

ISRAEL'S BIBLE – THE BASIS FOR JEWISH-CHRISTIAN DIALOGUE

**LECTURE ON THE OCCASION OF THE FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE INTERNATIONAL JEWISH-CHRISTIAN BIBLE WEEK
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Hans Hermann Henrix

The 40-year long tradition of the International Jewish-Christian Bible Week – begun in the Hedwig-Dransfeld-Haus in Bendorf and since 2004 continued at Haus Ohrbeck – is a valid and real reason to express congratulations and thanksgiving. Thanks are due above all to the people who initiated the tradition, and representing them I want to name Anneliese Debray (1911-1985), who will always be remembered, and Rabbi Jonathan Magonet, who is present here. They helped a vision to come to life and they showed a perseverance that has persisted until today. It is the vision that says: Yes, there is a Bible that Jews and Christians have in common, Israel's Bible. And this vision does not forget that along with closeness, the relationship of Judaism and Christianity to this shared Bible also includes considerable difference. For some, this difference is so great that they question whether Jews and Christians do have Israel's Bible in common.

In order to go more deeply into the subject of Israel's Bible as the basis for Christian-Jewish closeness and difference, I want to begin with a personal experience. As a Catholic ecumenical theologian whose orientation comes from fundamental theology, so who is not competent as an exegete, this experience provides information about the relationship between the text of the Bible and the community of those who read the Bible. In our case, the relationship between the text and the community of readers calls for a clarification of the fundamental relationship between the Jewish and the Christian way of reading the Bible. This clarification means no less than the challenge, whether the Church and Christianity can gain a positive relationship to the Jewish way of reading Israel's Bible.¹

Experiences with reading the Bible within religious services

Both for Jewish and for Christian services, the reading and proclamation of Scripture is at the centre – for Jews that of the Torah and the prophets, for Christians that of the writings of the Old and New Testaments. During the Shabbat morning service, the reading of the Torah is emphasized by means of the most liturgical of acts, which the congregation underlines by a meaningful reverential

¹ Here, I am referring to reflections contained in my own contribution: Die gemeinsame Bibel lesen – Ein christliches Echo auf ein jüdisches Votum, in: Siegfried Kreuzer / Frank Ueberschaer (Eds.), *Gemeinsame Bibel – Gemeinsame Sendung. 25 Jahre Rheinischer Synodalbeschluss zur Erneuerung des Verhältnisses von Christen und Juden*, Neukirchen-Vluyn 2006, 75-87.

gesture. After the Torah scroll is taken out of the Torah shrine, the scroll is brought to the *bimah*, the lectern; during the procession, the members of the congregation come forward to touch the Torah scroll with the *tsitsit*, the threads of their *tallit* and they then bring these to their mouth or their lips. Over and over again, this reverential gesture is impressive for the Christian guest. And I admit that when I visit the service in the Aachen congregation, I sometimes feel the urge to do the same as the members of the Jewish congregation. But an interior voice then tells me: "You are not wearing a *tallit*. The Torah is not your property. Of course the text of the Torah also belongs to your Bible. But here we have more than a text; here we have the Torah as a text that creates community. There is a bond, a unity between the community and the text, and you don't belong inside this unity, you are outside it. Respect this. Do not push yourself inside. Be close in a different way." And so I remain at my place in the synagogue benches, and when the Torah is carried past my place, I bow. My bow is also reverence, is also a gesture of faith. This faith says in my heart: "God's Word is now very close. The divine Word is present here. In the sign of the Torah scroll, the Word of God that is written there is present. Here, the Divine is no less close than in the bread of the Eucharist, which is carried through the aisles of your church in the monstrance and which you honour by bowing before it." The Catholic guest can interpret his or her experience of the Torah in the synagogue by means of the tradition of sacramental language, which goes beyond what has to do simply with things and even more so with what is magic; this sacramental experience is close to the Jewish one, while it is at the same time very different.

What does this experience of religious service tell us? Alongside the fundamental fact that we have the Bible in common, the relationship with this shared Bible also includes separation between Jews and Christians, between Israel and the Church. However, this double component of common ground or community *and* separation can be experienced not just during the liturgical reading of Israel's Bible. It forces itself into the ecumenical endeavour in study, in interpretation – whether exegetical or theological – that goes beyond the liturgy and the religious service.

The text of the Bible and the Bible's community of interpretation

The experience of the liturgical reading of the Bible makes clear that the idea of an individualistic face to face of a single reader with the Bible is an abstraction. There are things that disturb an individualistic relationship with the Bible. These come from each individual's own community of readers or interpreters. They have had an effect on the very complex and in part compromising history of the relationship between the Church and Israel. Along with the positive and friendly common reading of the shared Bible, for example by Origenes or Jerome, from the time of the early Church Fathers on there was a polemic rejection of the Jewish interpretation of Israel's Bible. This Christian rejection was nourished by critical to hostile statements in the New Testament concerning Jews, which are a painful and much discussed topic in Christian exegesis and theology. Thus there is intensive discussion about whether the anti-Judaism is to be understood at the level of the interpreters and the "*Wirkungsgeschichte*" (the history of the text's influence) of, for instance, the Gospels according to Matthew and John, or whether it is part of the text of these Gospels itself. So far, no consensus has been reached as regards this question. Along with voices that consider the Gospels themselves to be anti-Jewish,² there are others who deny this.³ Thus, the

² For the Gospel according to John, the congressional volume edited by Reimund Bieringer / Didier Pollefeyt / Frederique Vandecasteele-Vanneuville offers ample material on the problem. There, the authors R. Alan Culpepper, Maarten J.J. Meenken, Stephen Motyer, Adele Reinartz, Simon Schoon and Peter J. Tomson tend towards considering the Gospel according to John itself as anti-Jewish. Cf. Reimund Bieringer / Didier Pollefeyt / Frederique Vandecasteele-Vanneuville (Eds.), *Anti-Judaism and the Fourth Gospel. Papers of the Leuven Colloquium 2000*, Assen 2001.

³ This position can be found in the contributions by James D.G. Dunn, James H. Charlesworth, Hendrik Hoet, Bertold Klappert and Urban C. von Wahlde in the same congressional volume cited above.

distinction between the biblical text itself and its later interpretation is a topic, the discussion of which has not yet come to an end in Christian exegesis and hermeneutics.

Hermeneutically, it is possible to say on principle about the relationship between the text and the interpreter that a “text” is only a text within a communicative relationship. In other words, “text and interpreter are reciprocally inter-dependent – the interpreter needs and is constrained by the text, but the text only becomes meaningful as it is interpreted.”⁴ So it is possible to speak of a “bridge between the old texts and ourselves”, which we can build as Jews and Christians, or we can also say that we should and want to bring “our life to the texts” and “the text into our life”.⁵ The reciprocal connection between the text and the interpretation or the life of the text does not abrogate the abiding vis-à-vis of the text. Within Christianity, this was again lastingly and universally impressed upon us in the 16th century by the “*sola scriptura*” of the Reformation. Authentic interpretation remains bound to the text, which is the norm and guideline for interpretation. Authentic interpretation of Scripture is only possible on the basis of the scriptural text itself. The text’s position as a vis-à-vis to its interpretations remains. But the rendering of the text’s meaning does not exclude the interpreter’s activity. Rather, the interpreter’s activity in interpreting Scripture can at the same time be called a “self-interpretation” of Scripture.

Israel’s Bible was brought forth by the community of Israel. And the commentary on this Bible through the life, the preaching and the destiny of Jesus of Nazareth allowed a new community to come forth, the community of the early Church. Both of these facts tell us that there is a double movement between the text of Israel’s Bible and the community of those who read or live the Bible. It has Jewish validity if we concentrate on the religious dimension of the Jewish people and of Judaism and for once neglect the dimension of *Am Yisrael* and *Erets Yisrael*. And it has Christian validity. Both communities place themselves into a relationship with the Bible – on the one side with Israel’s Bible, and on the other with the one Bible consisting in the Old and the New Testament – by proclaiming and hearing the scriptural texts liturgically within their religious services, by reading and interpreting them in study, and by implementing them in life. But this is not the only movement between the community and the Bible. Both communities for their part are formed and given their *raison d’être* by the Bible. They experience the scriptural texts as “holy texts”. Through reading and interpreting the texts in their religious services, their communities become a community of faith and they live and express themselves as such.

When the relationship between the text and the interpreter is so close and not least of all aims at community, a tradition of interpretation and commentary that is specific to the community is created. In the case of the Bible and the relationship between Judaism and Christianity, this brings the question with it, what relationship their respective Bible and traditions of reading that Bible have with one another. On the occasion of another jubilee – the 25th anniversary of the Synod declaration of the Church of the Rhineland in Wuppertal in 2005, “*Zur Umkehr des Verhältnisses von Christen und Juden*” [Towards the Renovation of the Relationship of Christians and Jews] – Michael Signer rightly saw the positive relationship for the future of Judaism and Christianity as dependent on whether it would be possible for the Churches “to develop a new approach to Judaism as a result of a hermeneutical praxis”.⁶ Which Bible forms the foundation and guideline for Jews and for Christians and the basis for Jewish-Christian dialogue? How do the Jewish and the Christian traditions of reading and interpreting their respective Bible see one another? Is it possible for the Church to acknowledge the Jewish tradition of interpretation in a positive way?

⁴ Judith M. Lieu, *Anti-Judaism in the Fourth Gospel*, in: *ibid.*, 126-143, 140.

⁵ Thus Michael Signer, *Reading the Same Scripture? Jews and Christians. Towards Renovation of the Relationship between Jews and Christians*, in: Siegfried Kreuzer / Frank Ueberschaer (Eds.), *Gemeinsame Bibel*, *ibid.*, 66-74, 68.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 66.

Tenach and the one two-part Christian Bible of the Old and the New Testament

After the destruction of the Temple in the year 70 CE and the Bar Kokhba Revolt (135 CE), the Jewish and the Christian communities of reading and interpreting both sought “orientation from the Hebrew Bible”. In so doing, the “Greek version of the *TeNaKh*” was “the basis for the disciples of Jesus in interpreting the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.”⁷ As Christians, we have to remind ourselves over and over again that the Sacred Scripture of early Christianity was solely Israel’s Bible. Based on it, the authors of the New Testament interpreted, proclaimed and gave foundation to the Christ-event.⁸

Of course, this proclamation of Christ became scripture remarkably fast. But we must not imagine this process as happening in such a way that the first generations of Christians wrote their scriptures proclaiming Christ alongside of or opposite to the Sacred Scripture that existed. Rather, Israel’s Bible is and remains “the acknowledged and fundamental authority in proclaiming Christ, because what is said about Jesus can only be understood from Israel’s Bible.” A figure like the 2nd century Marcion is of particular significance in understanding when and why the two-part Christian Bible came into being.⁹ As a consequence of his rejection of Israel’s God as the Creator God, Marcion also rejected Israel’s Bible. He not only rejected Israel’s Bible, but also cancelled everything connecting the message of Christ with it. During his lifetime, so around the middle of the 2nd century, there was not yet any collection of Sacred Scriptures bearing the title “New Testament”. The various Jewish-Christian as well as Gentile-Christian congregations read and actualized Israel’s Sacred Scriptures as the Word of God in their present day and in their community. They did this by means of the usual methods at the time. The faith-filled appropriation of Scripture included allegory and typology as well as the *pesher*, the “opening up” of what until then had been secret. “Marcion rejected all these ways of understanding that were customary in Judaism and Christianity.”¹⁰ He wanted to replace Israel’s Scriptures by a canon of Scriptures that contained solely and exclusively the message of Christ. Thus he forced the Church to clarify in a binding way its own relationship to Israel’s Bible. The result of that clarification is as unequivocal as the discussion in exegesis and the history of theology around the details of this 2nd century process of clarification is controversial: the new Sacred Scriptures did not replace Israel’s Bible. By expanding its Sacred Scriptures, the early Church came to “two important decisions: 1. It kept all the Scriptures of Israel’s Bible, and it placed the ‘new’ Scriptures not before but after Israel’s Bible; thus the one two-part Christian Bible came into being. 2. It did not interfere in the Jewish wording of the first part so as to Christianize it by reworking it.”¹¹ Through the one two-part Sacred Scripture made up of the Old and the New Testament, the early Church underlined “that it can understand and proclaim the Jew Jesus of Nazareth only in the unity and uniqueness of the God who revealed himself to Israel ... The Christians’ one Sacred Scripture in two parts holds on to this faith in the One and Only God of Israel, the Creator of the world to whom Jesus testified and whom he proclaimed, as forever non-negotiable and irrevocable.”¹²

⁷ Thus with Michael Signer: *ibid.*, 69.

⁸ This is emphasized by Christoph Dohmen, *Israelerinnerung im Verstehen der zweieinen Bibel*, in: the same (Ed.), *In Gottes Volk eingebunden. Jüdisch-christliche Blickpunkte zum Dokument der Päpstlichen Bibelkommission Das jüdische Volk und seine Heilige Schrift in der christlichen Bibel*, Stuttgart 2003, 9-19, 12ff.

⁹ Cf. the indications in Hubert Frankemölle, *Frühjudentum und Urchristentum. Vorgeschichte – Verlauf – Auswirkungen (4. Jahrhundert v. Chr. bis 4. Jahrhundert n. Chr.)*, Stuttgart 2006, 294, 344f., 365.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 344.

¹¹ Erich Zenger, *Heilige Schrift der Juden und der Christen*, in: the same and others, *Einleitung in das Alte Testament (Kohlhammer Studienbücher Theologie 1,1)*, Stuttgart 1998, 11-35, 13.

¹² Christoph Dohmen, *ibid.*

So the Scriptures of the New Testament were not written as an autonomous book or an autonomous norm. From the beginning they referred to Israel's Bible; they formed the expanded part of the Christian "new edition" of Scripture. This "new edition" uses the coupled concepts "old-new". It is not used first of all as a "couple in opposition", but as a "couple in correlation". It signifies a sequence within the two-part Christian Bible: the Old Testament is the first part, which precedes the New Testament, the second part of the Christian Bible. So according to Christian understanding, Israel's Bible is the book of Sacred Scripture which Judaism and Christianity have in common. For both communities, this Bible is the basis of their faith experiences with the God of Israel. In order to underline this, it has been said: "No document of any religion ... except the New Testament is in a canonical relationship of dialogue with the Hebrew Bible, which thus becomes the 'Old Testament' of the Christian Bible."¹³ Israel's Bible is and remains the lasting basis for Christian-Jewish dialogue.

The canon of the Jewish Bible for its part was formed essentially between 400 and 200 BCE as a three-part canon, which the Hebrew acronym *TeNaKh* signifies: *Torah* (Teaching of the five Books of Moses), *Nebiim* (Prophets), and *Khetubim* (Writings). In this process, there were variations, above all as regards the third body, the *Khetubim*, the Writings. The canonical parts "Torah" and "Prophets" were relatively stable. The New Testament phrase "the Law and the Prophets" or "Moses and the Prophets" indicates this (cf. Mt. 5:17; 7:12; 22:40; Acts 13:15; 24:14 and others). The formation of the Christian canon in the 2nd century followed the Greek canon of the Septuagint as regards the interior form of Israel's Bible and its chronological order according to past, present and future, and therefore until today follows the sequence of "Law", "Writings" and "Prophets". Israel's Bible and its interpretation are at the centre of what Judaism and Christianity have in common and what at the same time is the difference between them. One can say: just as rabbinic Judaism formed the concept of "oral Torah" as the interpretation and expansion of the "written Torah", so early Christianity developed its proclamation of Christ in the form of the New Testament as interpretation of and commentary on Israel's written Bible. And just as in the Jewish "Sayings of the Fathers" the oral Torah is understood as the continuation of the revelation on Sinai (*Avot* 1,1), so the New Testament was interpreted by early Christianity as the confirmation, fulfilment and continuation of the Word of God written down in Israel's Bible. Oral Torah and New Testament are ways of reading the *TeNaKh* or the Old Testament, and they initiate an uninterrupted tradition of interpretation.

Of course, this occurred in a long history filled with tensions. For many centuries, Christian proclamation and interpretation of Scripture criticized, rejected and maligned the Jewish tradition of interpretation in an aggressive and polemical way.¹⁴ The opposing Jewish reaction also contained its polemic elements. But in view of the social and political consequences of the Christian polemic in the course of history, the Church and Christianity remain faced with the question, whether they are able to develop a changed hermeneutic praxis and a different relationship to the Jewish tradition of interpretation. To quote Jonathan Magonet: "In the past, we defined ourselves in contrast and in opposition to one another. Today we must define ourselves in relationship to one another."¹⁵ Let us answer the question whether this is possible in a positive way for the Church and for Christianity by looking at an astonishing document of the Catholic Church.

¹³ Robert Brandau, *Zeugen Gottes voreinander – Judenmission?*, in: Siegfried Kreuzer / Frank Ueberschaer (Eds.), *Gemeinsame Bibel*, *ibid.*, 121-123, 122f.; cf. the same, *Innerbiblischer Dialog und dialogische Mission. Die Judenmission als theologisches Problem*, Neukirchen 2006, 338ff.

¹⁴ Thus with George Lindbeck, *Postmodern Hermeneutics and Jewish-Christian Dialogue: A Case Study*, in: Tikva Frymer-Kensky and others, *ibid.*, 106-113.

¹⁵ Jonathan Magonet, *Der Dialog mit Israel und der Dialog mit den Religionen*, in: Siegfried Kreuzer / Frank Ueberschaer (Eds.), *Gemeinsame Bibel*, *ibid.*, 54-65, 63.

The possibility of a positive acknowledgment of the Jewish interpretation of the Bible as seen by the Pontifical Biblical Commission

Fifteen years ago, Jews realized that there is a committee, the Pontifical Biblical Commission, which advises the pope and his Congregation of the Faith in matters concerning the interpretation of the Bible. The occasion arose because of a much noted statement by the commission of April 23rd, 1993, "The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church".¹⁶ It was written because of contradictory assertions concerning the scientific interpretation of the Bible in the Catholic Church. In this document, the commission emphasized the right to use the various methods and means of access to understanding the Bible, and it wrote a whole section on "Approach through Recourse to Jewish Traditions of Interpretation". "Jewish biblical scholarship in all its richness, from its origins in antiquity down to the present day, is an assent of the highest value for the exegesis of both Testaments." At the same time, the difference between the respective horizons of Jewish and Christian biblical interpretation was presented: "Above all, the overall pattern of the Jewish and Christian communities is very different: On the Jewish side, in very varied ways, it is a question of a religion which defines a people and a way of life based upon written revelation and an oral tradition; whereas, on the Christian side, it is faith in the Lord Jesus – the one who died, was raised and lives still, Messiah and Son of God; it is around faith in his person that the community is gathered. These two diverse starting points create, as regards the interpretation of the Scriptures, two separate contexts, which for all their points of contact and similarity are in fact radically diverse."¹⁷

The perception of the Jewish tradition of interpretation continued to have an effect on the commission. In a process that lasted several years, it discussed the relationship between the Old and the New Testament as the Church's one Bible, and it developed a respect for the Jewish interpretation of Israel's Bible that had not been known previously. The May 2001 document, "The Jewish People and their Sacred Scriptures in the Christian Bible", was the final result of their work.¹⁸ The Biblical Commission thereby hoped "to advance the dialogue between Christians and Jews with clarity and in a spirit of mutual esteem and affection." (No. 1, p. 14) Its fundamental thesis is that the Old Testament is indispensable for Christianity and that "in itself (it) has great value as the Word of God." (No. 21, p. 49) It astonishes the reader when it urges Christians to recall that there is a Jewish and a Christian tradition of interpretation and of reading the Old Testament, and that these may not contest the other's right to exist. And finally, it brings an impressive double metaphor for the indissoluble link connecting the New Testament with the Old: "Without the Old Testament, the New Testament would be an incomprehensible book, a plant deprived of its roots and destined to dry up and wither." (No. 84, p. 192)

In many respects, the document deals with the post-biblical, relevant present-day Jewish understanding of tradition. In so doing, a fundamental hermeneutic decision of the document comes to bear: it reflects on the Sacred Scripture of the Jewish people (the "Old Testament") and the Christian Bible (as a unity of the Old and the New Testament) not only in their historical relationship to one another. Rather, the biblical texts are literary texts that are understood by their communities as "holy" and "canonical" texts.¹⁹ These communities read the same text – though of course in a

¹⁶ Pontifical Biblical Commission, *The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church*, <http://www.ewtn.com/library/CURIA/PBCINTER.htm> (5.6.2008).

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 48.

¹⁸ The Pontifical Biblical Commission, *The Jewish People and their Sacred Scriptures in the Christian Bible*, May 24, 2001, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Città del Vaticano. Quotations from the document are indicated in the text with the number of the paragraph and the page number.

¹⁹ "As holy texts, they are copied ritually, honoured and recited in worship. As canonical texts, the words of which are considered to be sacrosanct and unchangeable, they are the 'canon' for interpreting life and giving order to life for the

different order and with a different acknowledgment of individual writings as regards their canonicity – but in referring to it, they discover emphases and aspects that another community had not read and understood in that way. Thus, a dimension of meaning is created between the text and the community of readers, which is not present between the text and another community of readers. That is why the Vatican document is also concerned with the contrast between the post-biblical Jewish and Christian explanations, interpretations and “ways of reading” the Bible: on the one hand, the Jewish interpretation of the Jewish Bible consisting of the Torah, the Prophets and the Writings, and on the other hand, the Christian one of the Christian Bible consisting of the Old and the New Testament. It recalls to Christians that they “can and ought to admit that the Jewish reading of the Bible is a possible one, in continuity with the Jewish Sacred Scriptures from the Second Temple period, a reading analogous to the Christian reading which developed in parallel fashion. Both readings are bound up with the vision of their respective faiths, of which the readings are the result and expression. Consequently, both are irreducible.” (No. 22, p. 51)

The statement, which when read in a cursory manner might seem like an arrogant ecclesial way of judging another faith, is in fact a self-critical renunciation of the old theory that Judaism was replaced or superseded by the Church, which for a long time vehemently and persistently contested the organic continuity of Israel’s Bible in post-biblical Jewish tradition. With its demand for Christians to admit that the Jewish commentary tradition organically continues Israel’s Bible, and by having the Church refer to this tradition in a lasting way, the document corrects this old theory in the sense of a reformation within the Church. Theology still needs to catch up with the consequences of the Biblical Commission’s statement that the Jewish way of reading Israel’s Bible and the Christian way of reading it are both to be understood as an organic interpretation of the Bible and must be mutually acknowledged. Many years before the document was written, the Jewish-Christian Bible Week in the Hedwig-Dransfeld-Haus and in Haus Ohrbeck enabled people to experience what the Pontifical Biblical Commission said. In that, they have a certain lead over scientific biblical exegesis in faculties and universities. Common studies and commentaries on the Bible by Christian and Jewish biblical scholars are still the exception.²⁰ Over and beyond this, the Church’s recognition of the Jewish way of reading the Bible also has weight for the way systematic theology attains insights. Traditionally, theology comes to an understanding of its theological insights by teaching its theological *loci*. According to Catholic understanding, the *loci* and sources for coming to theological insights are the canonical writings of the Bible and the witness of the Church in what the Fathers, the Councils, the liturgy as well as the great theologians say. At a lower level, natural reason and the philosophers as well as human history are also taken into account.²¹ And with its positive appreciation of the Jewish commentaries, the Biblical Commission suggests that these should also be included among the sources of theological insight or of the *loci theologici*. A theology that practices this kind of hermeneutics is on the way towards fulfilling the demand to open up a new approach to Judaism. During these days of the Jewish-Christian Bible Week, you are implementing this new approach of Christian women and men to Judaism. And when on October 29th, 2005, Jonathan Magonet confessed in his words of thanks for his honorary doctorate from the Protestant faculty of Wuppertal (*Kirchliche Hochschule Wuppertal*): “The annual Jewish-Christian Bible Week ... became for me a kind of spiritual home, and the people who came there became my community”, this showed that both sides, Jews and Christians, benefit

community of those who accept this canon.” Thus Erich Zenger, Was die Kirche von der jüdischen Schriftauslegung lernen kann, in: Christoph Dohmen (Ed.), *ibid.*, 109-120, 110.

²⁰ The series edited by Erich Zenger, *Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Alten Testament*, offers a variation of common Jewish and Christian biblical interpretation, among others with the Jewish commentaries by Moshe Greenberg and Sara Japhet.

²¹ Thus with Max Seckler, Article “Loci theologici”, in: *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche* 6 (1997), 1014-1016; Quotation: 1015.

from studying Israel's Bible together, and in so doing they prove that it is the basis for Christian-Jewish dialogue. May another forty years lie ahead for this spiritual house and this community.²²

Translation: Sr. Katherine Wolff

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²² Further reflections on common study of Israel's Bible and its challenges and tensions can be found in the author's aforementioned contribution, *Die gemeinsame Bibel lesen – Ein christliches Echo auf ein jüdisches Votum*.