

## The Secret Jewish Oath

Under Pope Innocent III, decisions (canons) 67-70 were adopted by the Fourth Lateran Council which included protective measures against Jewish usury (illegal interest charged on money that is borrowed - this is against Bible law). They had to wear a badge that would be noticeable to all letting others know that they were Jewish. Jews were not allowed to mix with Christians either in the work place, in marriage, or in schools, or social occasions.

Also, because the Jews take an oath every year called the Kol Nidre they were not allowed to testify in a court of law. The Kol Nidre is an oath that Jews make every year during the Day of Atonement which is a special Jewish holiday. The Talmud says, "He who desires that not of his vows (promises) made during the year shall be valid (kept), let him stand at the beginning of the year and declare. 'Every vow which I may make in the future shall be null (cancelled)'" This is where the custom of crossing your fingers behind your back when you are supposed to tell the truth comes from. You pretend you are telling the truth about something, but really you are crossing your fingers behind your back and know that what you are saying is really a lie and supposedly it is OK to lie then. Usually kids or teens do this and its not really about anything serious. Maybe you hid your sister's favorite music CD and she asks you if you took it. You look at her like you don't know what in the world she is talking about and with your fingers crossed behind your back you say, "honest, sis, I don't know what happened to your CD." But really, you are playing a joke on her and you know exactly what you did with it. This is usually pretty harmless. But the Jewish religion takes it very seriously. They have an entire holiday for it that Jews around the world celebrate. You never know if a Jew is telling the truth in court, or in a business dealing or with anything important. They don't see anything wrong with lying, because they take a religious oath every year to cancel all their lies.

In a later book we'll look at more things the early Catholic Popes had to say about Jews and how Jews began to influence the church so severely that the Protestant reformation got underway.