

Satan's Tactic Against the Church



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We Must Understand How Spiritual Warfare Works

To understand the principle of God's justice, we must first understand the nature of the enemy who wars against us. We know that our fight is not against flesh and blood. It is against principalities and powers. It is against the prince of the power of the air (Ephesians 2:2). It is against this spiritual force of wickedness that is seen as the prince of this world (Ephesians 6:12). That is what we are up against in these days prior to the Kingdom. The Scriptures warn, "Be on the alert! Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour" (1 Peter 5:8). The adversary is looking for those who are receptive to his battle. It is one thing to be aware of spiritual warfare, but it is another thing to understand how it works. Paul wrote, "We are not ignorant of his devices," and we should not be ignorant of the tactics satan uses when he comes against God's people in spiritual warfare (2 Corinthians 2:11). The devil has a definite plan to use against God's people, especially Christian believers in the Church. So we want to be aware of his tactics and be able to counteract them.

To begin, satan learned an effective strategy when the children of Israel refused to enter the Promised Land. God told them that He was giving them the land and that He Himself would take over the battle to possess it. They would defeat nations that were greater and mightier than Israel. But the sons of Israel would not go in, and God had to judge His people (Numbers 32:13; Deuteronomy 1:26–30, 4:37–38). While watching this situation, satan learned a key strategy. He knows that he can never win a battle against God's people because God will always come through with His *hesed*—His grace, His mercy, and His love. God will find a way to cover His people and bring them through the spiritual warfare and battle they face against the adversary. However, satan learned that he did not have to defeat God's people directly; he only had to position them in a place where God Himself would judge them. The book of Numbers shows how satan caused that to happen in a very evident way.



Balaam's Effective Method to Destroy God's People

We may be familiar with the story of Balaam but not necessarily see how it applies to us. I think it absolutely applies to the Church and to Christian believers right now. If we say “Judas Iscariot,” we all know we are talking about someone who betrayed the Lord. It should be the same with Balaam. When we say that name, we should know exactly the method of battle satan uses to bring destruction against God’s people. Not only do we read about Balaam in the Hebrew Scriptures, but we also find the spirit of Balaam coming through against the Church (2 Peter 2:15; Revelation 2:14). Balaam came against Israel because Balak paid him to curse the Israelites just as they were about to enter the land after forty years of judgment. Think about that. They had just finished the process of God judging the previous generation of Israel. Now a new generation was coming out of the wilderness and ready to take the land. They were coming out of a time of judgment, and immediately they faced this spirit. The adversary said, “Here is a whole new generation of God’s people, and they are walking right into the promise, right into the fulfillment. Let’s try this again to see if we can wipe out this new generation.” So satan sent Balak and Balaam to curse the people of God. But satan’s direct spiritual warfare against them did not work. Balaam could not curse them. He tried again and again to curse the people and come against them. But God would not let it work (Numbers 22:4–6, 23:11–12, 25–26, 24:10).

Although the direct curse failed, Balaam’s other method was executed, and God started judging Israel. Balaam had counseled Balak, “Get the idolatrous women of Moab to marry the sons of Israel and draw them into the worship of Baal. Then you do not have to worry about cursing them because God Himself will come against His people and wipe them out. If we can get the people to sin and give their hearts to idolatry, then God will destroy them.” That is exactly what happened. They began to intermarry and worship Baal of Peor (Numbers 25:1–5, 31:16). This was proven by archeology. From the time Israel came into the land of promise until the Babylonian captivity, idols were found all throughout the cities of Israel. They worshipped these idols as a result of Balaam’s counsel. Balaam knew by satanic wisdom that if he could get Israel to worship idols, God Himself would judge them. The Israelites were never able to break free

from this experience until they were taken captive to Babylon. As archeology also shows, after they returned from Babylon there were no more idols in Israel. They had finally learned their lesson, but it took the destruction of the land, the destruction of the Temple, and their captivity in Babylon before God was able to free them. After learning this lesson, the adversary has used it to great advantage against God's people. Spiritual warfare is all about satan getting you into a position where God Himself is forced to judge you and bring the consequences of your disobedience upon you.



The Doctrines of Many Churches Are Filled with Anti-Semitic Teachings

If God tells you to do something and you do not do it, the result is not that satan defeats you, but God Himself will come and defeat you. God loves the Jewish people and has an eternal covenant with them. Yet we know from examples in the Hebrew Scriptures that when God's chosen people failed and sinned, His presence literally picked up and left the scene. Thus the terminology of Ichabod, "the glory has departed from Israel," became an experience (1 Samuel 4:21). Ezekiel paints the picture of how God's presence lifted from over the altar, came out of the Temple, went across to the Mount of Olives, and disappeared to the east (Ezekiel 10:3–4, 18–19, 11:22–23). God's presence literally left the Tabernacle and the Temple. He left Israel. Now we have the prophetic promises that His presence will return. But we have to ask ourselves, "Are we in the place right now where the presence of God has left much of Christianity? Are we doing what He told us to do?"

Christ told us to love one another, just as He has loved us (John 15:12). But are we being obedient to His commandment? Anti-Semitism started in the early days of the Church. Almost as soon as Yeshua (Jesus) ascended, we see the beginnings of anti-Semitism coming from those who believed in Christ as Messiah. Eventually, we see it becoming absolutely horrendous in its manifestations of slaughter, destruction, and genocide, all coming from the Church. Much of

what happened in the Holocaust was born out of the teachings of the Church Fathers. As Christians, we cannot say that we are free from anti-Semitism because it has been passed down in our spiritual DNA from the Church Fathers. The doctrines, the teachings, and the covenants of many churches are filled with horrible anti-Semitic teachings. And once again, satan is trying to lead the Church into a place of being anti-Semitic to the point that God will have to come, according to His Word, and judge the Church—not bless the Church, not anoint the Church, not have His presence be with us. We must face the reality that our anti-Semitism has positioned us where God must bring judgment, correction, and even withdraw His presence from us.



Anti-Semitism Includes Two Aspects

Anti-Semitism has two aspects to it. One aspect is that of the world. The people of the nations and their governments are very involved in anti-Semitism. There is nothing new about that, but it is increasing greatly today. The United Nations represents the nations in their anti-Semitism. It is weird how every nation on the planet feels obligated to tell the tiny country of Israel how to govern its people. I do not know why the United States, especially, feels a perverse obligation to execute some type of two-state plan in the land of Israel. A two-state plan will never work. Do that and you will have constant war. You will not bring peace; you will create enemies and then move them ten miles apart from each other. At that distance, they do not even need rockets; they can throw hand grenades. If people want to help, then let them bring oneness. There is already a great deal of oneness between the true residents of the land of Israel, whether they are Israeli or Arab. There is a great deal of working together and living together as brothers. Peace can happen. Israel offered it from the very beginning of the nation. They said, “Every person who lives in the land, who wants to be an Israeli citizen, here is your passport.” Oneness can be done. God can do it.

A second aspect of anti-Semitism involves the Church. My concern is that we are seeing the Body of Christ become more and more engaged in it. One problem is that the Church is stuck on this idea that all Jews must be saved to receive God's blessing and that it has to happen right now. So there is a constant friction coming from Christianity that says, "We have to save the Jews. We have to get them all to believe in Jesus. There is only one name under heaven whereby they can be saved, so we have to go out and witness to them." This idea is a big deal in Christianity and much of it is done under the guise of supporting Israel. Many groups support Israel because they are looking for the prophecies about judgment to take place. But God is looking for salvation rather than judgment (John 3:17). Are we to support Israel only to see the fulfillment of end-time events? There is no purity in that motivation.

Another problem with Jewish conversion by the Church is a result of what the Church has become. We know it today as a Gentile church, even though it started as a Jewish church. Now, however, conversion to Christianity means the converts have to become Gentiles. It is not just about accepting Jesus. It is a matter of continuing Hellenism. It is just another type of genocide because you literally become part of destroying the people, the language, and the culture. Everything about God's people is eviscerated; the guts are taken out. For example, most churches that I am aware of would not be satisfied if a Jew believed in Jesus and still attended the synagogue. That would not be acceptable. Instead, they have to celebrate Christmas and Easter. They have to worship according to our Gentile traditions that were developed over the last two thousand years and came out of the idolatry of Gentile society. Yet there are many things the Jewish people do that are far more biblical than anything you find in the Church.



God Will Save His People Israel

The Jews have had a covenant with God from the very beginning, going back to the days of Abraham. How long does it take for God to finish what He started with Israel? "Can a land be born in one day? Can a nation be brought forth all at once?" (Isaiah 66:8). God has

committed Himself that He will save His people Israel (Isaiah 41:8–10). Christianity needs to trust that God will do that. That is part of faith. There are many things you believe to see happen that have not happened yet. Do you have faith for Israel? Or are you just driven to convert them? Do you say, “They have to be like us. They have to become Christian”? Well, they are not like us. They are already God’s people. The Scriptures tell us that we as Gentiles were in this world without God, without a connection. It took Christ to reconcile us to the Father (Ephesians 2:11–16). Thank God there are promises and prophecies that He will restore the Jewish people and bring them back. We as the Gentile Church do not have such promises and prophecies, but Israel does. God will restore them. God will bring them back to the land. We must be honest about the fact that God is not kidding when He said He will bless those who bless the seed of Abraham and curse those who curse them (Genesis 27:28–29). At some point God is obligated to judge every enemy of His people. So if satan can suck the Church into anti-Semitism, he has sealed our judgment. If you are on the wrong side of the promises of God, you are bringing yourself right into the plan of Balaam. We must recognize that God will give the Jewish people a new heart and a new spirit, and they will serve Him. The Father is so determined to bless Israel and the Jewish people that Ezekiel prophesied He will lift them out of their graves and set them in the land.

“Then you will know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves and caused you to come up out of your graves, My people. I will put My Spirit within you and you will come to life, and I will place you on your own land. Then you will know that I, the LORD, have spoken and done it,” declares the LORD.

EZEKIEL 37:13–14





The Church Has Been an Instrument of Cursing the Jewish People

There is no way to get around the reality that the Church has been an instrument of cursing the Jewish people. It has been an instrument of rejection and the Holocaust. The Church has been an instrument of replacement theology and supersessionism. Again, we must recognize that God promised Abraham, “I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse” (Genesis 12:3). The Church has a very long history of being on the wrong side of this promise. If anti-Semitism remains in our thinking, at some point it will bloom again into persecution of Judaism and the Jewish people. The result of that, as horrible as it is for the Jewish people, will be even worse for the Christian believer because God then becomes your enemy and He is obligated by His Word to curse you.

It is time for us to shake off this tactic of Balaam that satan uses to maneuver and manipulate us into a place where God is forced to judge us—just as He was forced to judge Israel in the time of their idolatry. God help us to learn from the scriptural examples and from history. We have all the answers right there. Read, for example, what Obadiah prophesied:

“Because of violence to your brother Jacob,
You will be covered with shame,
And you will be cut off forever.
On the day that you stood aloof,
On the day that strangers carried off his wealth,
And foreigners entered his gate
And cast lots for Jerusalem—
You too were as one of them.
Do not gloat over your brother’s day,
The day of his misfortune.

And do not rejoice over the sons of Judah
In the day of their destruction;
Yes, do not boast
In the day of their distress.
Do not enter the gate of My people
In the day of their disaster.
Yes, you, do not gloat over their calamity
In the day of their disaster.
And do not loot their wealth
In the day of their disaster.
Do not stand at the fork of the road
To cut down their fugitives;
And do not imprison their survivors
In the day of their distress.”

OBADIAH 1:10–14

How many times have the Jewish people down through history had their wealth looted by nations and peoples? The Church has played a part in that. We must face it and confess it. Through His covenants, God promised Abraham and the Jewish people that there would be a recompense to the nations for their treatment of the apple of His eye (Zechariah 2:8). God has used Israel as an example. He has put them through many things. He has punished them for their disobedience. That is true. But He has also watched how the nations have reacted and responded to their discipline. Have we followed the admonition of the Scriptures, “Comfort, O comfort My people” Israel (Isaiah 40:1)? Have we comforted them in the time of their testing, in the time of their discipline? Or have we taken what God meant as discipline and turned it into devastation? Have we turned it into death and destruction when God was only trying to correct His people?

It is time to recognize that this tactic of Balaam is being used against us. Can Satan defeat us? Absolutely not. Can he manipulate us to a place where God has to judge us? Yes, and I think we are already there. We must get rid of our passivity and indifference. We must get rid of the malice we have had against the Jewish people. It must be removed from our hearts and minds. It must be removed from our churches. I encourage all of us today to seek the Lord while He may be found. Call upon Him while He is near (Isaiah 55:6). We must see ourselves cleansed from anti-Semitism. We must find a way to turn and repent and become a blessing to Israel and the Jewish people. We must be a source of love and comfort to the apple of God’s eye. I know this is a hard message for many. It is probably contrary to much of the doctrine that many have learned from their youth. But let us find a way to be on God’s side of this issue.

All Scripture references are from the New American Standard Bible 1995 (NASB1995).

ABOUT GARY HARGRAVE



GARY HARGRAVE has a passion for leading people into spiritual maturity. Gary effectively ministers the life-changing truth of God's Word through Bible teaching and prophetic revelation that emphasizes the Lordship of Christ.

Gary embraces the teachings and insights of the Hebrew Scriptures as the essential foundation of God's Kingdom and the roots of Christian faith.

By cultivating spiritual maturity in Christians, Gary is deeply committed to teaching and inspiring unity in the Body of Christ and between Christians and the Jewish people.

Throughout decades of ministry, Gary has worked closely with leaders in the Jewish, Catholic and Protestant communities to build relationships based on commonality and understanding. He frequently leads study tours to Israel and the lands of the Bible.

Gary is the host of a weekly podcast entitled *Growing In God*, and is the founder of Shiloh University, an accredited online Bible college and seminary.

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For other insightful resources by Gary Hargrave, including podcasts, books, articles, videos, and other educational materials, please visit: www.HargraveMinistries.org.

ABOUT HARGRAVE MINISTRIES

The calling of the Lord upon this ministry is to lead people into spiritual maturity by revealing biblical truth. **Our passion is to see the Kingdom of God manifest on earth** as the Body of Christ grows in unity, power and love.

Everything we do flows from the revelation of the Jewish roots of our Christian faith. It is our desire and privilege to bless the land and people of Israel. Our Israel outreach includes our ability to:

- **Feed the poor and break the cycle of poverty in Israel**
- **Support the orphans and widows of fallen Israeli soldiers**
- Provide physical and emotional care to **child victims of terrorism**
- **Build bridges between Christians and Jews with biblical study and research**
- Support archaeology and preservation of the **biblical City of David**
- Provide 24/7 **care for Holocaust survivors**
- **Help persecuted Jews around the world return to Israel and start new lives**
- Plant trees to **reforest Israel** and help create **"The Gospel Trail"** between Nazareth and Capernaum

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