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THE CURSE OF

Anti-Semitism

ITS CAUSE
ITS COURSE
ITS CURE

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Lord Beaconsfield (Benjamin Disraeli, Prime Minister of England) said: “Egyptian Pharaohs, Assyrian kings, Roman emperors, Scandinavian crusaders, Gothic princes, and holy inquisitors, have alike devoted their energies to the fulfillment of this common purpose. Expatriation, exile, captivity, confiscation, torture on the most ingenious, and massacre on the most extensive scale, a curious system of degrading customs and debasing laws which would have broken the heart of another people, have been tried, but in vain.”

THE CURSE OF ANTI-SEMITISM
ITS CAUSE—ITS COURSE—ITS CURE

Anti-Semitism is the hatred or persecution of the Jew. Enmity between nations was not unusual even in ancient times, and surely hatred of the Jew has never been absent. But today it is a matter of world interest and importance. It has entered very really and materially into the already strained relations between the different countries of the world. A matter of such wide scope and vast importance deserves close attention, and must be viewed in the light of the Scriptures. Why do we call it the “Curse of Anti-Semitism?” According to Genesis 12:3 those who bless the seed of Abraham will be blessed, and he who curses the seed of Abraham will be cursed. Anti-Semitism, then, is a curse and accursed. It is a venomous disease and malady that has fastened itself upon the body politic of the world. Like any disease it can and should be viewed as to its cause, its course, and its cure.

Its Cause

First of all, let us examine the cause or root of this phenomenon. Various and differing have been the views as to the cause of anti-Semitism. One view has it that it is because of certain national characteristics that the Jew is objectionable. His bargaining is pointed out as a cause of irritation. In the world of trade and commerce this is
an accepted practice which arouses little or no comment. But the individual Jew is forbidden this means of trading. The student of history will well recall how the Jews of the Middle Ages were prevented from engaging in all kinds of remunerative pursuits. The Roman Church designated which occupations were allowed them. Trading was one of the avenues for livelihood and the Jew became adept in it. If we mean by bargaining the practice of haggling, we ask whether this can fairly be confined to the Jew alone. Is the Jew the only one who haggles? In 1929 archaeologists began to unearth in Ras Shamra in Syria on the Mediterranean coast, clay tablets which revealed the religious, social, and commercial life of the ancient Canaanites. There these scholars found tablets which showed that these people had, in their regular trading and business, almost a dozen different prices for the same articles. It all depended on the customer at the moment.

Another characteristic that has been held up to ridicule is the alleged hooked nose and large features. Anyone who has studied the physiognomy of different peoples and cultural groups, knows that types vary widely. The Jews found in different continents of the globe differ greatly in their physical features. It is not uncommon to hear one, who has had preconceived ideas as to what a Jew should look like, say, “Well, that’s strange; I would never have taken him for a Jew!” Again, do we hate the Chinese because their eyes do not conform to ours? Do we despise the Abyssinians because of their large lips? If so, then we do well to inquire how much the grace of God has wrought in our lives.

But, we are told, you cannot do business with a Jew, because he indulges in unlawful and shady business practices. Is this true of all Jews? Do you have proof that it is valid even for a majority of the Jews? Is illegitimate business confined to the Jew? Are there no Gentile forgers, bandits (paging Al Capone), murderers, embezzlers.

Someone indicates at this point that he could forgive the Jew everything, but he is so annoyingly aggressive. Is it not true in the history of the world that a virile minority, which has been trampled upon and downtrodden, ever seeks to advance itself and improve its lot? Why is this more unforgivable with regard to the Jew, than with any other nation under heaven? If our friends show this same trait, we do not call it aggressiveness, but commendable initiative and self-confidence. Is this fair or honest?

Another national characteristic that has come in for condemnation and censure is the supposed clannishness of the Jew. If there be a Jewish Ghetto in New York (or in Europe), are there not a Harlem, a Little Italy, a Little Ireland in the same city?
As a minority the Jews have been forced to band together through differences in customs, speech, manners, for protection and mutual encouragement in common trials as well as in unified worship. Too, have they ever been openly invited and welcomed among the very ones leveling this objection against them? Let the record speak for itself.

Then we hear vilification of the Jew on the ground that he runs the country through his political power. On one hand, we hear that, because of the Republican Jews, a depression was brought on in the time of the Hoover administration. On the other hand, the reason for the Second World War, we are informed, was the influence of the Democratic Jews on the Roosevelt administration. Too, the reason for the tremendous infiltration of communism in the Truman administration is the pressure of Jewish forces. In one breath we learn that all Jews are capitalists, and in the next breath we are informed that all Jews are communists. We have never been able to find out yet why it is, when the Jews are in such power here and elsewhere, that they do not exert a little of it in behalf of their persecuted brethren throughout the world. If Jews are such prime factors in world communism, how is it that large purges strike them with deadly regularity? No, the objections do not fit the facts, and facts have a way of being stubborn. In all honesty it ought to be admitted that these objections are invalid, without support, and downright vicious.

The objections just examined usually form the Gentile answer to the reason for their dislike or hatred of the Jew. The Jews themselves generally lay it to the charge against them of the crucifixion of Christ. The Roman Church has in its primers that the Jews “have to suffer on account of the death of Christ on the cross.” Max Hunterberg in his Jesus—The Crucified Jew, the main thesis of which work is that the persecution of the Jews in all ages has been because of unjust blame for the crucifixion, writes: “If you place the story of the crucifixion on one scale and all the anti-Semitic books on the other, the former will outweigh the latter.” In the matter of the crucifixion it is well to remember the words of the Lord Jesus Christ: “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.” Was Christ praying here in the will of God? Was His prayer answered? Do you think it should not have been answered? In all fairness we cannot minimize the part of Herod, Pilate, and the Romans — to speak of human agencies alone — along with the Jews. Acts 4:27 gives the list of the human participants in the crucifixion of Christ, and we do well to conform our thinking to the truth stated there.

All these views are surely insufficient and inadequate, for these conditions did
not exist in the time of Pharaoh of Egypt in the lifetime of Moses, yet there was rabid anti-Semitism then. What, then, is the true and only cause? In a word it is Satan. The solution is to be found in Revelation 12. Satan hates the nation through whom has come so much blessing to the world, especially the Saviour. First, the dragon is incensed against the child of the woman (Jesus Christ), then he goes to make war with the remnant of her seed, Israel. Moreover, when Satan is angry against Israel, it always culminates in defiance against the Lord Jesus Christ. The two are inseparable.

This was well stated by a newspaper correspondent: "We speak of the problem of the Jews. But it is really a problem in civilization. If the world can't tolerate the Semite, it will have to give up Christ as well as Moses. If the world can't tolerate a virile, energetic minority, it will have to resign itself to mediocrity and set itself to stamp out genius as a poisonous thing. . . . The blood of Israel is precious blood. He who forgets that forgets history, sacred and profane." Yes, the devil himself is the moving personality behind all anti-Semitism. The man who was probably the worst Jew-hater in America at the time wrote in 1929 that he had been in eternity for seven minutes by plunging downward and was certain that he was not in heaven. Evidently from his later actions of venom against the Jew, he had visited none other than the prince of demons, Satan himself.

**Its Course**

If the cause of this malady is Satan, then the course is bound to be devilish and it is. The first anti-Semite on record is Pharaoh of Egypt. Exodus 1:6-14. Genesis 12:1-3 gives national existence as the first promise to Abraham, and as soon as this promise began to be fulfilled, the devil became busy. See Acts 7:17-19. Then came the nations in the wilderness journey, especially Amalek against whom God declared perpetual conflict. Many years later Haman, the arch-enemy of the Jews, comes on the scene of history. He plots no less than the total destruction of the nation to satisfy a personal grudge. See Esther 3:6 together with the wise prediction of his friends in 6:13. Some centuries later a violent wave of persecution broke out against the Jews in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria, about 168 B.C. In his passion to make Greek culture and practices standard throughout his realm, he prohibited the distinctive religious customs and observances of the Jews in Palestine, who were under his rule. He forbade the keeping of the Sabbath, the rite of circumcision, the observance of the dietary laws, and other religious practices. To climax his atrocities he had a sow slain on the altar of the temple in Jerusalem. The uprising of the Mac-
cabees and their valiant stand for the Jewish faith brought an end to this scourge. It is well known what transpired later in the Roman War in 66-70 A.D. The Romans destroyed the temple, the city of Jerusalem, and scattered the Jews throughout the world.

During the Middle Ages (from about 800 A.D. to 1517 A.D.) the lot of the Jew in exile (Galuth) was always insecure and precarious at the best. The period of the Crusades (1095-1212) was a time when religious emotionalism ran riot. The papacy incited the masses to regain the Holy Land from the infidels by promising glowing rewards for the present and for the hereafter. It is not generally known that on their way east the crusaders and their followers wreaked vengeance on the helpless Jews. So terrible were the atrocities heaped on the defenseless Jews, that, rather than fall into the clutches of the enemies, parents killed their children. Women and girls loaded themselves with stones and threw themselves into the rivers. What was left was plundered and the survivors were killed.

No sooner was the nightmare of the Crusades a thing of the past, than we find the Jews the object of the vile hatred of the Romish Church in the Spanish Inquisition (15th century). Jews were subjected to the auto-da-fe (act of faith) which was the public torment of all heretics before burning them. Even corpses long buried were unearthed to heap indignities upon them. All Jews were ordered out of Spain in 1492. Many died along the way because of starvation, exposure, and privations. Read the history of any country of Europe and you will find the story of the Jew written in streams of blood. The pogroms and massacres of Kishineff, Russia, are still memories to some surviving Jews of our generation. Books could be written on the persecution of the Jews by Hitler, beginning in 1933. He infected with his propaganda of hate, not only Germany and the countries of Europe, but Canada, the United States of America (where he seemed to have special affinities with certain Gerals), and other continents of the globe. This vile anti-Semitism has not been destroyed, merely because the German military machine was put out of operation.

The murder of some 6,000,000 Jews has sat lightly upon the minds and consciences of the Jew-baiters. Using the forged and exploded Protocols of the Elders of Zion as bait, they have hooked many an unwary victim. And the trail of blood goes on. It is of the essence of anti-Semitism that the perpetrator never learns from the past. Are we to look for a change in these conditions while the Church is on earth? No, the Word of God indicates the haters of Israel will continue their Satanic ways during this age, taking advantage of the grace of God.
and the fact that He is not smiting the enemies of His people dead in their tracks. (But all do well to learn the lesson of Hitler.)

When the Lord Jesus Christ comes to take His Bride to heaven (I Cor. 15:50 ff.; I Thess. 4:13-18), unbelievers will remain on earth to undergo the unspeakable woes of the Great Tribulation time. Read Matthew 24. This will be a time when hatred for the Jew will be unleashed as never before (Daniel 12:1). It will be the time of Jacob's trouble. Jer. 30:4-7 and Revelation 6-19. The culmination of anti-Semitism will be in the Battle of Armageddon. The nations will be aligned against Jerusalem to strike what they hope will be the final and crushing blow to the Jew. Read carefully Joel 3; Zechariah 12 and 14. Instead of annihilating the Jew, they will call down on themselves the unmitigated wrath of Almighty God and the sword of the Messiah, the Champion of His people, Israel. As sure as God is in heaven and His Word is true, the Jew will never be completely annihilated. Said the Lord through Jeremiah (30:11): "I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have scattered thee, but I will not make a full end of thee." How bitter has been the tale of the course of the persecution of the Jew!

It is told that, when Salmasius reproached John Milton with his blindness, and declared it was an evidence of God's dis-pleasure, the noble old poet said: "My blindness is only the twilight of God's wings which overshadow and protect me." Even during the darkness of persecution for Israel, the protecting wings of God have been and are her portion.

Its Cure

Some may know of the course of anti-Semitism; few may know its cause; but fewer still know its cure. The cure extends in three definite directions. First, the cure for anti-Semitism in the case of an unwary child of God is to become better acquainted with the Word of God and the Lord of his salvation. It is still a debatable question as to whether one can truly know the Lord, and be wilfully anti-Semitic. Can one claim to know God and yet so flagrantly and openly live in opposition to His revealed will? The believer will find it is incumbent on him to do good to all men everywhere. Why not, then, to the brethren of the Lord Jesus Christ after the flesh? The cure for the nations is to be found in Matthew 25 at the judgment of the nations. The nations of the earth will never learn to desist from Jew-hate, until they are judged for it when Christ sits on the throne of His glory, which is the throne of His father David. Luke 1:31-33. Someone has well said: "One does not defy Israel with impunity." It was Frederick the Great who said: "No country ever got any good by
injuring the Jew.” The Japanese out of long experience have coined a proverb: “If you would revenge yourself, dig two graves.” The plotter usually falls into his own pit. How true this is of the Jew-haters! History bears eloquent witness!

Now, what is the cure for anti-Semitism as far as Israel is concerned? It is to be found in her turning with a sincere faith to the Lord Jesus her Messiah. Hos. 3:4, 5; Zech. 14:2-4, 9. When the Jew rests by faith in the Lord Jesus, there will no longer be the problem of hatred against him in his national life. This is the hour of Israel’s testing, but she shall come forth victorious. Dr. Stuart Holden once told his congregation how, when he visited a factory where costly china was made, the thing that interested him most was the painting of the finished product. “It had been through many processes, and was taken to a studio for the artist to complete. I saw the pattern being put on in various colors, and noticed that a great deal of black was being used. On asking why, I was told, ‘It is black now, but it will be gold when it comes out of the fire.’” So with Israel, the beloved of the Lord, but woe to the persecutors!

If you, dear reader, have been caught in the snare of anti-Semitism through seemingly plausible arguments, turn to God’s Word alone, (and beseech Him by the Holy Spirit to deliver you from this) soul-damning venom. Then ask Him to implant such a love for the lost in Israel that you will not rest until many of them rest by faith in their Messiah and Saviour.

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