

# Did the House of Representatives Just Outlaw Quoting Parts of the New Testament?

According to a growing number of Christian conservatives, including Tucker Carlson, Charlie Kirk and Andrew Torba (CEO of social media platform Gab), the new House bill opposing antisemitism actually outlaws quoting parts of the New Testament? Is this true?

Kirk, who is a strong supporter of Israel, asked on X:

Carlson, who has increasingly been accused of harboring antisemitic views, responded with, "Yes. The New Testament."

Torba, who himself is frequently accused of antisemitism, sent out an email on May 2 titled, "The House Passes H.R. 6090: A Threat to the Christian Faith."

He then claimed that

*"The bill adopts the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's definition of 'antisemitism,' which includes the basic Biblical Truth that the Jews killed Jesus Christ as 'classic antisemitism.' The bill has raised serious concerns among Christians who believe that their First Amendment rights are being threatened. For example H.R. 6090 could potentially make it a crime for pastors to preach sermons that adhere to Biblical passages, of which there are many, which explicitly state that the Jews killed Jesus."*

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And note that Torba wrote this urgent warning as a “Christian nationalist,” signing off with “Christ is King.”

On what basis are these men raising these concerns? It is the fact that the House Bill uses the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance’s definition of antisemitism, which states, “Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”

The IHRA then provides examples of Jew hatred, including, “Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.” Or, “Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.” Or, “Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.”

Based on this last example, concerned Christians are claiming that this bill will make it illegal to quote passages such as these:

– “Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified” (Acts 2:36, ESV; Peter, preaching to a Jewish crowd in Jerusalem).

– “The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified his servant Jesus, whom you delivered over and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release him. But you denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses” (Acts 3:13–15; again, Peter,

preaching to a Jewish crowd in Jerusalem).

– “For you, brothers, became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea. For you suffered the same things from your own countrymen as they did from the Jews, who killed both the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drove us out, and displease God and oppose all mankind by hindering us from speaking to the Gentiles that they might be saved—so as always to fill up the measure of their sins. But wrath has come upon them at last!” (1 Thess. 2:14–16; Paul, writing to Gentile Christians in Thessalonica).

Are these concerns justified? Not in the least.

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The IHRA definition simply states that it would be antisemitic to label Israelis today (or, all Jews, for that matter) as Christ killers or as responsible for the death of Jesus. That's it.

It neither states nor implies that a Christian could not quote these passages of Scripture, nor does it state or imply that it is antisemitic to state that some Jewish leaders in the first century were complicit in the death of Jesus, which is historically true. It would not even be antisemitic to state that these leaders acted on behalf of the nation.

But to extract from this that Israelis today were guilty of deicide (killing Christ, who was God incarnate) would be to grossly misuse Scripture. And to make that claim would be antisemitic.

As for a right reading of the New Testament passages, they are written against a backdrop where: 1) large crowds of Jews followed Jesus and it was mainly Jewish leaders who rejected Him (see, for example, Matt. 21:33-46); 2) all the first

followers of Jesus were Jews; 3) Peter and Paul are presented as observant, Torah-keeping Jews (see, for example, Acts 4:10, 23:6) before the temple was destroyed, there were tens of thousands of Jewish followers of Jesus (Acts 21:20).

As for Paul's words to the Thessalonian believers, a more accurate rendering would be, "For you, brothers and sisters, became imitators of God's communities in Christ Jesus that are in Judea—for you suffered the same things at the hands of your own countrymen as they did from the Judean leaders [or, simply "the Judeans," speaking of the Jews of Judah who were guilty of these acts], who killed both the Lord Jesus and the prophets and drove us out. They [meaning, these same troublemaking Judean leaders who rejected Jesus and the prophets and apostles He sent] are not pleasing to God and hostile to all people, hindering us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they might be saved. As a result, they constantly fill up the measure of their sins. But wrath has come upon them at last" (compare the Tree of Life version).

In short, then, this bill says nothing whatsoever about citing these New Testament passages or affirming their truthfulness. Rather, it addresses the historic (and still present) antisemitic libel that all Jews were and are Christ killers, a libel that has led to the slaughter of Jews throughout history, as I documented in "Our Hands Are Stained with Blood."

Whether the bill infringes on free speech in general is a separate issue entirely, but that is a far cry from the hysterical, patently false charges being raised against the bill today.

Pay them no heed.

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