece, the *Moreh Nevochim*, the *Teacher of the Perplexed*, most deplorably empty and vain'. Clarke, *The New Testament*, commentary on Colossians 2:8.

⁸⁴ Clarke, *The New Testament*, commentary on Titus 3:9; 1 Timothy 4:7.

⁸⁵ Clarke, 'Advertisement' for 'Christ Crucified, a Stumbling-block to the Jews', volume 2, sermon 25, pp. 251–252.

⁸⁶ Adam Clarke, 'St. Peter's Character of the Dispersed among the Gentiles', undated sermon in notebook, p. 15, James Everett and Adam Clarke MSS, John Rylands Library Special Collections, MAW MS 72.5.

⁸⁷ Adam Clarke, 'The Corruption that is in the World through Lust', undated sermon, p. 5, Papers of Dr Adam Clarke, John Rylands Library Special Collections, PLP 26.10.10.

⁸⁸ Clarke, *The New Testament*, commentary on John 16:2. Elsewhere, Clarke referred to Mary I as 'Bloody Queen Mary' and 'the bloody queen'. See Clarke, *The New Testament*, commentary on Matthew 5:11, 26:65. Clarke used the terms 'Zealots' and 'Sicarii' interchangeably. See for example, Clarke, *The New Testament*, commentary on Acts 8:3.

⁸⁹ See Nockles, 'Charles Wesley, Catholicism and Anti-Catholicism', pp. 155–156.

⁹⁰ A character who has been the subject of a number of biographies, none of which hint at his anti-Judaism.

⁹¹ Clarke, 'Love to God and Man, the Fulfilling of the Law and the Prophets', volume 2, sermon 23, p. 222; Clarke, *The New Testament*, commentary on Matthew 5:43.

⁹² Clarke, *The New Testament*, 'preface to the epistle to the Romans', p. viii.

⁹³ Clarke, 'St. Peter's Character of the Dispersed among the Gentiles', p. 2.

⁹⁴ Adam Clarke, 'Creed of the Abyssinians', *Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine*, September 1826, pp. 607–608.

⁹⁵ For example, he only referred to Jewish usurers occasionally, and only one instance was found in reference to contemporary Jews ('the Jews ever were, and are still, remarkable for usury, and usurious contracts'). Similarly, only one reference was found to the physiognomy and cleanliness of Jews ('Poor Jews! they have, in general, a very disagreeable look, partly affected, and partly through neglect of neatness and cleanliness'). Clarke, *The Holy Bible*, commentary on Psalms 15:5; Clarke, *The Holy Bible*, commentary on Isaiah, 52:14.

⁹⁶ See Stephen B. Dawes, *Adam Clarke: Methodism's First Old Testament Scholar* (Cornish Methodist Historical Association, 1994), pp. 3, 34 n.1. According to the editor of the 'new edition' of Adam Clarke's *New Testament* commentary, the sale and use of the *original* commentary in England and America 'has been greater than that of almost any other similar work', and the demand for it 'has continued, and it is still called for beyond any other of the older commentaries'. Daniel Curry, 'Editor's Preface to the Revised Edition', in Curry, *The New Testament*, p. 3.

⁹⁷ Joseph Sutcliffe, *A treatise on the universal spread of the gospel, the glorious millennium and the second coming of Christ* (1798), cited by Newport, 'Methodists and the Millennium', pp. 109–112.

⁹⁸ Thomas Coke, *A Commentary on the Holy Bible*, volume 4 (London, 1803), cited by Newport, 'Methodists and the Millennium', pp. 121–122.