

Anti-Semitism Is The Chilling New Normal

'The Lord's portion is His people. Jacob is the lot of His inheritance. God found him (Jacob) in a desert land, in the waste-howling wilderness. God surrounded him (Jacob). God cared for him. God kept him as the apple of His eye' (Deuteronomy 32:9 & 10).

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Historian Paul Johnson has said, "What strikes the historian surveying anti-Semitism worldwide over more than two millennia, is its fundamental irrationality. It seems to make no sense, any more than malaria or meningitis make sense."

Anti-Semitism goes by many names; bigotry, discrimination, prejudice, intolerance. Most often it falls in that broad category of 'racism', which has been defined as prejudice, discrimination or antagonism directed against someone of a different race based on the belief that one's own race is superior. Historically, victims of racism have often been poor, those who as a collective were unable to defend themselves against oppressors. Such hatred has insidiously infected populations all over the globe, resulting in persecution and death to countless individuals whose 'crime' was that of being different.

Peculiar Racism

The racism experienced by Jews however, is unique in many ways. In the Middle Ages they were vilified for stubborn laziness, accused of living in self-inflicted poverty and filth, bearing a smell particular only to Jews. Yet at the same time, the myth of the wealthy money lender persisted together with the belief the rich Jewish majority was involved in a conspiracy to take over the wealth of the nations. Jews were held in contempt as weak and pathetic, less than human and unable to govern themselves, while another theory of a powerful international Jewish conspiracy to control the governments of the world flourished at the same time. That false accusation continues to this day.

Today we live in a world where racism is widely discussed and condemned on every level, yet anti-Semitism is becoming increasingly normalised and is on the rise worldwide. Paul Johnson says, "If anti-Semitism is a variety of racism, it is a most peculiar variety. In my view as an historian, it is so peculiar it deserves to be placed in a different category. I would call it an intellectual disease, a disease of the mind, extremely infectious and massively destructive."

Irrational Hatred On The Rise Internationally

Regardless of which label we might apply, the irrational hatred of Jews is on the rise worldwide, surpassing some of the highest levels on record. Dr Moshe Kantor, founder of the Moshe Kantor Database for the Study of Contemporary Anti-Semitism and Racism at Tel Aviv University, has produced an exhaustive report on global anti-Semitism since 2010, released each year on the eve of Holocaust Remembrance Day. The 2018 report reveals some alarming trends, so much so, Dr Kantor wrote an open letter to the European Union in which he referenced the brutal killing and burning of a Jewish Holocaust survivor in France, a country which has seen the murder of Jewish school children, a Jewish woman thrown from a window and a Jewish youth savagely kidnapped and murdered.

Dr Kantor reported, "Across Europe, extremists from the far-right are marching down the streets and into our parliaments. The Holocaust is denied, minimised and relativised, even by some governing parties in Central and Eastern Europe. Anti-Semitism, old and new, is clearly on the rise at the highest political echelons, in religious institutions and on the streets. Even our homes are no longer safe. This is the reality of Jewish existence in 2018 in Europe. It is the sign of a profound societal sickness."

France, which sees at least one report of anti-Semitic harassment or violence every single day is not the only country with a problem. The United Kingdom saw an overall increase of 16% in violent attacks in 2018, with 100 incidents per month reported – the highest level in the history of the report. The United States reported 1,879 attacks on Jews and Jewish institutions. Violent acts against Jews doubled in America, with 59 reports of physical attacks and of the nearly 100 Jews globally who lost their lives for their Jewishness in 2018, 11 were killed in one single incident in Pittsburgh – the largest number of such deaths in decades. Australia witnessed a 59% increase in overall anti-Semitic activity, Canada 16.5% and South Africa 25%. Countries

like Japan, South Korea and New Zealand who had no actual statistics on anti-Semitic activity, all reported an increase in overall anti-Semitic attitudes, with Jews falsely accused of everything from arrogance to plotting to destroy the world's white population and being responsible for mosque shootings that resulted in 51 dead and dozens injured. Worldwide, campuses are rife with calls for death to the Jews, death to Israel and death to Zionists.

Chilling Echoes From The Holocaust

Many Jews liken today's climate to that faced by their parents and grandparents in the 1930's and 1940's. European Jews are feeling an increased sense of emergency. Dr Kantor says, many are fearful they are no longer an integral part of the societies in which they have lived for centuries. They ask, "Is there a place where we will be truly safe?"

Perhaps most alarming however, is the change in what anti-Semitism looks like. Today, graffiti on synagogues and vandalised Jewish cemeteries are overshadowed by physical attacks, beatings, kidnappings and murder. Threats, harassments and insults have become more violent and more common. Globally, such attacks are no longer necessarily the work of the far left or the far right but are becoming mainstream and socially acceptable. Dr Kantor reports, anti-Semitism is the new normal.

Not since World War II has it been so imperative for Christians to raise our voices against this evil, the same evil that destroyed six million Jews including 1,500,000 children while the church (of all denominations) stood by silently. Newspapers, magazines, the Internet and even conversations at work or school are breeding grounds for the spread of anti-Semitic propaganda and those who remain silent are complicit in what can only be explained as a spiritual attack on the people of the Bible and the God Who says, they are the apple of His eye. "For thus says the Lord God of Heavenly Armies, 'For honour He has sent me to the nations which plundered you, for those who touch you touches the apple of His eye'" (Zechariah 2:8). The blood of the six million (Jewish Holocaust victims) cries out for those who would enter the battle against ultimate evil. Let us not let them down again.

Thank you Bridges for Peace for allowing us to publish this important message. Let all Christians stand side by side with our Jewish brothers and sisters, speak up when necessary, openly abhor anti-Semitism in any form, support Israel, help Jews return to their rightful homeland Israel and wherever possible, financially support Israel by giving to special charities like Bridges for Peace, who do a remarkable job of bring help to Israeli's wherever help is needed. Praise the Lord of Glory for them and for their dedicated workers and supporters who work as a vast global team. Truly, they fulfil scriptural obligations.

So what can we do? Pray for Israel (Psalm 122:6). Intercede intelligently with knowledge of the Word of God. 'I have set watchmen on your walls O Jerusalem, who will never hold their peace day or night. You who put the Lord in remembrance, do not keep silent until He establishes Jerusalem and makes her a praise in the earth' (Isaiah 62:6 & 7). Every Christian and every church needs to pray and intercede for Israel. It has to be a worldwide prayer network. That is why the scripture says they pray day and night. While some people are sleeping at night, others on the other side of the earth are awake and praying. The second obligation we have is to offer intelligent support to Israel. The Lord says to, "Comfort, comfort My people" (Isaiah 40:1). God is talking to the Bible believing Gentile Christians. We are to comfort or help the Jewish people because Israel has now been pardoned (Isaiah 40:2). We owe it to the Jewish people. Every Spiritual blessing we have received as well as our salvation has come via the Jews. We cannot change what Gentile Christians in the past have done to the Jews, but we can change our attitude and show the Jews our gratitude from now on. Some Christians are unaware of how God feels about His people, the Jews. We as Christians have a part to play in shaping history and our part involves helping and praying for the Jews.

Some of the people who promote the most negative attitude towards the Jews are the media. They are wickedly biased against the Jews. Shame on the media and shame on their organisations for allowing such biased reporting. Jesus calls them, "My brothers" and there, He is referring to His biological family, the Jews. If we give them (His brethren) as little as a glass of water, Jesus said it is as good as giving Him a drink. On the flip side, if people refuse to help the Jews, it is as serious as refusing to help Jesus Himself. 'The King will reply to them, "Truly I tell you, when you did it for one of the least of these My brethren, you did it for Me ... Solemnly I declare to you, when you failed to do it for the least of these, you failed to do it for Me"' (Matthew 25:31 to 46). 'Let all who hate Zion (Israel) be put to shame' (Psalm 129:5). 'For the nation and kingdom that does not serve you (Jerusalem) in that day, will perish, yes, those nations will be utterly laid waste' (Isaiah 60:12). All nations will be judged according to their attitude to Israel. The whole of history is littered with 'wrecks' of great nations and empires that have ignored God's warnings. It is a sad but real

indictment on the Gentile Christian church, many are against Jews but will not admit they are anti-Semite. Just being passive towards Israel and Jews is enough to be an anti-Semite. Being passive is not standing up for what is right; being passive is not interceding for Israel; being passive is to allow hundreds of Jewish children to go hungry in the time of war; being passive is not comforting God's people. If you are a Gentile Christian and are passive in your attitude – you are an anti-Semite. We need to repent before God on behalf of our nations and cry out to Him for mercy. We need to pray for the leadership of the Christian churches around the world to begin to recognise their sin and repent.

The hatred of Jews is not sociological, it is spiritual. That is the reason for anti-Semitism, or more accurately, anti-Judaism. There is a four-fold reason for the dislike of the Jews.

Firstly: Salvation through Jesus our Messiah comes from the Jews and He has soundly defeated the devil. The devil has an overwhelming fear of the Messiah and has a terrible dread of being sent to the eternal lake of fire in judgement.

Secondly: Pride and jealousy. Jesus is a Jewish Man Who rules the entire universe when the devil wants to but cannot. The devil's pride, arrogance and sin had him cast out of heaven. God said, "How you have fallen from heaven, morning star, son of the dawn! How you are cut down to the ground! You said in your heart, 'I will ascend into heaven! I will exalt my throne above the stars of God! I will sit on the mountain of assembly in the highest heaven! I will ascend above the heights of the clouds! I will make myself like the Most High!' But you will be brought down to Sheol, to the depths of the pit" (Isaiah 14:12 to 15).

Thirdly: Spiritual jealousy. The Jews were chosen because God loved them. 'You are a holy people to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you to be a special people to Himself out of all the peoples on the face of the earth. The Lord did not set His love on you and choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the fewest of all people but because the Lord loves you and because He would keep the oath which He had sworn to your forefathers' (Deuteronomy 7:6 to 8). The Jews are a chosen and loved people, they will always be God's people and He has mercy on them. 'The Lord will have mercy on Jacob and will again choose Israel and set them in their own land' (Isaiah 14:1). Jacob is another name for Israel (Genesis 35:10). The scriptures explain how the devil was filled with pride, rebelled and was rejected from heaven and will end up suffering a horrible end in the lake of fire, with no mercy shown to him or to his evil followers (Isaiah 14:9 to 20; Ezekiel 28:14 to 19; Revelation 20:10). Here we have the two extremes. The devil was once loved by God, was the anointed and chosen cherub but rebelled and was eternally rejected out of heaven, and will not be shown any mercy. Israel was later chosen and loved by God, rebelled and after they have repented, will be shown mercy and welcomed back into fellowship with God. The jealousy and anger felt by the devil towards Israel because the Jews have been pardoned, something that will never happen with the devil, explains why the devil uses people to hurt and kill the Jews, and because Christians have accepted Jesus Who is Jewish, as our Saviour, we too are often under attack and suffer persecution. The devil is spiritually jealous of Israel because the devil has been eternally rejected, but God has shown mercy towards Israel. All of Abraham's offspring were called Hebrews but only the children of Jacob (Israel) and his son Judah went on to become known as Israelites and Jews. Most of the Hebrew descendants of Abraham became known as Arabs as they assimilated with the multitudes of native Arabah tribes living in the vast area now called the Middle East. Abraham had eight sons (Isaac, Ishmael and six sons to his second wife Keturah) but only Isaac's descendants were the children of promise, called or chosen to carry the oracles of God to the whole earth and to bring forth our Messiah. Abraham's nephew Lot had two sons, Moab and Ben-Ammi. God rejected all of Abraham's seven other sons, plus Lot's two sons, plus Isaac's son Esau. Those ten rejected sons and nephews produced many thousands of offspring who all hated and became jealous of the sons of promise – the descendants of Isaac, and that hatred continues today in the form of intense anti-Semitism.

The fourth reason for anti-Semitism is worship. The devil desires to be worshipped and pleaded for Jesus to worship him just once, and he would have given Jesus everything, but Jesus rebuked the devil instead and quoted scripture. 'The devil took Jesus to an exceedingly high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. The devil said to Jesus, "I will give You all of these things, if You will fall down and worship me." Jesus replied, "Get behind Me Satan! For it is written, "You will worship the Lord your God and you will serve Him only"' (Matthew 4:8 to 10; Luke 4:7 & 8). So the fourth reason for the dislike of Jews and Christians is this: we never worship the devil and nor will we, ever, and he hates that, hence the persecution of Jews and genuine born-again Christians. The devil desires to be worshipped and the Jews will never worship him. All of these spiritual reasons are played out in the natural earthly realm in the form of anti-Semitism. The logical reality is, only those under the influence of the devil, hate the Jews. People who truly love God and His Son Jesus, will genuinely love the Jews and will do all they can for them. Those who bless the Jews will be blessed and those who curse, torment or persecute the Jews will themselves receive the curses and torment (Genesis 12:3).

Amen and God bless you.

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