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# **God Loves Israel**

## "I have loved thee [Israel] with an everlasting love." Jeremiah 31:3

By Mike Wingfield

If you publicly declare today that you love Jewish people and the nation of Israel, there will be many who hate you. Hatred for Jews is spreading like a disease around the world. Since Hamas' invasion of Israel on October 7, 2023, anti-Jewish hate crimes are reaching historic levels. It is now reported that approximately one-fourth of people living in the U.S. hate Jewish people. Sadly, many of these people claim to be Christians.

Many people hate the Jews because they believe the ancient lies about the Jewish people that have been in existence for centuries. They view the Jewish people as being in positions of wealth and control. Some believe Jews are trying to take over the world. Others simply hate them without knowing anything about the Jews. They hate them because they choose to hate them.

Speaking about the signs at the end of this age, Jesus said to His Jewish disciples, "Ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake" (Matthew 24:9). Before He went to the cross, Jesus said to His disciples, *"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. …* They hated me without a cause" (John 15:18, 25).

Many people may not know it, but when they hate the Jewish people, they are acting like God's greatest adversary, Satan. No one hates Israel and the Jewish people more than Satan. Throughout the centuries Satan has enflamed and magnified people's hatred for God's chosen people.

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Satan knows how deeply God loves the Jewish people. This evil enemy of God understands God's heart, purposes, and eternal design for the Jewish people. Satan knows that God has created the Jewish people and blessed them to demonstrate His faithful, infinite, and glorious character. The devil knows that God has invested His reputation and sovereign plans to bless the entire world through the Jewish people (Genesis 12:2-3).

Satan's goal is to dethrone God and exalt himself above all the angels, and to possess all of heaven and earth (Isaiah 14:12-14). Therefore, he has chosen to attack God by striking at God's heart. He must defeat God by destroying Israel and the Jewish people. History demonstrates that this has been his objective from the beginning of the nation of Israel in Egypt almost 3,900 years ago.

**Revelation 12** reveals that Satan is the cause of anti-Semitism. In this imagery, the woman who is about to give birth to a male child is Israel. The dragon that is before the woman stands ready to devour the male child, and then the woman, is Satan. Before and during Christ's First Coming, Satan did everything he could to destroy the plan of God by attacking God's Son. He tried to kill Jesus (Matthew 2:16; Luke 4:28-30; John 8:59). He also tried to disqualify Jesus as the sinless Son of God (Matthew 4:1-11).

Jesus defeated Satan's schemes. After He completed His Father's mission and ascended back to heaven. Since that time Satan's major objective has been to eliminate the Jewish people and annihilate the nation of Israel. He is doing this to prevent the Second Coming of Christ. He knows that if he is unsuccessful in this effort, he will be cast into the bottomless pit for 1,000 years (Revelation **20:1-2**), and then into the Lake of Fire for all eternity (Revelation 20:10). As always, Satan has used the godless Gentile nations in his conflict with God. One of his favorite tools are wicked, godless human governments and their evil leaders.

In **Revelation 12:7-8**, the apostle John indicated that this war against Israel is an extension of the war in

heaven between the good angels of God and the demons of the dragon, Satan. This simply indicates that the central focus of the war in the spiritual realm is focused upon the nation of Israel. In **Daniel 12:1** and **Revelation 12:7**, it is noted that Michael the archangel is *"the great prince which [stands] for the children of [Daniel's] people"* – the Jewish people. Michael is known as the most powerful angel in God's war efforts against Satan. The fact that God has placed His most powerful angel in charge of defending Israel against Satan indicates just how serious this war is in the overall scheme of the battle between God and Satan.

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Since the beginning of God's choice to make the Jewish people His own people, Satan has used sinful man to attack the people of God. Without knowing it, people and nations have aided Satan in his efforts to annihilate the Jewish people. The Bible teaches that before a person is redeemed by God, they are manipulated by Satan to accomplish hell's agenda. The apostle Paul described all sinners as those who prior to their salvation *"walked according to the course of this world, according to the power of the air, the spirit that now [works] in the children of disobedience"* (Ephesians 2:2).

Why should Bible-believing, conservative, evangelical Christians love the Jewish people and Israel? When a person becomes a follower of Jesus as his Messiah and Savior, he must also accept Him as his Lord. If Jesus is our Lord, that means we

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should obey His commands and agree with His eternal will. Jesus, our Jewish Savior, taught us to pray, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10). The future kingdom that Jesus instructed us to pray about was not a spiritual kingdom, but a physical kingdom on earth. We will return to earth and reign with Christ in His kingdom over the nations for 1,000 years (Revelation 20:4-6). Christ will rule in His kingdom from the throne of David in Jerusalem, Israel over all nations (Isaiah 2:1-4). This kingdom was a promise given to the Jewish people in many Old Testament texts. Therefore, we should love Jesus and His people, Israel, and joyfully pray for this kingdom to come.

The divine calling of Israel is of great importance and is the foundation of God's dealing with Israel and all other nations. Since God chose this nation for His divine purposes, what He does to the Jewish nation and all other nations reflects His divine sovereign power and authority over all His creation.

One of the great themes in the Bible is God's love for His chosen people, Israel. God has openly stated that He loves Israel. Speaking to Israel through His servant Moses 3,400 years ago, God said, "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt" (Deuteronomy 7:6-8).

This divine calling of Israel is of great importance and is the foundation of God's dealing with Israel and all other nations. Since God chose this nation for His divine purposes, what He does to the Jewish nation and all other nations reflects His divine sovereign power and authority over all His creation. God has chosen to bless those who bless Israel and to curse those who curse Israel (Genesis 12:3). Those who attack Israel are attacking God. Therefore, Israel's enemies are God's enemies (Psalm 83:1-4). The history and prophecy of Israel are filled with miracles. God's supernatural hand upon His people should be a powerful warning to all people concerning what awaits those who oppose the sovereign will and plans of God! "All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity" (Isaiah 40:17).

Several things need to be recognized concerning God's calling of Israel into a covenant relationship with Him. God has designated them to be a "holy people unto the Lord" (Deuteronomy 7:6). This does not have any application to their spiritual salvation. The word holy simply means they have been "set apart" by God for His purposes. God has chosen them to be a special people "above all people that are upon the face of the earth" (Deuteronomy 7:6). The word "special" in Hebrew, segulah, designates Israel as God's treasured possession. It indicates that the person who owns this possession has a special affection for it. lt means that the owner considers that possession to be of great value to him. In four other Old Testament texts, the same Hebrew word is translated "a peculiar treasure" (Exodus 19:5).

This means that the nation of Israel is considered by God to be His personal treasured possession. He has declared, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise" (Isaiah 43:21). He has said to Israel, "Thou art mine" (Isaiah 43:1). When God's work in Israel is complete at the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom, He will say to them, "Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God" (Isaiah 62:3). The Lord has declared that this will be "that day when I make up my jewels" (Malachi 3:17).

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God's ancient calling of the nation of Israel has not been abandoned by God. Notice Jeremiah 31:1, 3, "At the same time [the time of the end], saith the LORD, will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people. ... The LORD hath appeared of old unto me saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee."

Many people believe that God has forsaken His covenant with the Jewish people and replaced them with the church. At the heart of this confusion, called Replacement Theology, is the misunderstanding of the very nature and character of God. God's love for Israel flows out of His sovereign will. It is an act that flows out of His infinite character of faithfulness and mercy (**Deuteronomy 7:8**). Since God does not change, neither does His nature. He is *"the same yesterday, and today, and forever"* (Hebrews 13:8). This unchangeable character guarantees that Israel cannot be consumed (Malachi 3:6)

He does not love the Jewish people because they deserve it. God knew that when He called Israel, they would be a rebellious people (Isaiah 48:8). Like all of humanity (both Jew and Gentile), there is none that seeks after God in his own spirit (Romans 3:9-18). However, because of God's covenant with Abraham, God chose to exercise His patience and did not destroy them. For the sake of His own glory, God has acted with infinite love and promised that someday Israel will be redeemed (Romans 11:26-27).

Often, we forget that God lives in the eternal now (Isaiah 57:15). God has no past or future. With Him, it is all present. Therefore, God's love for Israel is not based upon what the Jewish people do at any moment in time. God has loved Israel despite their rebellious spirit, and He sees the day that will come when all living Israel, the final generation, will call unto Him in repentance and be saved (Zechariah 12:10-13:9).

In Jeremiah 31:3, God declared to Israel, "with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." The Hebrew word for "loving kindness" is hesed. This speaks of a loyal love, unfailing love based upon devotion that is steadfastly built upon a prior relationship. It speaks of merciful and unfailing love that is an act of the sovereign choice of God. Not on emotions alone.

God has feelings and emotions. He is not some sovereign robot in heaven without any feelings. However, we must understand that God's love is more than just emotions. It is not a reaction to the object of His love. It is a selfpurposed act of His holiness for

The psalmist frequently celebrated God's mercy shown to Israel. The Psalms were written by godly men to whom were given great insight by the Spirit of God. They recognized Israel's sin, but they also saw God's great mercy. Because of His mercy they were not rejected or consumed by His wrath. See **Psalm 89** and **136**. We should all rejoice that *"the LORD is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy"* (**Psalm 145:8**). *"It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not"* (Lamentations **3:22**).

God has feelings and emotions. He is not some sovereign robot in heaven without any feelings. However, we must understand that God's love is more than just emotions. It is not a reaction to the object of His love. It is a self-purposed act of His holiness for His own eternal purposes and glory. God works *"all things after the counsel of his own will"* (Ephesians 1:11). God's glory is not invested in the object of His love, but in His own glory. God's choice and calling should not bring about any pride in the object of God's love. God has chosen weak people, foolish persons, and the people who are the rejected and despised people of the world, so that *"no flesh should glory in his presence"* (1 Corinthians 1:29).

God's love for His people Israel can be seen in two ways. First, God has attached Himself to the nation

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by using its name as a reference to Himself. He has declared 46 times in the Bible that Israel is His people and that He is their God! After they have been scattered among the nations for thousands of years, in the end He says, *"Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Behold, I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country; And I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness"* (Zechariah 8:7-8).

Names in the Bible are very important. Names are designed to reflect the character or the divine nature of that person's calling. God's name in the Bible is holy (**Psalm 111:9**). The very mention of God's name is to be approached with great reverence (**Exodus 20:7**). God has forever attached His identity to the Jewish people. He has called Himself "The Holy One of Israel," "The God of Israel," "The God of Jacob," and "the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."

God has determined that when people observe the Jewish people, they can learn something about His very nature. God's work among His people teaches us much about His grace and mercy. It also demonstrates that God is infinitely patient and faithful. God has repeatedly used great miracles in the history of Israel. These miracles are a demonstration of God's awesome power. The nation of Israel is a testimony to the truthfulness of God's Word. His promises never fail! The history of Israel demonstrates that God is serious about punishing sin and unfaithfulness to God. The Jewish people also demonstrate God's infinite love for those who are unworthy of that love.

Hundreds of times in the Bible, God refers to Israel as "my people." As previously mentioned, God has a unique covenant with only one nation and ethnic group – Israel and the Jewish people. He has set them apart and high above all other nations. In the truest sense of the word, they are His people. In Matthew 25:40, Jesus referred to the Jewish people as "my brethren." With this comment, Jesus said to those whom He was speaking, that what they did to His people they had done to Him. When you attack Israel, you are attacking God! God said that those who touch Him, touch *"the apple of his eye"* (Zechariah 2:8). This means that the Jew is the central focus of God in His eternal plan. As goes God's divine will and purpose, so goes the nation of Israel. God's will and the nation of Israel are intertwined in the mind and heart of God! That is why Israel is the target of hell and all the devil's demons!

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In the Bible, God gives many symbolic illustrations of the identity of Israel. In Exodus 4:22, Moses declared to Pharoah, "Israel is my son, even my first born." In the culture of the Middle East, the first-born son held a position of honor and importance over all his siblings. How fitting for God to refer to the nation of Israel in these terms. In Exodus 19:5, God spoke to Israel and said, you are a "treasure unto me above all people." With great affection. He referred to Israel as His vineyard (Isaiah 5:7). Israel is the unique flock of God (Isaiah **40:11**). At Mount Horeb in **Exodus 19**, God met with Israel and gave them a covenant that is recognized in the Bible as a marriage covenant. In the Bible, Israel is known as the wife of Jehovah. When the end comes, God will renew His relationship with His wife with a new covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-34). These, and many other analogies, indicate that God has a deep affection and enduring love for His people. No other nation is looked upon with such honor or calling.

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The Lord has assured us that He will never permanently reject His people, Israel. Remember that the Lord has said to Israel, *"I have loved thee with an everlasting love"* (Jeremiah 31:3). He has promised to discipline the children of Israel, but has declared, *"My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips"* (Psalm 89:34). God's promises are bound up in the presence of the sun and the moon. God has said that as long as the sun and the moon stands, the nation of Israel will be before Him to accomplish His purposes (Jeremiah 31:35-37).

I would like to say to all those who are attempting to attack or curse Israel, "look up!" If you see the sun and moon, please know that you will not be able to destroy Israel or stop God's eternal plans. Not all the demons in hell or all the billions in the nations will be able to defeat the Lord God. When Jesus returns, He will slay all the wicked *"with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips"* (Isaiah 11:4).

The surge of anti-Semitism is a testimony that Satan is running scared. He must know that His time to defeat God is getting short (**Revelation 12:12**). He is assembling the nations against Israel. The nations are about to feel the wrath of God. Like fools, they are running toward their own demise.

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"Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." Matthew 24:44

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