

A Rising Tide of Anti-Semitism

A reporter for *The Forward*, a well-known Jewish newspaper based in New York City, asked what Jews for Jesus does to combat anti-Semitism. Among other things, we explained our commitment to inform Christian friends like you about this scourge wherever it raises its ugly head. After all, evangelical Christians remain Israel's best friends in the world. That's why I'm writing to you about two recent incidents of the rising tide of anti-Semitism.

Incident One

The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization

(UNESCO) recently ratified a shocking resolution to deny Jewish ties to the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.

The Temple Mount is known as the holiest site in Jerusalem, in large part because of the two Jewish temples that stood there for almost nine centuries. The first, built by King Solomon some 3,000 years ago, was destroyed by the Babylonians. The second was leveled by the Romans in 70 a.d., fulfilling Christ's prophecy in Mark 13:1–2.

The site is mentioned over 400 times in the Bible and figures prominently in centuries of Jewish and Christian history. Of course, it has since become the location of the Dome of the

Rock and the Al-Aqsa Mosque and is considered the third holiest site in Sunni Islam. One needn't be a Bible scholar or a historian to recognize that this fact does not erase the prior significance of the Temple Mount. It is extremely significant to the Jewish people. No Jew, no Christian, no Muslim—nor anyone else—can deny this truth without distorting the documented history of God's people. To do so distorts the truth about God Himself.

And yet, by a shameful 10–2 vote (eight nations abstained), the committee adopted this outrageous resolution. With calculated and clearly political intent, the resolution ignores the undeniable Jewish and Christian connection to the Temple Mount. Referring to the location by its Arabic name, *Haram al-Sharif*, the resolution accuses Israel of endangering this holiest of sites.

Nor does the resolution end there. It actually presumes to order Israel to



David Brickner
Executive Director,
San Francisco USA



cease celebrating its Jewish heritage in Jerusalem. Incredible! Make no mistake, whatever motivated people to sign it, the resolution itself is another piece of groundwork for a growing structure of hate that won't be satisfied with anything short of the annihilation of the Jewish people.

Incident Two

In anticipation of the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's Reformation, the German Lutheran Church published a resolution that promotes a spiritual form of anti-Semitism: denying the church's right, much less responsibility, to share Jesus with the very people through whom and to whom He first came. If you didn't read about this in last month's newsletter, please find my article titled "True Love" at j4j.co/truelove. It's critical for Christians who care about Jewish people to understand this issue.

If it seems like these developments are not relevant to us here in America, consider this: A study recently released by Brandeis University documents growing anti-Semitism and anti-Israel sentiment on U.S. university campuses. The report found that the high rates of anti-Semitic harassment and hostility "are largely driven by hostility toward Israel."

This comes as no surprise to those of us who are Jewish; we all know students who have encountered anti-Israel and anti-Jewish remarks or graffiti . . . even on some of our favorite Christian campuses.

The more things change, the more they stay the same.

This month the Jewish people will celebrate the Feast of *Purim*, the story

of God's deliverance from wicked Haman as told in the Book of Esther.

Purim is a day of remembrance and rejoicing. Thanks to God's intervention—through Mordechai and his clever cousin/ adopted daughter, Esther—evil Haman's plan to annihilate the Jewish people was exposed. In the end, he was the one who was destroyed.

As we celebrate this victory, I'm reminded that the future of God's chosen nation is already decided. Both Old and New Testament Scriptures reveal the crucial role that Jewish people have played, and will continue to play, in God's plans.

Even in the face of growing, bald-faced anti-Semitism, such as that demonstrated by the UNESCO vote, and the subtler, perhaps even subconscious blow by the German Lutheran Church, we know that God's unstoppable plan is for the salvation for Israel to bless the whole world (Romans 11:12).

I believe all Christians need to grasp the importance of what's happening, respect God's favor on the Jewish people and take action.

It is my duty to call on all brothers and sisters in Christ to stand with the Jewish people for their very right to exist and to hear the life-saving gospel, remembering that:

- Salvation for Gentiles is through a "grafting" into the "holy root" of Israel (Romans 11:17).
- God wants to use Gentile salvation to call Israel back to Him (Romans 11:11).
- It's not too late for Jewish people to repent (Romans 11:23).

While the developments I described are not unexpected in light of Scripture, it's still shocking to watch them unfold.

What a tragedy it would be if, in the name of political correctness—and, yes, maybe even fear—we see Christians keep silent when Jewish people are threatened. What a shame it would be to see more and more Christians avoid sharing the Jewish Messiah with His very own people.

All Christians should heed the words of Mordechai to Esther: "For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place . . . Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" (Esther 4:14).

God is working His plan *right now*. That means there is even greater urgency to be a part of that plan by carrying His Word to Jewish people who are willing to consider that Jesus just may be their Messiah.

Last month we announced the publication of Jews for Jesus European director Avi Snyder's new book, *Jews Don't Need Jesus & Other Misconceptions*, from Moody Press. For a sneak peek, check out page eight. You can pre-order copies using the enclosed flyer. Please use this as a tool to stand with us in support of the cause of Christ among the Jewish people. You might want to get multiple copies to distribute to your pastor, your friends and others.

Will you stand with us now to pray for the protection and salvation of the Jewish people? There is incredible openness to the gospel among Jewish people worldwide, especially in Israel. Will you help Jews for Jesus share the gospel of *Yeshua* (Jesus) during these increasingly difficult times and encourage others to also do so?



by Bob Mendelsohn
Regional Director
JFI Australia

Sydney Campaign 2016

I'm happy to report on the Sydney summer witnessing campaign which took place 1-14 December. We had an older campaign and as Mark Landrum called it, 'old school' in style. The average age was 52 years old among the 12 full-time campaigners and the four part-timers from Sydney. Our volunteer campaigners came from Israel, South Africa, the US, Ukraine and Australia, and our chef from the UK, although he's an Aussie citizen as well.

In the two weeks we handed out 48,000 tracts, bannered over the Syd Einfeld Freeway in the centre of the Jewish area, and prayed with 2 Jews and 9 Gentiles to profess faith in Yeshua.

Almost nightly we read psalms out on the corso in Bondi (Psalm reading), made phone calls to Jewish sounding surnames from the phone book, and stretched ourselves to the limits. Our limits were noticeable mostly by our ageing.



We stayed in apartments situated in Bondi Junction, and used the lounge in one unit to serve as our centre for writing friends and daily chapel. Our chaplains were heavy on encouragement and cared for us in body, soul and spirit.



Totals

54 Jewish people and 69 Gentiles who didn't know the Messiah, gave us their details for further followup.

Totalling over 120 unsaved people whose details we secured. That's well worth our efforts. We haven't had this kind of response in Australia, ever. To any type of campaign or outreach.

More photos are on our Flickr page: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/bobmendo/albums/72157673389169763>

We are especially grateful for the prayers of the saints, which carried us through, no matter the 30 degree temps, no matter our tiredness, no matter the limited variety of tracts we used.

We may just conduct another campaign later in 2017, and welcome letters and emails of interest as we make the Messiahship of Jesus an unavoidable issue to our Jewish people world-wide, even here in Oz!

Bible Adventure Tour:
Late November 2017
Egypt - Jordan - Israel

Tour the Holy Land

This tour is hosted by Kameel Majdali, member of our Board of Directors, who has led more than 32 Bible land tours. You will hear Bible teaching and current events by Kameel at every site. In addition, you will meet with some of our Israeli Jews for Jesus Staff.

Dates: 19 nights from around 20 November 2017 (shorter tour is possible)

Price: TBA. 2016 price was USD 2,500 plus airfare. Includes 4 star hotels, half board, touring, tips & taxes. No hidden costs.

For further information:

leanne@tan.org.au or ania@tan.org.au; or write to:

Teach All Nations, P.O. Box 493,
Mount Waverley VIC 3149

Also ask about our 'Footsteps of Paul' Greece-Italy Tour: 8-18 November 2017. Includes two nights in Santorini!

Regarding wills

Some have been asking us lately about long-ranged financial plans. Thank you for that. Please include the following wording in your will if you wish to make a contribution in your will to Jews for Jesus after you die and are in the presence of Yeshua.

"I bequeath the sum of (\$xxxx or xx%) of my estate, free of all Probate and Death Duties to Jews for Jesus of Australia (ABN: 50.084.937.422), in the State of New South Wales (257 Oxford Street, Bondi Junction), for the general purpose of the said organisation and I declare that the receipt of the Jews for Jesus authorised officer shall be sufficient discharge to my trustees who shall not be obliged to see to the application thereof."

And please let us know here in Sydney or at your national office, that you have done this. Thank you very much for your help in this life or after you are gone, to help us reach the Jewish people around the globe.

FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE

If you'd like to give to Jews for Jesus but prefer using the Internet, we have a secure link for you or you can ring our office (1.800 MESSIAH) during business hours and we will organize your donation that way:

<http://www.jewsforjesus.org.au/?p=1030>

ADDRESS INFORMATION

JEWS FOR JESUS AUSTRALIA
E-MAIL: mail@jewsforjesus.org.au
WEB: jewsforjesus.org.au
Phone in Australia: +61.2.9388.0559
ALSO WORKING IN: BELORUSSIA,
CANADA, FRANCE, GERMANY,
HUNGARY, ISRAEL, RUSSIA, SOUTH
AFRICA, SWITZERLAND, UKRAINE, the
UNITED KINGDOM, and USA
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JFJ AUSTRALIA
PO Box 925
Sydney NSW 2001
DONATIONS
Banking in Australia:
NAB: BSB: 082.067
Account: 46.072.8465

JFJ NEW ZEALAND
PO Box 564
Rangiora 7440
DONATIONS
Banking in New Zealand:
BNZ: BSB: 02-0484
Account number:
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God fulfills His promises—against all human odds

by Rich Robinson, senior researcher

PROMISE	KEY PASSAGES	SUMMARY	NEW TESTAMENT LINKS	APPLICATIONS	JEWISH TRADITIONS
THE BIRTH OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE	<p>“Now the Lord had said to Abram: ‘Get out of your country, from your family and from your father’s house, to a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation.* I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.’” Genesis 12:1–3</p> <p>See also Genesis 15:1–6; 16:1–4; 17:1–8; 18:1–15; 21:1–7; 22:1–18 for the story of promises made, delayed, and fulfilled.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abram is promised descendants, a land, and a blessing that will extend to the world. • Time passes and his faith gets mixed with doubt. He takes matters into his own hands by having a child by Sarai’s handmaid Hagar, but is told this is not the child of promise. (*Note: the Jews are descended from Abraham through Isaac only, and also through only one of Isaac’s sons, Jacob.) • Abraham is 100 years old and Sarah is 90 when Isaac is born. • God commands Abraham to sacrifice Isaac, seemingly imperiling the fulfillment of the promise (and raising some interesting ethical questions). At the last minute, God spares Isaac and provides a ram as a substitute. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abraham is shown as a paragon of faith (Romans 4:18–25; Galatians 3:8–9; Hebrews 11:8–10) and so is Sarah (Hebrews 11:11), despite occasions of doubt and even laughter over God’s promise. • The miraculous nature of Isaac’s conception is emphasized in Hebrews 11:11–12. • Jesus, who fulfills the climax of the promise, “in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed,” also was conceived miraculously (Luke 1:34–35). • Whereas Isaac, the son of promise, was spared, God did not spare His own Son, but allowed Him to die so that we could be spared (John 3:16). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have amazing promises in Christ and God is faithful to keep them all, despite obstacles and timetables that may seem to indicate otherwise. • Even faithful people sometimes doubt, yet help to see God’s promises realized can help build our faith. • Abraham and Sarah only saw part of God’s promise fulfilled. Like them, we can live a life of faith and hope, even though we may pass from this earth before God’s promises are ultimately fulfilled at Jesus’ return. 	<p>Every year on the Feast of Trumpets (aka Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year) the story of the near-sacrifice of Isaac in Genesis 22 is read. Jewish painter Marc Chagall depicted the scene of Abraham raising his hand to sacrifice Isaac, complete with the ram caught by its horns in a bush. But at the top of the painting, this famous Jewish artist (who did not view Jesus through Christian eyes) also included a vignette of Him carrying the cross, with red dripping like blood onto the scene of Abraham and Isaac.</p>
THE DELIVERANCE OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE	<p>“And the Lord said: ‘I have surely seen the oppression of My people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters, for I know their sorrows. So I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land . . . to a land flowing with milk and honey. . . .’” Exodus 3:7–8</p> <p>The entire story of Passover is recorded in Exodus 1–15.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After enslaving the Israelites, Pharaoh commands their baby boys be killed. The midwives fear God more than Pharaoh, so many—including Moses—survive. • Moses takes the plight of his people into his own hands by murdering an Egyptian and has to flee to the land of Midian. • Forty years later, God appoints Moses to lead the Israelites from Egypt. Moses raises objections about his own abilities, but God enables him to play his part in the promised deliverance. • The Israelites are exempt from the first nine plagues that God sends to judge Pharaoh and Egypt’s idolatry. They must, however, affix the blood of a perfect lamb on their doorposts for their first-born sons to be spared from the final plague. • As Israel exits Egypt, Pharaoh’s military pursuit seems to imperil their redemption. Yet God parts the sea, and the would-be destroyers are destroyed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Like Pharaoh, Herod tried to destroy the Israelites’ male offspring (Matthew 2:16); but God similarly circumvented his plans. • The Last Supper is a Passover meal in which Jesus refers to His impending death to atone for our sins (Matthew 26:17–30; Luke 22:8–20). • Jesus is not only our sacrificed Passover lamb, He is God’s Son, who—unlike the first-born sons of Israel—was not spared (John 3:16; see also Matthew 27:54; Mark 1:1; Romans 1:4). • Just as Pharaoh’s power was destroyed when He tried to destroy God’s promised people, so Satan’s power was destroyed when he tried to destroy God’s promised Messiah (compare Genesis 3:15 with Luke 10:18; Hebrews 2:14; 1 John 3:8). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Even when God’s promise seems to take a long time to unfold, it’s not advisable to try to speed up matters on our own. • Our inabilities (real or imagined) need not prevent us from answering God’s call to participate in His promises; He’ll enable us if we trust Him. • As God redeemed Israel from slavery in Egypt to worship Him, Jesus redeems us from slavery to sin for the same purpose. 	<p>The annual Passover seder held in Jewish homes tells the story of the Exodus in an interactive way that includes eating ceremonial foods and responsive readings about the Exodus. For many modern, secular Jews, the story of the Exodus is about our efforts to free people from human trafficking or other oppression. Sadly, it has become no more than that for many Jews, though for believers, Passover invites no less of a response.</p>
THE PRESERVATION OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE	<p>Many passages, including Jeremiah 31:35–37, reiterate God’s promise to preserve Jewish people despite national disobedience. The Book of Esther is a brilliant example of how He also preserves them from external perils and time again, against all odds. Since the Jewish holiday Purim (commemorating the events in the book of Esther) falls this month, that entire book is our key Scripture for this section.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the Persian court of King Ahasuerus, a villain named Haman rises to power, to the point where all are commanded to bow down before him. • Mordechai refuses to bow before Haman because, as a Jew, he bows to no one but God. • Haman is so enraged by this that he plots to kill all the Jews in the kingdom. • Against all odds, God has brought a young Jewish woman, Esther (Mordechai’s cousin and adopted daughter), into the court where she wins the king’s heart and becomes queen. • Though the king initially grants Haman’s request to wipe out the Jewish people, Mordechai and Esther enjoin all the Jewish people in the kingdom to pray, and Haman’s plot is not only foiled, but he meets the very death he planned for Mordechai. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No New Testament passage refers specifically to the preservation of the Jewish people in so many words. Nevertheless, that preservation is assumed: Jesus comes in fulfillment to the promises to Israel (Luke 1:54–55; 68–75; 2:32); Paul speaks of the salvation of Israel at the end of days in Romans 11:26–27. Clearly, there needs to be a Jewish people in existence for that to happen! • As God used Esther in His plan to defeat Haman, He used a young Jewish girl, Miriam (Mary), as the vehicle through which the Deliverer from sin would come. As Haman was defeated, sin, death and Satan will suffer ultimate defeat by Jesus (Matthew 25:41; Romans 16:20; Acts 10:38; 1 Corinthians 15:54–55; 1 John 3:8; Revelation 20:10). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Though God is never mentioned in the book of Esther, we see Him “behind the scenes” throughout the book. Even so, His work may not always be obvious in your life, but by faith you can know that He is working out all events according to His promises. • If you see yourself as insignificant compared to “the powers that be,” remember that God uses faithful, humble people to overthrow the plans of the wicked. • The unique survival of the Jewish people when far outnumbered by would-be exterminators even to this day is inexplicable apart from God’s promise-keeping nature. Even so, you can count on Him to keep every promise He’s made to those who are His through His Son, Jesus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Today Purim is celebrated with a carnival-like atmosphere. • The book of Esther (called the megillah or scroll) is read in its entirety, while listeners are provided with groggers (noisemakers), which are used while booing at every mention of Haman and cheering at every mention of Mordechai and Esther. • Three-sided fruit-filled pastries, called hamantaschen, are eaten. Hamantaschen means, “Haman’s pockets” and in Israel are called, “Haman’s ears”—and no one knows why we would want to eat those!

