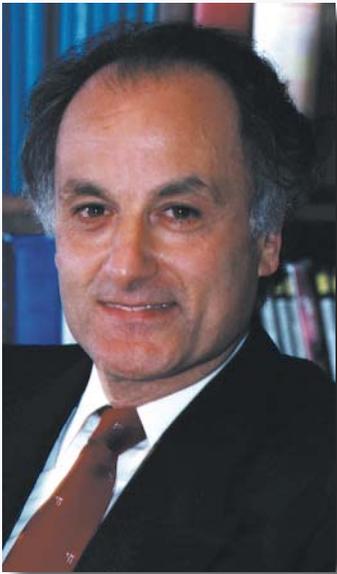


# Dialogue is Difficult



Jacques B. Doukhan, D.H.L., Th.D.

**F**or nearly two millennia, Jews and Christians have stood in confrontation—a dispute between people who never seem to hear or understand each other, in spite of the memory of so much persecution and death. Theology seems to have lost its credibility when placed alongside racist judgments, sardonic smiles, and countless crimes. The separation has witnessed the emergence not only of two distinct religions, but of two peoples, two cultures, locked in radical opposition. Not

only are they enemies, they have differentiated themselves even on the biological level. Judaism and Christianity became two distinct races!

Real dialogue, real encounter between the Jew and the Christian, will be difficult or will not be. Indeed, today, cordial smiles and soft and civilized exchanges have replaced the tears and the harsh disputes of the past. But have we reached the stage when Jews and Christians finally meet and dialogue? Talking to each other, listening to each other, are part of the dialogue.

But is the dialogue really working? What does dialogue mean? After Auschwitz and two thousand years of the Christian teaching of contempt, is the Jewish-Christian encounter still possible?

And then to remember a time when to be a Jew and to be a Christian designated just one religion, one Law, and one people! A time when to be Christian was to be Jew and, conversely, a time when the great separation, that none could have foreseen, had not begun.