

A Time for Vigilance

Anti-Semitism in Europe and the United States is on the rise at an alarming rate.

Once again, anti-Semitism is on the rise at an alarming rate. Synagogues and Jewish establishments and cemeteries across Europe, Russia and Ukraine are being bombed and desecrated. According to the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), from September 2000 to November 2001 some 330 acts of anti-Semitism occurred in and around Paris alone.

Even in America Jews are being threatened and attacked. On May 7 at San Francisco State University, police had to protect a group of Jewish college students from a mob of protesters shouting violent threats and curses at them. On July 4, an Egyptian madman opened fire at Israel's El Al Airlines ticket counter at Los Angeles International Airport, killing two Israeli bystanders.

The ADL reports that more than 100 anti-Semitic incidents have occurred on U.S. campuses just since January. One of the organization's top officials stated recently that Jews worldwide are now "more vulnerable than they've been since World War II."

When we hear the word anti-Semitism, most of us automatically think of the Nazi Holocaust of World War II, when more than 6 million Jewish people were massacred simply because they were Jews. Nothing in world history has been more notoriously evil or outright revolting than the Holocaust.

Two questions immediately emerge in response to it. How and why?

First, how could such a terrible atrocity ever happen? How could any one man or race of men in modern times be so depraved and possessed with hatred to do something so despicable?

Second, and perhaps even more incomprehensible, is: "Why God? Why did You, a God of love, allow something so tragic, so obviously diabolical to happen to Your so-called chosen people?"

In response to these questions, it is important to point out that the Holocaust was not the first one the Jewish people had suffered, nor, sadly, is it likely to be the last one. Others, actual and attempted, include Pharaoh's orders to wipe out the Jews after 400 years of slavery in Egypt, the planned destruction of the Jews by Haman (see the book of Esther), Herod's edict at the time of Yeshua's (Jesus') birth to kill all Jewish male children, the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70, the Crusades, the pogroms of Russia, the Spanish Inquisition and others.

Anti-Semitism isn't modern. Its roots are ancient. The infamous Nazi Adolf Eichmann once said, "Throughout history men have dreamed of destroying the children of Abraham." And he was right.

But clearly this desire is the result of demonic influences and not merely the schemes of wicked empires, governments or dictators. Ephesians 6:12 states plainly that we fight, not against flesh and blood but against "spiritual wickedness in high places" (KJV).

Ultimately, the source of anti-Semitism lies with Satan

himself. He hates God, and he is and always has been committed to the destruction of what God loves and desires. As God's chosen covenant people, Jews are at the bull's-eye of this hatred.

Satan also knows that the restoration of the Jewish people plays a central role in the return of the Messiah. Thus, he is committed at all costs to preventing this.

Jewish theology can't explain the Holocaust—and actually the “why” of it is part of the larger question, Why is there evil and suffering in the world if God is a God of love? The question is perplexing even to the most solid believer.

When Adam sinned in the garden, he attached himself to Satan, and, as a consequence, evil entered the world and the heart of man. We suffer inhumanity and hatred as a result. It is not God's fault. He loves us and wants us to love one another.

How will you respond to anti-Semitism? Will you speak out against it wherever you encounter it? Will you stand with the Jewish people, even risk your life to help them, as things intensify against them?

May your response reflect Yeshua's heart for His people: “Inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me” (Matt. 25:40, NKJV).

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Ministries International. He founded two Messianic congregations and served them as a senior Messianic rabbi for 11 years.