

THEME: Antisemitism

LOOKING BACK

- What was the most important thing you did or heard from the last session?

CONNECT

God's Chosen People

Resources

Bibles

Icebreaker Activity - Who Is Israel?

Aim: To consider how and why being anti-Israel is antisemitism.

Activity – Defining Israel:

Have children move to the area that best represents what they think is the meaning of the name “Israel.” The choices for the four corners and the center of the room are as follows:

1. A man
2. A family
3. A nation
4. A land
5. A modern nation-state

Israel is all five of these things:

- A man (Jacob)
- A family (Jacob's twelve sons & their families)
- A nation (formed by God through Moses and a covenant at Mount Sinai)
- A land (the land promised to Abraham's descendants through Isaac and Jacob)
- A modern nation-state firmly established in the ancient biblical homeland of the Jewish people, as the prophets said it would be.

Discuss - Anti-Zionism & Antisemitism

The Bible states that, in the last days, people will hate the Jews more and more. Sometimes, Jewish people are known as Semites, so this hatred of Jews is called antisemitism. There are more and more people in our generation hating Jews and also actively opposing the modern nation State of Israel (where a hill called Mount Zion is found near Jerusalem). This opposition is called anti-Zionism.

Anti-Zionism believes that Jewish people do not have a right to live in modern-day Israel and do not have a right to defend themselves there. Some of those who hate the nation of Israel will do whatever they can to destroy the nation and get rid of all the Jewish people living there.

As with antisemitism, there are a lot of lies told by people who oppose the Jewish people living in the nation of Israel. There are false claims of human rights abuses and false narratives about the land and its history. The media also portrays many false news reports about Jews in Israel. Satan would have us

participating in schemes such as BDS (boycott, divest, and sanction), causing people not to trust the Jewish people and wanting their destruction. We'll look at one example of this from the Bible.

As followers of Jesus in these last days, we must guard ourselves from deception and stand against the enemy's evil plans.

TRUTH TO KNOW

Faith Focus: God Loves the Jews!

Introduction

We want to help you know the Truth and will do our best to tell you what is true, but you don't just need to take our word. You need to read it in the Bible for yourself. So we will open the Bible and read the Truth each time we meet. This week's "Truth to Know" is found in the book of Esther.

Did you know the Bible has a book about an evil plan to destroy all the Jews?

Background to This Bible Passage

The Book of Esther tells the story of a time when the Jews were in exile from the land of Israel after the times of the Israeli kings. It is about an enemy of the Jewish people named Haman, who convinces the King of Persia to make an edict declaring that all Jews should be killed just because they are Jews. What the King doesn't realize is that his wife, Esther, is a Jew. She had hidden this identity from him. When Esther finds out about Haman's evil plot against her people, she fasts and prays for three days and bravely goes before the King to tell him what is happening. The King is enraged to find out that this people group, the Jews, is Queen Esther's family. He destroys Haman, the enemy of the Jews, and makes a new edict declaring that the Jews have a right to live and to protect and defend themselves against attacks.

The Unfolding Story - Your Interactive Teaching

Read **Esther 3:8-14; Esther 7:1-6; Esther 8:11-17.**

Esther 7:6 shows us the evil root of antisemitism. Haman is called an adversary and enemy of the Jewish people. In the Bible, Haman is a human representation of satan. We sometimes refer to such people as anti-Christ's because they are coming against God's plan to bring salvation through Jesus, who was born as a Jew and died as King of the Jews. So, a common aspect of being anti-Christ is to be anti-Jewish.

- What do you notice about Haman's plans for the Jews in **Esther 3:13**? Haman wanted to destroy, kill, and get rid of ALL the Jews, every single one of them. We saw this in the Holocaust when Hitler, a type of anti-Christ, tried to kill every Jewish person.
- Antisemitism is evil. The story of Esther gives us a picture of what satan would like to do to the Jewish people. Satan hates the Jews. Do you know why? The Savior of the world (Jesus) comes through the Jews. The Jews are God's chosen people. God will also use the Jews to show how He keeps His promises at the end of time.

Esther 8:11-17 shows how the story of Esther ends with a triumphant victory for the Jews. God's faithfulness to His promises to the Jewish people throughout history will show that God has good plans for His chosen people. God loves the Jews and wants us to love and care for them.

The book of Esther ends in chapter 9 with the establishment of the feast of Purim, to be celebrated and remembered for two days every year by every Jewish family in every city. Purim is still celebrated by Jewish people today in our time. God wants His people always to remember how He saved them from being eliminated and to know that He will continue to preserve them as His chosen people.

Activity Suggestion - Understanding Antisemitism

Things to Prepare: Pencils/pens, notecards, whiteboard or a large sheet of paper, marker

Activity – The Brainstorm:

1. People will partner with someone else in the room and discuss their thoughts about this question: What is antisemitism?
2. Write down their ideas, key words, and examples on a notecard.
3. One person will conduct a whole group brainstorming by writing everyone's ideas on a whiteboard or a large piece of paper.
4. Look for gaps in understanding and bring correction.

Discuss

- What is antisemitism? This is hatred for Jewish people that involves taking harmful action against them just because they are Jewish.
- What are some examples of antisemitism through the years? The Holocaust during World War II is the most significant and worst act of antisemitism in our recent history. Six million people were systematically murdered because they were Jews. Pharaoh in Egypt in the time of Moses. Esther. Synagogues being burnt to the ground, and Jewish people attacked in the streets in different parts of the world.
- How do you think God feels about antisemitism, and why? The Jewish people are God's chosen people. He must feel very sad about this. He chose this people group to birth the Messiah, Jesus. In fact, Jesus is Jewish. The Bible says that the Jewish people are the "apple of His eye" and that when we hurt them, it is like poking God in the eye!
- Does antisemitism exist today? Yes. There is a rising trend of people hating Jews. This is seen as the mistreatment of Jewish people and is also observed as a coming against the nation of Israel, the only Jewish State on the planet. Antisemitic people do not want Jewish people to exist, so they oppose the Jewish State of Israel. This is called anti-Zionism.
- What is the cause of antisemitism? Satan has always hated the Jewish people because they are God's chosen people. Satan wants to eliminate Jews so God's promises cannot come true. As Christians, we know that God always keeps His promises. He has wonderful plans for His chosen people, the Jews, and the Jewish nation of Israel.
- Who is our battle against? Our battle is not against people but against the demonic forces (**Ephesians 6:12**). So, we are not against Israel's earthly enemies (God loves them enough to die for them, too); we are against the demonic powers that stir people against Israel and God's plans for the Jews. We do not want to find ourselves agreeing with these demonic powers!

READY TO GO

Thinking about how this affects our lives and our response to the signs we see.

Think about what you will do to guard against deception and take a stand against antisemitism.

TIME FOR ACTION



1. **“STOP & THINK” Action Point**

Take two minutes to think about your life. Do you feel ready to stand with God’s plans and heart for Israel and stand up for the Jewish people? What difficulties might you face?



2. **“PAUSE TO PRAY” Action Point**

Have a conversation with God about today’s lesson. Ask Him to help guard your heart and mind against deception regarding Israel and the Jewish people. Ask Him for boldness to stand, even when others may not stand with you.



3. **“GO & DO” Action Point**

Purim, the celebration of God’s preservation of the Jewish people, is a time of joy. Gather some others and sing a joyful worship song to thank God for His faithfulness towards the Jewish people. [Here](https://youtu.be/4kxWoKLvSy4) is a very joyful song you can listen to about Jesus, the King! (<https://youtu.be/4kxWoKLvSy4>)

SPRINGBOARD

Discuss what topic you would like to do together next time. After this session, you may wish to follow up next time with one of the following sessions:

- Guard Against Deception
- How to Listen to the News
- How to Be in the World and Not of It

DEEPER STUDY

For those who would like to study further the themes raised in this session.

For Study

1. Read **Esther 9:19-32**. These verses describe the establishment of the celebration of Purim. What details do you notice about this festival? How do you think Jewish people celebrate Purim these days? Why is it important that Jews take part in Purim?
2. Read **Ephesians 2:11-22**. Through Jesus, who is Jewish, Gentiles (non-Jews) are offered salvation and brought into the commonwealth of Israel. Now, the many blessings that God's Chosen people received (these include the scriptures, the prophecies, the patriarchs, covenants, and promises) are available to Gentiles. How can Gentiles show their gratitude to the Jewish people for all they have done to preserve the scriptures over many generations?

For Memorizing

1. **Isaiah 51:11** (NIV). "Those the LORD has rescued will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away."
2. **Amos 9:14-15** (ESV). "'I will restore the fortunes of my people Israel, and they shall rebuild the ruined cities and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and drink their wine, and they shall make gardens and eat their fruit. I will plant them on their land, and they shall never again be uprooted out of the land that I have given them,' says the Lord your God."

For Observation

Read this poem written during the Holocaust by Martin Niemöller.

(<https://www.hmd.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/First-They-Came-with-new-branding.pdf>)

How does this make you feel? What do you think you will do if there is another holocaust?

For Action

Share what you have learned in this lesson about antisemitism and anti-Zionism with someone not in IN:Tribe. Be sure to share how God's heart and plans for the Jewish people are to bless them. He will preserve them as a people group from all enemy attacks, and He wants us to bless them, too.

Before the Next IN:Tribe

Read this booklet.

(https://www.standwithus.com/files/ugd/ebf7ac_0f7e4c8772f741d2bdb37971d2bad14e.pdf)

It is from StandWithUs, a non-religious organization that believes Jewish people have a legitimate right to live in their ancestral homeland of Israel. Of course, as Christians, we also see evidence of this from God's promises in the Bible.

What are three interesting facts you learned about the Jewish connection to Israel as you read the booklet? Come ready to share your three facts with others at our next IN:Tribe meeting.