***The Attacks upon the Jews

RV152-02***

The nation of Israel is seen in a state of suffering as if she were a woman in labor pains. The Jewish people have indeed been under satanic attack from the time of Abraham, when he was identified to be the channel of the Messiah Savior, which would cause the final nail to be put into the coffin of Satan, and his final doom in the lake of fire. Therefore, antisemitism has been inspired from the very first by Satan. Over the centuries, he has made various attempts to frustrate God's plan to eventually cast Satan into the lake of fire. The Lord Jesus Christ is going to replace Satan as the ruler of this world. He will rule the world with the Jewish people as the leading nation of the world. The people of Israel will be the source of great spiritual enlightenment during the Millennial Kingdom.

Nations which have been guilty of antisemitism as national policy, historically have come under divine judgment and destruction. A prime example of that is Germany. Nations which have treated the Jews with justice and kindness have been prospered by God. An example of that is the United States.

**England**

One of the great examples of God's dealing with a nation for good and for evil, relative to its dealing with the Jewish people, is England. Following the corrupt reign of Charles I, immorality was rampant; the Word of God was flaunted; spiritual principles were ridiculed; and, biblical morality was practically unknown.

**Oliver Cromwell**

Then God brought on the scene a man named Oliver Cromwell. Oliver Cromwell was a great biblical Christian. Furthermore, he was a great military leader. He conquered Charles I with his army. The result was that Charles first was beheaded.

Oliver Cromwell was then established as the protector of England. As a godly leader, one of the things that he understood from Scripture was that a nation that wants to become great treats the Jew in the proper way. A nation which abuses the Jews is asking for trouble. Therefore, Oliver Cromwell, because he was a man of the Word, understood that the Jew was part of making England great. The result was that in 1655, he did the unthinkable. He did the unheard of thing of declaring to all the world that England henceforth was a haven for the Jewish people. The Jewish people flocked, with all their abilities and all their capacities, to England.

**The British Empire**

As a result of that, England rose to a pinnacle of great power. She became a world empire upon which the sun never set. Wherever the sun was, it was shining upon some part of the British Empire around the globe.

**Disraeli**

This came to a climax under the long reign of Queen Victoria, during which there was the brilliant leadership of Disraeli, a Christian Jew, who led the nation to its finest hour of greatness.

The Arab-Israeli conflict over Palestine brought England into a confrontation in which he had to make some serious decisions relative to her attitude now toward the Jewish people. Just before World War I, Britain, because of assistance from Jewish leaders in the fighting of that war, and in the devising of a substitute for a key element in munitions (in the appropriation of explosives), the Jewish leader Chiam Weissman came up with the solution. The British people expressed their appreciation and declared in a declaration known as the Balfour Declaration that the British government was in favor of establishing a homeland for the Jewish people in Palestine, and that they would pursue that. They sought to do this by partitioning Palestine between Arabs and Jews.

When the Arabs of Palestine, the descendants of Ishmael heard this, they were enraged, and they put enormous pressure upon the British government. Unfortunately, the British government, which had a responsibility (a League of Nations mandate) to supervise Palestine, knuckled under to the Arabs, and decided to make the Jews a minority of the population. They would permit them to come into the country at the rate of about 1,500 a year for several years, and cut them off at a population of 500,000, so that they were enormously outnumbered.

This rejection of Jewish interests, in fact, began the decline of the British Empire. Finally, Britain lost all control, and in 1948, she just declared she was out. When she left, with the British gone, the Jews knew that this was the time to strike, which indeed they did, and they resorted to armed force. The result was unbelievable, but unbelievable – that (no doubt, under the hand of God), they (the minority) won out over the Arab majority, and they did establish the Jewish state.

England, from the time it failed to keep its promise to the Jewish people to establish that homeland, was on a downward trail. When they broke that promise, England rapidly began to be eclipsed. Following World War II, England became what it is today, a third-rate power. This, which once was blessed by God for its kindness to the Jews, as the greatest world empire, perhaps, that had ever existed.

**Germany**

Another example of modern nations and their relationships to the Jews, of course, is Germany. You all know about the example of Nazi Germany and its systematic decision to destroy the Jewish people. It is the most recent example of enormous Jewish suffering. Adolf Hitler himself was a demon-possessed man. He was driven by Satan, therefore, to fulfill Satan's ambition to exterminate the Jews. This is the suffering that John sees in this woman in his vision. Once Hitler was in power, before he was through, 6 million Jews were murdered in concentration camps. Another eight million Christians and other people were murdered as well. Satan tried again through Hitler to destroy the Jewish people, and to frustrate God's millennial plan. All Hitler did was raised an enormous hatred for the German people, and an enormous hatred for himself. In time, on April 30th, 1945, he put a cyanide capsule in his mouth; a Luger to his head; bit on the capsule, just to be sure that nothing malfunctioned; just to be sure, shot himself through the head; and, there he died like a rat in a hole in a bunker under the streets of Berlin.

If you were to go to one of the famous wax museums, Madame Tussaud's, in London, it is filled with famous historical characters. There, of course, you will see Adolf Hitler. All the other historical characters are sitting out in the open. You can walk right up to King George V, and you can look him eyeball-to-eyeball. You can speak to him if you wish. You're not supposed to touch him, but you could walk around and see all these people. Mrs. Danish got tired as we toured the museum, so she sat down in a little kind of a low place and folded her arms, and there were statues all behind her. And people started coming up, and they were looking at her. And one lady was wondering who this gal was. They were discussing this matter until Mrs. Danish just couldn't stand it any longer to keep from laughing, and she moved, and startled them all. This place was alive.

But when you come to Hitler's figure, it is encased in glass. You cannot touch it. You cannot get up close to it. It used to stand free. The English people remember the horror that this man brought in the result of his ultimate goal. It was his prime goal to destroy the Jewish people. He brought death to 25 million people in Europe. His statue was torn to shreds every time they let him just stand there in the open. So, for people to get a look at him in that museum, they had to encase in this glass case.

**The United States**

The United States, of course, is another example of great influence relative to the Jewish people. America has historically been a haven for the Jews, and consequently, has enjoyed great divine blessing. The Jews have come to America, and are under our constitutional protection like anyone else. They have been part of American history since colonial times, and have fought in all of our wars with great valor. The Jews have contributed enormously to American arts and to American science. But antisemitism began developing in the United States just before World War I. People begin to have a hatred for the Jews, and this increased right up to the start of World War II.

Part of this was the old stupidity to blame the Jews for the world's problems. Very quickly, when the Great Depression came along in the thirties, who was to be blame for it but the great Jewish bankers and international personalities that had control of people's lives and could cause this suffering. In the United States this very day, the attitude is developing that we can get along without the Jews, but we cannot get along without oil. So, now we see an American government, which has always been the friend of the Jews; which is beginning to compromise; which is beginning to waffle on the deal; and, which is beginning to think that we can get along without the Jews, but we need the Arabs' oil. So, we are beginning to buddy up to the Arabs. We have seen the sad spectacle of the United States voting condemnation in the United Nations against the Jewish people for taking care of one of its severe internal problems with the Arabs – something we have never done before.

Something has to happen to the United States, because it is to be found nowhere in the prophetic Scriptures: not an inkling; not a whisper; not a suggestion. If there's one way to start having something happen to the United States, then antisemitism and antagonism toward the Jewish people is a good way to start on that downward road.

Biblical Christians recognize that there are good Jews and that there are bad Jews, but they do not have an antagonism and a hatred toward the Jewish people. While we are very clear here at Berean Church that the Jewish people have made an enormous mistake in rejecting their messiah, Jesus Christ, and that without Him, they are never going to see the shores of heaven. Jesus made it very clear that He is the only way – the only access to God the Father. Therefore, every Jew who dies without Christ as his Savior today, be he good or bad, heads for the lake of fire eventually.

However, having said that, we are not anti-Semitic. We are simply observing and reporting what the Bible has to say, and what God's plan is. We understand their spiritual problem with Christ. We understand the national doom that is before them. However, we also understand that God is yet going to turn them toward their Messiah, and He is not yet going to raise them up. He does have a future for them.

**Antisemitism**

Biblical Christianity never produces antisemitism. Only a perversion of Christianity in the form of religion produces antisemitism. God has always protected the Jewish people, and He always will. Satan is behind all the anti-Semitism, and he will be to the end of the tribulation. Antisemitism is continuing to cause great physical, emotional, and spiritual suffering for the Jewish people to this day. The Arabs are the source of constant agitation against the Jews in order to create incidents. The Arabs (make no doubt about it) are acting as Satan's tools. The sad thing is to see the United States backing them in that action.

We see Hitler's argument being revived – that the elimination of the Jew from the world scene would bring peace and prosperity to everyone. Throughout the centuries, therefore, Satan has made systematic attacks to destroy the Jews. I'd like to lead you through some of those now, as we step through the Scriptures, and identify some of these specific areas. There have been moments in history when Satan thought he was he was on the verge of being able to destroy the Jewish people, and thus to frustrate God's plan of having a line through which the Savior could come; or, the Savior having come, to destroy the Jewish people so that there are no living Jews to go into the millennium. You have to have living Jews in natural bodies to go into the millennium, just as you have to have gentiles in living natural bodies to go into the millennium, or else God has been outwitted. This is what Satan is doing today.

**Cain and Abel**

The very first attempt was at the beginning of human history. You'll find that in Genesis 4:8. Adam and Eve had two sons. Cain, the oldest, was a dog. Abel, the second, was a princely young man. He was a godly man. Abel, was in the godly line through which, eventually, the Christ Messiah Savior was to be born. In Genesis 4:8, we read, "And Cain told Abel, his brother, and it came about, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel, his brother, and he killed him."

In 1 John 3:12, this is referred to again: "Not as Cain, who is of the evil one, and slew his brother. And for what reason did he slay him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brothers were righteous." The word which is used here concerning the slaying of his brother is a word which is used in the killing of sheep – by pulling the sheep's head back; running a knife across its throat; hitting the jugular vein; and, making him bleed to death. This suggests to us how Cain killed his brother in his moment of rage and meanness. He came up behind godly Abel; he grabbed him by the hair; he jerked his head back; he probably picked up the very sacrificial knife that Abel had used in sacrificing his lamb properly to the Lord; he cut across the throat of his brother; and, he killed him. This was not just somebody getting mad and having a family squabble. This was Satan on his campaign of antisemitism.

**Seth**

God responded by replacing the godly line with a third son whom Adam and Eve named Seth. Genesis 4:25: "And Adam had relations with his wife again. And she gave birth to a son and named him Seth, for she said, "God has appointed me another offspring in place of Abel, for Cain killed him."

In Luke 3:23, you have a little more amplification: "And when He began His ministry, Jesus Himself was about 30 years of age, being supposedly the son of Joseph, the son of Eli." Go down to verse 38. In between these verses is the genealogical table of the descent of Jesus. Here you have the genealogy through his mother Mary. Verse 38 says, "The son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God." So, Seth is very clearly in the line of the Messiah. That's why Satan decided to kill the splendid young man, the brother Abel.

**The Nephilim**

Another attempt on part of Satan to frustrate the plan of God to keep himself from being placed into the lake of fire is found in Genesis 6:1-4. At this point in human history, very early on, the human race became extremely corrupt. We have Satan's next plan laid out before us. Satan always works with the attractiveness of sex. What he did was bring his demon angels into a condition of relationship with women (unbelievers) in a marital context so that they reproduce half-breeds: half-human; and half-demons: "It came about when men began to multiply on the face of the land, and daughters were born to them, that the sons of God (This is a technical term for angelic beings.) saw that the daughters of men were beautiful, and they took wise for themselves whomsoever they chose. Then the Lord said, 'My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh. Nevertheless, his days shall be 120 years.' And Nephilim were on the earth in those days (that is, giant-sized people). And also afterward, when the sons of God came into the daughters of women, and they bore children to them, those were the mighty men who were of old – men of renown."

This incident has been preserved in Greek and Roman mythology, where gods come down and have sexual relations with women, and produce mighty offspring. The mythology stories came directly out of this background in Scripture. This was a very wicked thing to do.

This is further amplified in the book of Jude and in the book of 1 Peter. We won't have time to go into these passages here, but it makes it even clear what specifically happened – that these were demon beings that were involved in this relationship.

Well, God responded, and you see what the plan was. The plan was to keep multiplying this kind of a relationship so that eventually there was no pure-blooded human being on the face of the earth. If you did not have a 100% pure human being, only a half-breed, then Jesus Christ, the Messiah, could not be born into the human race. That would have frustrated the plan of God. That was the idea behind this. For all we know, Satan came within eight people of his goal. For all we know, a week before the flood began, there were probably only 9 people on the face of the earth who were not half-breeds. One of them was Methuselah, the oldest man that ever lived. He died the week before the flood began. The rest were the family of Noah – the eight people that were in that family that God preserved. All the rest of this half-breed combination were wiped out and destroyed in the flood. Genesis 6:5-13 describe that for you in detail.

**Abram**

Another attempt that we have recorded in Scripture of Satan's plan to prevent God from carrying through on His decree, relative to Satan and to the coming Savior is recorded for us in Genesis 12. Abram has obeyed God, and he is now in the territory of the Promised Land. But a terrible thing has happened. A great famine has arisen. So, Abram makes one of the mistakes that, periodically, the Jews were inclined to make. He thought that he had to take some action, on his own, apart from God. God had made very clear that the place of blessing of the Jew was in the land. The Jew has never been spiritually blessed and honored by God outside the land. So, all Abram had to do was stay in the land, but he decided to take off on his own. This was, again, one of those moments of carnality where Satan was leading Abram in order to frustrate the plan of God.

Here was the plan in Genesis 12:10: "Now there was a famine in the land, so, Abram (his name had not been changed yet at this point) went down to Egypt to sojourn there, for the famine was severe in the land. And it came about, when he came here to Egypt, that he said to Sarai, his wife, "See now, I know that you are a beautiful woman." Sarai, whose name had not yet been changed to Sarah, was a very handsome lady. And Abram was starting to think to himself that, when he gets down there, he's going to be just a little nobody stranger (an outsider), and he knows how things work in Egypt. The king has only to beckon his finger toward a woman, and she is his. It doesn't matter whether she's married or unmarried. If she's married, the beckoning of the finger, to bring her into his harem, also means that it's a signal to his associates to execute the husband.

Verse 12: "And it will come about, when the Egyptians see you, that they will say, 'This is his wife,' and they will kill me, but they will let you live. Please say that you are my sister so that it may go well with me because of you, and that I may live on account of you." Well, this was a half-truth. Sarai was the half-sister of Abram. He said, "When we get there, don't let them know that we're married. Just say you're my sister." Well, that opened the can of worms, which now develop here.

"And it came about, when Abram came into Egypt, the Egyptians saw that the woman was very beautiful. And Pharaoh's officials saw her, and praised her to Pharaoh. And the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house." Abram's worst fears were realized: "Therefore, he treated Abram well for her sake. (I'm going to take your sister into my harem. You're her brother, and I'm going to treat you kindly.) And he gave him sheep, and oxen, and donkeys, and male and female servants, and female donkeys and camel. But the Lord struck Pharaoh in his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram's wife.

"Then Pharaoh called Abram and said, 'What is this that you've done to me? Why did you not tell me that she was your wife?" The result of all this was that God, through plagues, and in one way or another, makes it clear to Pharaoh that he has taken into his harem a woman who was already married, and more than that, who was destined to be in the line to bear the Messiah. God has already said, "The next person in the line has to come from you and Sarai." For Sarai to be removed from Abram, and for Abram perhaps to be killed, would have been Satan's most magnificent victory.

"Why did you say, 'She is my sister, so that I took her for my wife? Now then, here is your wife. Take her and go.'" Boy, was he glad to get rid of her – beauty or no beauty: "And Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him – that they escort him away with his wife, and all that belonged to him." He said, "Just get rid of him. I want them out of our territory."

So, God had responded by protecting what Pharaoh was about to do by protecting Sarai from Pharaoh's plans, and pulling her back out of that harem. Had God not done this, Satan would have won, and frustrated forever the plan of God.

**Moses and the Exodus**

In Exodus 1:15-16, you have another example of Satan's attempt to destroy the Jewish people. Here he leads the Pharaoh, who did not know Joseph and what Joseph had done. He had a faint memory of that. He saw how many Hebrew slaves had been produced. So, he ordered that all male boys should be killed at birth: "Then the king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah, and the other was named Puah. And he said, 'When you are helping the Hebrew women to give birth, and see them upon the birth still of a son, then you shall put him to death; but if she is a daughter, then she shall live."

The plan that Pharaoh had was to decimate the Hebrew population by reducing the males in it, so that in time they would be weeded down to a point where they would be non-existent, and certainly no threat to him. God's response to all this was to preserve Moses, at his birth, by having him discovered, of all things, by Pharaoh's own daughter. Exodus 2:1-10 describe this – that the mother put little Moses afloat in a waterproof basket. And when Pharaoh's daughter found him, she decided to take him into the palace, and to rear him as one of the royal family.

So, now, Moses, who was going to be the very man who was going to preserve God's people and lead them out of slavery, was reared under the most extensive educational system; under the most powerful empire of the day; and, under the great wisdom and knowledge that the Egyptians possessed. When the time came, indeed, that Moses was grown, and the Exodus was put in motion, Satan decided once more to make an attempt to kill the people of God. Finally, Pharaoh, after ten plagues, and the killing of their firstborn, permitted the people to go, In Exodus 14:5-14, you have this described in detail.

However, the death of the first born in Egypt caused Pharaoh to want vengeance upon the escaping Jewish slaves. So, he decided to follow them with his army. He knew where they were going. They had entered a restricted area where there were mountains on the right; mountains on the left; and, before them was the Red Sea. And Pharaoh gave the order: follow them; push them into the sea; kill every one of them on the spot; and, don't let any of them escape. This was a splendid opportunity for Satan again to frustrate the plan of God, and to bring this suffering upon the people.

Well, God responded once more by opening the waters of the Red Sea, and bringing the people over safely. Then in Exodus 14:26-30, the king, who was going to kill the people of God, found his own army destroyed: "The Lord said to Moses, 'Stretch out your hand over the sea so that the waters may come back over the Egyptians; over their chariots; and, over their horsemen.' So, Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its normal state at daybreak." While the Egyptians were fleeing right into it, then the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea: And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, even Pharaoh's entire army that had gone into the sea after them. Not even one of them remained." And the people of God stood there rejoicing to see the salvation and preservation of God as the bodies of the dead Egyptians were washed up on the shore.

**Joash**

As time went by, and the centuries went by, we come to 2 Chronicles 22, and Satan comes within a hair's breadth of carrying out his antisemitic plan of destroying the Jewish people. One of the daughters of Jezebel and Ahab was name Athaliah. She was the Queen Mother, and in 2 Chronicles 22:10, we read about the capture of her wicked son, who was the king, and of his destruction: "Now when Athaliah, the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she rose up and destroyed all the royal offspring of the house of Judah." She was so enraged at God, and she was so enraged by the fact that her wicked son had been brought down, obviously, by God. What she was out to do was that she said, "I'll fix you God." She knew that there had to be somebody left alive in the line of David through the tribe of Judah for Jesus Christ to be born. So, what she did was gathered up all the males of the royal family, and ordered every one of them killed.

What a plan! There's no turning back from this. With every male killed in the Davidic line, there can be no fulfillment of God's promise of bringing a Savior through the line that began with Sarai and Abram.

However, God responded with a plan of his own, for He laid it into the heart of one of the nurses to secretly pick up a little boy named Joash, and to hide him, so that all the males of the line were killed but this one little boy. By the thread of this one little boy, Satan almost had what he was after.

2 Chronicles 22:11-12: "But Jehoshabeath, the King's daughter, took Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him from among the king's sons who were being put to death, and placed him and his nurse in the bedroom. So, Jehoshabeath, the daughter of King Jehoram, the wife of Jehoiada the priest (for she was the sister of Ahaziah), hid him from Athaliah so that she would not put him to death. And he was hidden with them in the house of God for six years while Athaliah reigned in the land." She took over as the ruling queen. At an appropriate time, in 2 Chronicles 23, the priests decide to bring out little Joash. Six years have passed. Athaliah thinks that she has put God in His place. There is nobody in the line of David left.

2 Chronicles 23:9: "Then Jehoiada the priest gave to the captains of hundreds the spears and the large and small shields which had been King David's, which were in the House of God. He stationed all the people, each man with his weapon in his hand, from the right side of the house to the left side of the house; by the altar and by the house around the king. Then they brought out the king's son, put the crown on him, gave him the testimony, and made him king. And Jehoiada and his sons anointed him saying, 'Long live the King.' When Athaliah heard the noise of the people running and praising the kin, she came into the house of the Lord to the people. And she looked and, behold, the king was standing by his pillar at the entrance. And the captains and the trumpeters were beside the king, and all the people of the land rejoiced and blew trumpets, the singers with their musical instruments leading the praise. Then Athaliah tore her clothes and said, 'Treason. Treason.'"

Now, the people themselves rejoiced. They hadn't realized that the plan had not been frustrated. They had not realized that there was one male left through which the line of David and the Messiah could come. They rejoiced when they discovered this. Athaliah pronounces this to be treason.

"And Jehoiada the priest brought out the captains of hundreds who were appointed over the army, and said to them, 'Bring her out between the ranks, and whoever follows her, put to death with the sword.' For the priest said, 'Let her not be put to death in the house of the Lord (get her out of the temple).' So, they seized her when she arrived at the entrance of the horse gate of the King's house, and they put her to death there."

Satan once more was frustrated. The line of the Messiah was preserved, and his agents were killed.

**Haman**

The Feast of Purim is one of the great festivals that the Jewish people observe. In the book of Esther, this feast is described. It was the result of the attempt on the part of Haman in the Persian Empire to destroy the Jewish people. Haman had been elevated by the Persian king, and he had a very big head. He wanted enjoyed riding through the streets, and seeing people bow down before him.

In Esther 3:6 we read, "But he disdained to lay hands on Mordecai alone, for they had told him who the people of Mordecai were. Therefore, Haman sought to destroy all the Jews, the people of Mordecai, who were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus." When Haman came through, he always noticed this miserable creature named Mordecai, who would not bow down to him – who would not do obeisance to him. So, Haman said, "I want to kill him." But he found out that he was a part of a particular group of people, the Jews. So, Haman, inspired by Satan, said, "I don't want to just kill him, but I want to kill all the Jews in this kingdom."

Consequently, he got an order from the king that on a certain day, everybody in the kingdom could kill all of the racial associates of Mordecai, and Mordecai himself would be hanged on the scaffold that Haman was preparing. On the day of the execution, all Jews could be killed, and you could take their property. Boy, what a way, for instant wealth. That's the best sweepstakes in the world: Kill a Jew, and get rich.

So, everybody was getting ready to become wealthy. But God responded by bringing to the attention of the king a service that Mordecai had done that preserve the king's life. He want to know what had been done for him, and nothing had been done. Well, by a series of events, eventually, Esther brought this problem to the king's attention, and she asked the king to give another order.

They had a dumb arrangement in the kingdom of the Medes and the Persians. Once the king passed a law, you couldn't change it. We have that in Congress today too. No matter how dumb it is, once it is passed, you can't change it. You got to just keep funding it further and further. So, the only way that Ahasuerus could change this was by putting out another decree. That decree was very simple. At Esther's request, the king sent out a decree that on the very day when he had decreed that any Jew could be killed, and his property confiscated, he put out a second degree that said any Jew who was attacked could kill his attackers and take their property. Now, that's a good ballgame. That's better than the Dallas Cowboys.

Esther 8:10: "He wrote in the name of King Ahasuerus, and sealed it with the king’s signet ring, and sent letters by couriers on horses riding on steed sired by the royal stud. Then the king granted the Jews who were in each and every city the right to assemble and to defend their lives, to destroy, to kill, and to annihilate the entire army of any people or province which might attack them, including children and women, and to plunder their spoil."

So, the scene was set as it ended up. Haman was discovered for the conniving con man that he was, and the king ordered that he should be hanged on the very scaffold that he had prepared for Mordecai: "So, they hanged Haman on the gallows which he had prepared for Mordecai, and the King's anger subsided." Satan was going to exterminate all the Jews in this part of the world. Instead, his agents themselves were destroyed.

**Jesus**

Of course, there is obviously the attack by Herod, when Jesus was born, on all the two-year-old males in Matthew 2:7-8. This was not just the enragement of a king who has gone berserk. This was a man under great control who was being directed by Satan and Satan's antisemitic plan: "Herod secretly called the Magi, and ascertained from then the time the star appeared, and he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, 'Go and make careful search for the child. And when you have found Him, report to me, that I, too, may come and worship Him." Herod secretly planned, in fact, to kill Jesus, because he had been told that He is the king of the Jews. So, in order to preserve his own status, he decided what he would do was kill this baby.

But God responded by warning the Magi not to report back to Herod. Verse 12: "Having been warned by God in the dream not to return to Herod, they departed for their own country by another way. When Herod discovered this, he was enraged, and proceeded to take a very horrible plan to still try to get Jesus. Satan knew that, at this point, this was his best opportunity to kill this little child. If He could kill the infant Messiah Savior, he was home free. So, he was directing all of his forces against the little child Jesus.

At this point, God comes to His foster father, Joseph, and tells him to immediately take the mother Mary and the child Jesus to Egypt for safety, and to stay there while Herod is alive. Matthew 2:13-15: "Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, 'Arise and take the child and his mother. Flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you. For Herod is going to search for the child to destroy Him.' And he rose; took the child and his mother by night; departed for Egypt; and, was there until the death of Herod. And what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, 'Out of Egypt I did call My Son.'"

Well, Herod reacted with rage, and in Matthew 2:16-18, we have described how he had figured out that it must be about two years since Jesus was born, by the time the Magi from the East had arrived in Bethlehem. He ordered that every male child in the vicinity, two years old and younger, should be killed. It is hard to imagine that a political leader could do such a thing. This man was a beast.

Upon the death of Herod, which is described in Matthew 2:19-23, Joseph was directed now to return to Egypt. He took the child Jesus and his mother, and went north to Galilee to a safe place, and they settled in the city of Nazareth. That's where Jesus was reared, and spent his boyhood and his early manhood. The Jews' Messiah, Jesus, was thus preserved while the anti-Semite Herod was dead.

**The Wilderness Temptations**

There was, of course, the attempt to neutralize Jesus that we have in Matthew 4:1-11, when he was tempted in the wilderness. Satan offered Jesus the crown of the kingdoms of the world. Satan said, "I'll give you the millennium now. Why go through the agony of the cross? All you have to do is recognize me as the Supreme Being. That's all I want. Bow down and worship me, and I'll give you the kingdoms that I now control." And you know how all that came out. Jesus rejected Satan's offers on all three occasions, and then Satan departed from Him. What Satan was doing was trying to again frustrate the plan of God by getting the humanity of Christ to sin.

**Other Attempts on Jesus' Life**

There were attempts to kill Jesus before he ever got to the cross. Sometimes people ask a foolish question: "What if Jesus had died before He got to the cross? Would His death still have covered our sins?" No, it would not have. It was very important that He not die until that particular point in time under the sacrificial bleeding on the cross. John 8:59 is an example of the pre-attempt to kill him. Therefore, they picked up stones to throw at him. Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple.

In John 10:31, the same thing is referred to: "And the Jews took up stones again to stone Him." When Jesus told them the truth about the Word of God, there was the old attempt to silence the preacher by killing him.

In Matthew 27:40-44, you have a very painful moment for the Lord. He was on the cross. He was in agony. He was in the process of paying for the sins of the world, and He is being taunted by the people who are below Him, and who say to Him, "We will believe your claim. All you have to do is really prove that you are who you say by coming down off that cross." Now, if Jesus, in His humanity, had not been guided by doctrine and the Holy Spirit, that would seem like a reasonable offer. That was very tempting.

Matthew 27:40: "And saying, 'You who are going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself. If you are the son of God, come down from the cross.' In the same way, the chief priest also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking Him and saying, 'He saved others. He cannot save Himself. He is the King of Israel. Let Him now come down from the cross, and we shall believe in Him. He trusted God. Let Him deliver Him now if He takes pleasure in Him. For he said, 'I am the son of God.'' And the robbers also, who had been crucified with Him, were casting the same insults at Him."

That was pretty hard to take. The religious leaders are standing there. They are throwing up the words of Jesus into His face: his loyalty to God; His being the Son of God; and, all of the claims that He had made and confirmed. When they said, "He saved other people," they meant, "He had raised them from the dead. He gave them physical help. He met their needs. Now He can't help Himself. What kind of a Savior is that?" It would have been very tempting, but the humanity of Christ did not crack. He stayed with the Word of God, and He knew what His job was; He bore His cross; and, He fulfilled His mission.

The result was that Satan's plan was frustrated. The Father sustained the Son Jesus. He carried Him through the sacrificial mission, and then He raised Him from the dead.

Remember that what was going on, on the cross, was the final battle with Satan. If Satan didn't make it now, he was doomed, and Jesus won the battle. So, the sins of the world were completely paid for.

**Anti-Semitism in the Tribulation**

There is one other final attack which is going to be placed against the Jewish people, and it will come during the tribulation era. It will be the worst persecution that the Jews have ever experienced. That is very hard to imagine in view of what Nazi Germany did to the Jewish people. But the Bible says that that was not the worst time. The worst time for them is yet ahead, because Satan is going to make one more great enraged effort to wipe out every Jewish person to stop the plan of God.

So, Daniel 12:1-2 say, "Now, at that time (in the tribulation period), Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people (Michael is the guardian angel of the Jewish nation), will arise, and there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time. And at that time, your people, everyone who was found written in the book, will be rescued (the Jewish people who are born-again). And many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake (Jews who believed in Jesus Christ, the Messiah, who are dead) and they will be raised: these to everlasting life; but, others to disgrace and everlasting contempt." So, out of the ground will come many Jews who have trusted in Christ, and they will go into the Millennial Kingdom in great joy. But there will be many Jews who have rejected Christ, who will be raised to go into the lake of fire.

It is so ironic that the very people that Hitler put through such agony and such suffering will now share the same eternal agony with Hitler – the both of them together, because both of them rejected the Savior Jesus Christ.

So, once more, this issue of antisemitism is a horrible thing. When John sees this woman in a stage of suffering, he is talking about what these people have suffered as a nation. And before our very eyes today, the scene is again being set for the greatest suffering that the Jewish people have ever faced. May God's grace continue to be extended to them. And may we continue to pray that the double scales which are upon their eyes would be removed. They have the natural scale of their sin nature, and the secondary scale which was imposed upon them as a result of calling down the blood of Christ upon them and their children. May God the Holy Spirit, in His grace, be pleased to remove that for many of them, and enable them to see that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes unto the Father, but by Him.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1990

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