

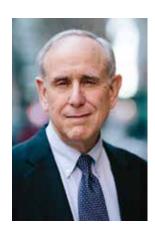


Volume XXV, Issue 1 February 2019

ANTISEMITISM TODAY

ANTI-ZIONISM AND ANTISEMITISM | COMPASSION AND THE IMAGE OF ISRAEL | HEBREWS BIBLE STUDY

Anti-Zionism and Antisemitism



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear friend in the Messiah,

Shalom. I pray the Lord is blessing your life, family, and ministry so far in 2019! We are already enjoying the celebration of our 125th year of faithful ministry for the Lord among the Jewish people. I hope you will join our celebration by attending one of our 125th-anniversary conferences or events. You can see the entire list by visiting chosenpeople.com/125years.

Antisemitism: The Oldest Hatred

Allow me to open my heart to you. Like many others, I was badly shaken when, on the Sabbath day of October 27, 2018, the horrible murders of eleven Jewish people in Pittsburgh grabbed our attention and directed it to the growing problem of modern and murderous antisemitism. Antisemitism, called "the oldest hatred," has been around for thousands of years. And today it seems to be intensifying.

Social commentators, both within and outside of the Jewish community, have many theories about this, but they leave out what I believe is

the most critical reason of all. Antisemitism is the devil's invention! When God called Abram to be the father of His chosen people (Genesis 12:1-3), Satan made the Jewish people the target of his fury. The evil one has tried to annihilate the Jewish people in every age and in endless ways to prevent God from using us as His instruments of redemption through the Jewish Messiah. We know the devil will not prevail, although that does not prevent him from continuing to try.



September 2018: Campaign in London on the day on which the Labor party NEC was expected to adopt the IHRA definition and examples of antisemitism.

Sadly, one of his ugliest tactics has been to use the Church to promote the hatred of Jewish people.

Anti-Zionism and Antisemitism

Of course, the picture is not entirely dark. We rejoice in the establishment of modern Israel as a sovereign nation and home for the Jewish people. The State of Israel rose out of the ashes of the Holocaust to provide the Jewish people with a safe haven and a bastion of protection against antisemitism.

Although God's choice of the promised land is ancient and rooted in the Scriptures (Genesis 15:18–21), the vision for the modern State of Israel is the fruit of the Zionist movement founded in the late 19th century and led by the great Viennese journalist Theodor Herzl. Yet, this love for Zion is not new. It has been the cherished hope of both Jews and Christians for centuries because of the prophetic biblical teaching describing the return of the Jewish people to the land of promise found throughout the Old Testament (Ezekiel 36:22–34).

In fact, some of the earliest and greatest supporters of the Zionist movement were *Christian* Zionists who took the Bible literally.

They fervently believed the Jewish people would return to the land of Israel.

Yet, today we see a rising tide of Christians who do not believe that the foundations of Zionism and the modern State of Israel established in 1948 are biblical. In light of the growing criticism of Israel among some Christians and the hierarchies of their churches, the question I want us to consider briefly is whether we

believe anti-Zionism and, in particular, Christian anti-Zionism, is antisemitic in nature.

Can we equate anti-Zionism with antisemitism?

I would suggest the answer is *sometimes* yes, especially when those opposed to the State of Israel support the BDS (Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions) movement¹ and groups like Students for Justice in Palestine, which harass and persecute Israeli speakers on university campuses across America and around the globe.

The answer is also *sometimes* no! Some Christians simply do not interpret the Bible as teaching that the land of Israel ultimately belongs to the Jewish people. This is unfortunate, but should not necessarily be equated with antisemitism. However, when criticism of Israel specifically leads to hateful language and actions directed toward Israelis, and Jewish people in general, then I believe the line is crossed.

This is when anti-Zionism becomes antisemitism!

Our Response to Anti-Zionism

Again, we ask the question, Is anti-Zionism antisemitic (especially the Christian version of anti-Zionism)? In order to answer this question, we must begin with a clear definition of biblical Zionism, which is sometimes misunderstood, especially by the Christian anti-Zionists who might be more influenced by culture than by what they read in the Bible.

Biblical Zionism holds that God gave the land of Israel to the Jewish people through an unconditional, irrevocable

covenant made between Himself and our forefather, Abraham, as found in many chapters of Genesis (12, 15, 17, 22, 35).

The belief that God gave the land of Israel to the Jewish people is still well-accepted by the majority of Christians in the United States, as shown by a recent survey of evangelicals (sponsored by Chosen People Ministries and Joel Rosenberg and implemented by LifeWay Research,) entitled *Evangelical Attitudes Toward Israel and the Peace Process*.

The Survey reports that over 80 percent believe the Abrahamic Covenant continues, and over 80 percent also see the establishment of the modern State of Israel in 1948 as the fulfillment of prophecy.²

Yet, according to Bob Smietana, who reported on the data discovered by this survey, negativity toward Israel and the hope of Zion seems to be influencing the younger generation of Christians.

Older American evangelicals love Israel—but many younger evangelicals simply don't care, according to a new survey from Nashville-based LifeWay Research. Three-quarters (77 percent) of evangelicals 65 and older say they support the existence, security and prosperity of Israel. That drops to 58 percent among younger evangelicals, those 18 to 34.³

Our younger generation was born years after the Holocaust and the founding of the State of Israel, and they do not have the same theological or emotional sympathies as those who were born closer to this time period. They did not grow up during the days when a much larger coalition of Arab nations tried to destroy Israel or when groups like the Palestinian Liberation Organization murdered Israeli athletes and began terrorist attacks within Israel. It is hard for some to understand why Israel has been so careful to protect the Jewish people within her borders.

This has been difficult for Israeli leaders. There is a mistaken understanding that followers of Jesus who believe God gave the land of Israel to the Jewish people also support every decision that Israeli politicians make. This is false. All leaders are human and capable of mistakes. Israel is not a perfect country! They have made mistakes.

I am hoping that Bible believers will carefully study the Scriptures and conclude that at the heart of *biblical Zionism* is the understanding that God gave the land of Israel to the Jewish people. It is a land to be shared among all her inhabitants since Israel was chosen to bless the nations of the world (Genesis 12:3, Isaiah 44:8). And it is a land and a people to be loved, prayed for (Psalm 122:6), and reached with the gospel message.

The negative spillover of anti-Zionism is impacting the view of many toward the Jewish people within and outside of Israel. When embraced, this critical attitude toward Israel can easily, and

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Miami Beach Holocaust Memorial Israel Solidarity Rally.

unfortunately, lead to antisemitism.

If Anyone Should Oppose All Forms of Antisemitism, It Should Be US!

Recently, Jeremy Sharon and Sara Rubenstein, writing for the *Jerusalem Post*, reported on the **European Jewish Congress** held in November 2018. It was sponsored by the Austrian Chancellor, Sebastian Kurz, who initiated the development of a **Catalogue of Policies to Combat Antisemitism.** The 32-year-old chancellor was quoted as saying,

"Antisemitism and anti-Zionism are getting blurred, but they are two sides of the same coin." ⁴

He recommended the following actions,

The recommendations, which it is hoped will be adopted by the EU and by national governments, include adopting the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's Working Definition of Antisemitism; the appointment by EU countries of a special commissioner for combating antisemitism; a commitment of a percentage of GDP annually to fighting antisemitism; barring antisemites from political parties and public office; committing financial and

other resources to guaranteeing security for Jewish communities in Europe; making Internet companies liable for antisemitic content on their platforms; and advising companies not to do business with countries or organizations that support antisemitism in any way.⁵

Kurz added,

Fighting antisemitism deserves much more than simple statements of good will—we need concrete policies and reinforced legislation.⁶

Oh, how I hope the Church will take the lead on encouraging the above!

How can we possibly reach Jewish people for Jesus without cultivating a love for all Jewish people, including Israelis, and to have a tender heart toward Zion? This is my prayer for you in this New Year, that God would give you the same heart as the Apostle Paul, who wrote in Romans 10:1, "Brethren, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation."

Opposing antisemitism may be a crucial first step in leading Jewish people to open their hearts to Jesus, the Messiah. I pray my people will see that true Christians love the Jewish people (Romans 11:11).

Praying for God's best for you and your family in 2019,





P.S. Our outreach to Jewish people in more than twenty North American cities and seventeen countries around the world is growing! We are so grateful for your prayers and support. For your gift of \$125 or more, we would like to send you a beautiful commemorative medallion to remind you to pray for Chosen People Ministries in our 125th year, and beyond!



Operation Good Neighbor. Israeli Commander comforts a Syrian baby. Photo, IDF

The Importance of Compassion and the Image of Israel

Christians are commanded to reach the world for Jesus according to passages such as Matthew 28:19–20 and Acts 1:8. Yet, the motivation for missions—especially to resistant groups, such as the Jewish people and Muslims—often requires an even greater dedication and a broken heart to fuel the passion needed to sustain what can seem like an unsuccessful ministry. Loss of motivation is perfectly understandable, as we are all human.

Jesus' example shows He was motivated by compassion.⁷ As Matthew records,

Seeing the people, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest." (Matthew 9:36–38)

What is compassion? It is the feeling you have when you see a baby suffering or a person you love in intolerable pain. It is the sense we have when we see pictures of poor children or we walk into a poverty-stricken area and see children in rags and eating from garbage pits. It is the unutterable moan that bursts forth from the depth of our soul because of the human condition that leads to tears and sacrificial action.

In Matthew 23:37–39, we read of the Savior's compassion and broken heart for His own people, and for all people when He says,

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling. Behold, your house is being left to you desolate! For I say to you, from now on you will not see Me until you say, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!"

The Apostle Paul also understood the compassion of the Savior and felt the same toward his people. He writes in Romans 9:

"I am telling the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience testifies with me in the Holy Spirit, that I have

¹ https://www.influencewatch.org/movement/boycott-divestment-and-sanctions/.

² https://allianceforthepeaceofjerusalem.com/lifeway-survey-full/.

^{3 &}quot;Support of Israel Wanes Among Younger Evangelicals," Life Way Research (blog), December 4, 2017, https://lifewayresearch.com/2017/12/04/support-of-israel-among-younger-evangelicals/.

israel-among-younger-evangelicals/.

https://www.jpost.com/Diaspora/Antisemitism/Austrian-Kurz-We-cant-undo-history-but-we-can-do-justice-to-our-history-572444 noted on 12.30.18.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid

great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh." (Romans 9:1–2)

This is the kind of compassion that drove the Savior and should move us, as well.

Christians throughout the ages have been capable of great compassion. God has used this desire to accomplish great things, including church planting, serving the poor, building hospitals, providing clean water, and generally improving the lives of the people reached with the message of the gospel.

Today, ministries promote themselves not only through stirring messages during missions conferences or compelling arguments distributed through blogs and social media but also through images that elicit compassion. Mission promoters have always understood the power of graphics and images as one of the chief motivational tools to compel Christians to serve the Lord in difficult places. We understand that people serve when their hearts are broken and feel compassion for those in need.

For example, think about the emotion in an appeal to reach Jewish Israelis with the gospel with images of soldiers in the Israeli Defense Forces standing guard at a Gaza checkpoint. Or consider the effect of videos of missiles coming from Gaza and landing in towns like Sderot, perched on the border of Gaza. And imagine the feelings that flood your soul when you are shown images of small children in Gaza after an Israeli bombing of terrorist tunnels. Who would not be moved by these images?

It is very difficult to think analytically when your heart is broken by the visual stimulation of suffering children. It would be inhuman to think in other terms. In these moments, it is unlikely that anyone would think of fact-checking or of trying to discover the circumstances around the bombing. The images override the facts, even when they might reveal that the bombed buildings were hiding missiles that would cause death to innocent elderly Russian Jews living in Sderot.

Unfortunately, the above illustration is the reality in Israel today. This unbalanced portrayal of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict has done much to paint an insidious view of Israelis. Israelis are portrayed as a colonial power that has no regard for human life.

Unfortunately, this negative image of Jewish Israelis has spilled over to the Jewish people in general, especially in the eyes of next-generation evangelical Christians in the United States, triggering a negative view of Israelis and of the Jewish people. Intrinsically, this is a human and moral problem, but it has also made it more difficult to motivate average Christians to love the Jewish people and Israel and to share the gospel with them.

By God's grace we need to pray for this to change. And we need to take action to make sure that our fellow believers have a more balanced view of the conflict in Israel. Portraying Israelis as aggressors is unfair and untrue. This type of thinking only intensifies the conflict and pours cold water on the work of Jewish evangelism in Israel and around the globe.



Our recent Muchan conference brought together young believers who are the future.

A Dark History but a Bright Future

There is a dark side to church history—a past that is not often revisited. Believers are generally shocked to hear that their theological heroes supported violence against the Jewish people. Consider the following quotations from significant church leaders:

Jerome, Letter 84, 400 AD: "If it is expedient to hate any men and to loath any race, I have a strange dislike to those of the circumcision. For up to the present day they persecute our Lord Jesus Christ in the synagogues of Satan."

Ambrose of Milan, writing to Emperor Theodosius I, 388 AD: "A report was made by the military Count of the East that a synagogue had been burnt, and that this was done at the instigation of the bishop. You [Theodosius] gave command that the others should be punished, and the synagogue be rebuilt by the bishop himself.... Shall, then, a place be made for the unbelief of the Jews out of the spoils of the Church, and shall the patrimony, which by the favour of Christ has been gained for Christians, be transferred to the treasuries of unbelievers?... Shall the Jews write this inscription on the front of their synagogue: 'The temple of impiety, erected from the plunder of Christians'?"

We are often unaware that church leaders advocated hatred of Jews, the destruction of synagogues, and the violent expulsion of the chosen people from "Christian" society.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

⁷ Jesus is driven by "compassion," the Greek word, "σπλάγχνον" splanchnon, which refers to an ache in the deepest part of one's soul. It is used at least ten times in the Gospels to describe the emotion that erupts from inside a person's soul, causing them to want to care for another person.

See the Bible Through Jewish Eyes ■ BIBLE STUDY WITH DR. RICH FREEMAN



Dr. Rich Freeman, D. Min. serves as the Vice President for Church Ministries and Conferences with Chosen People Ministries and lives in South Florida with his wife, Julia.

EXAMPLES OF FAITH Moses and the Exodus: Hebrews 11:23–31

In this study, we will continue examining examples of faith in Hebrews chapter 11, beginning with the portion that discusses the faith of Moses' parents. Hebrews 11:23 says, "By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's edict." The only other time the Greek word translated as "beautiful" is

used is in Acts 7:20 where Stephen says the baby Moses "was lovely [or beautiful] in the sight of God." The parents of Moses, Amram and Yochebed, believed that this newborn son was special to God and, perhaps, even the promised deliverer of the Israelites. So, in spite of the threat of death from Pharaoh's decree that demanded the killing of all newborn Israelite boys, these godly Hebrew slaves hid the little baby until he was too big to hide. They ended up putting him in a little ark on the Nile River where Pharaoh's daughter found him.

Moses' life was actually divided into three distinct parts of forty years each. The first forty years he lived as a prince of Egypt. In Acts 7:22, Stephen testified: "Moses was educated in all the learning of the Egyptians, and

he was a man of power in words and deeds." Everything changed at the age of forty when Moses set out to deliver the Israelites from the bondage of slavery in Egypt. The writer of Hebrews, in 11:24 says, "By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter." He had all the characteristics of a perfect deliverer: He had been trained as a prince and a military man—this was too good to be true! This misjudgment is reminiscent of the time God instructed Samuel to choose a new king of Israel from among the sons of Jesse, the Bethlehemite. When Samuel saw the first-born son Eliab, he deemed the strapping young man as the perfect king. He thought, "Surely the

Lord's anointed is before him" (1 Samuel 16:6). But God rebuked him by saying, "...man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart" (1 Samuel 16:7). Instead, God chose the youngest son, David, who would be called "a man after God's own heart" (1 Samuel 13:14). Similarly, Moses' attempt at delivering the people in his strength as a prince of Egypt was a failure, and after killing an

Egyptian for mistreating a Hebrew, he was forced to flee Egypt.

For the next forty years, Moses lived as a shepherd in Midian, preparing to shepherd the children of Israel in their departure from Egypt. The writer of Hebrews says in 11:27, "By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen." The exodus from Egypt was accomplished through the blood of the lamb at the first Passover, when the first-born of Egypt was slain. It was the blood of the lamb that would save the Israelites from the death of the first-born, the tenth and final plague. When the Angel of Death saw the blood of the lamb on the doorpost of the Israelites' homes, He would pass over

them and the people would be saved. Once the people left Egypt, they would face one final obstacle prior to their full freedom from the enslavement in Egypt. The writer of Hebrews records the event in 11:29: "By faith they passed through the Red Sea as though they were passing through dry land; and the Egyptians, when they attempted it, were drowned."

The last example of faith was that of a prostitute named Rahab, who by faith, believed that the Israelites would conquer Jericho, a seemingly impenetrable city, and eventually get to the Promised Land. For that faith, Rahab would be rewarded by becoming an ancestor of the Messiah.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

However, in Jewish circles these stories are well known. In fact, most Jewish people see Christianity through a lens of antisemitism, and they characterize Christianity based on an anti-Jewish medieval expression that emerged after centuries in Europe. Jewish people today look back and view those who persecuted their ancestors as representatives of the Christian faith.

A recent podcast by Orthodox Rabbi Yaakov Wolbe shared this sentiment: "Jew-hatred is a fundamental, theological principle of the Christian faith." ¹⁰

This is why your Jewish friend might have a negative response when you share your faith with them!

Fortunately, Rabbi Wolbe is wrong about the true heart of the Christian faith. Still, centuries of anti-Jewish actions by Christians have cast a long shadow and hurt the cause of Jewish evangelism today.

Jewish people generally believe the connection between Christianity and antisemitism is unbreakable. They see this trend continuing, especially among those who are anti-Israel. For the Jewish person today, an anti-Israel perspective merges with the long history of Christian antisemitism and only further supports the negative way most Jewish people view Christianity.

A major debate among modern evangelicals today is whether or not those who held these views of the Jewish people were "real Christians." Yet, deciding if they were "real" believers is God's job, and His alone.

The only antidotes to centuries of bad behavior by Christians are love and authenticity of faith. When Jewish people meet Christians who express their love of Israel and the Jewish people because of their love for the Jewish Messiah, then the gospel is elevated, and Jewish people are introduced to the truth about Jesus. Hopefully, they will see there is a big difference between historical Christianity and the true nature of His grace and love toward all people—especially to the Jew first (Romans 1:16)!

We pray and hope Jewish people will meet followers of the Jewish Messiah who love Him, behave as true believers, and love the Jewish people. This is the light that will dispel centuries of darkness.

CHICAGO BIBLE STUDY GETS AN UNEXPECTED GUEST

Staff member Roy had a surprising guest at his Bible study—a rabbi! Rabbi Nathan* was invited by a Christian woman who is a member of a local evangelical church. This church is located in the heart of the Jewish community in the northern suburbs of Chicago and surrounded by many synagogues within a ten-mile radius. This church has a steadfast love for the Jewish people. Roy believes the reason that the rabbi came to the Bible study was because the church made a conscious decision to pray and do what they could to bring the gospel to their Jewish neighbors. Please pray that more churches develop similar alliances with Messianic organizations. Please pray that Rabbi Nathan will return to the Bible study and that faith will come through the study of God's word!

LOOKING BACK AT HISTORY

Beginning with this issue of *The Chosen People*, you will notice that there will be one news brief that is different from all of the others. We have started the celebration of our 125th year of ministry among the Jewish people for the Messiah. In honor of that landmark, every month we will feature a news snippet from our past. Moses and the children of Israel reached a landmark when they camped on the banks of the Jordan River before crossing into the Promised Land. Before they entered into that new chapter of their lives, Moses recounted their history, remembering from where they had come. We remember our journey by taking a clipping from a newsletter in our archives and presenting it the way it would have been presented when it was first written. This month's look back is from 1940. By looking back, we can see the journey that God has taken us on, and recognize our path into the future. We hope that this year you will enjoy taking this journey with us!

*names changed

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NO. 2

INCIDENTS IN THE WORK

"It Was Just Like a Marriage"

With faces beaming, six of our Jewish refugees went down into the baptismal waters and thus made public confession of their faith in their newly found Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. It was on the Lord's Day morning of October 6th, and some of these desolated children of the house of Israel had been looking forward a long time to this event, as a mountain peak in life's experiences. They had been robbed and despoiled of everything which makes for life's material comforts; their life savings had been brutally taken from them, their homes had been destroyed, their very existence had been outlawed; in some cases families were separated for months at a time. But all these things now they counted as dross in the light of their newfound possession, everlasting peace and joy through the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁸ Jerome, "The Letters of St. Jerome," in St. Jerome: Letters and Select Works, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, trans. W. H. Fremantle, G. Lewis, and W. G. Martley, vol. 6, A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, Second Series (New York: Christian Literature Company, 1893), 176.

⁹ James Stevenson and B. J. Kidd, eds., Creeds, Councils, and Controversies: Documents Illustrative of the History of the Church A.D. 337-461 (New York: Seabury Press, 1966), 135.

¹⁰ The Jewish History Podcast by Rabbi Yaakov Wolbe, Episode 25: A History of Christian Anti-Semitism Part 1. Starting circa 11:20. https://rabbiwolbe.com/ history-christian-antisemitism-part-one/.

2019 CHOSEN PEOPLE MINISTRIES EVENTS

March 29-30, 2019 • Israel's Glorious Future

Marriott Irvine Hotel, Irvine, California with speakers Chris Edmonds, Dr. Jerry Johnson and Joel Rosenberg

Registration open at: chosenpeople.com/IGFIrvine

May 31-June 2, 2019 • Simcha (Joy) Retreat

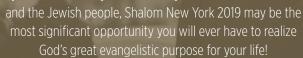
Sandy Cove Conference Center, North East, Maryland with speakers Dr. Darrell Bock, Stuart Rothberg, and the staff of Chosen People Ministries and worship with Marty Goetz!

October 11-13, 2019 • Israel's Glorious Future and Feast of **Tabernacles Celebration** Lake Lawn Resort, Delavan, Wisconsin

Speakers to be announced later!

November 15, 2019 • **Grand Finale Banquet**





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They Have Conspired Against You

A new trend of antisemitism is surfacing world-wide with the advent of the new Intifada in the fall of 2000. With the result of the chilling reality found in this new book, They Have Conspired Against You, Jewish people are again the target of antisemitism around the world, with a great emphasis on European Jews. The hope of this book is that it will expose, educate and call to action. (softcover)

\$20.95^{us}



Our Hands Are Stained with Blood

For nearly 2,000 years, the Church and the Jewish people have had a history of conflict, pain, antisemitism and hatred. Tragically, few Christians know about it. In Our Hands Are Stained with Blood, by Jewish believer Michael Brown, the tragic story of the 'Church' and the Jews is laid out for all to see. (softcover) \$15.95^{us}





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