

# STANDING AGAINST

## THE SPIRIT OF HAMAN



**I CANNOT REMEMBER A TIME** in my life when I did not stand with Israel and the Jewish people. My connection and involvement with Bridges for Peace now span two decades, and may God grant me many more years of pioneering and sowing into this holy calling. Yet, when I survey the Jewish community in the Diaspora (outside Israel) and the State of Israel in world affairs, I have one area of grave concern—but I also have unshakable hope.



## Unbridled Anti-Semitism

Let us begin with my grave concern. I speak of unbridled anti-Semitism. Never in my life have I seen a time of such brazen, public, often accepted and casually justified hostility against the Jewish people and the State of Israel. Jewish leaders are nervous about their community's survival and safety. I have learned of Jewish individuals who have removed the *mezuzah* (Scripture box affixed to doorway) from the front door to their homes or have chosen not to wear a Star of David necklace for fear of being identified as Jewish. I read a plethora of Jewish community articles and attend webinars of experts, and they cover the uncomfortable reality of the rise of Jew hatred across the globe. We at Bridges for Peace will never stand aside! Arm-in-arm we stand with Israel and the Jewish people. The words of Isaiah 40:1 ring out, "*Comfort, yes, comfort My people! says your God.*"

Now, one could make a case that anti-Semitism has been around for thousands of years, and they would be right. However, the level of global, public justifications of anti-Semitism, as well as the surge of violent anti-Semitic attacks happening at an astonishing daily rate, grieves my soul. Michael Mostyn, CEO of B'nai Brith Canada, writes, "We are seeing, in the West, the beginning of a new phase of discrimination against Jews. Many cannot openly identify as Jews without fear of being assaulted, which is happening all too often in Europe, the United States and now Canada."

## A Very Public Hatred

Since the recent conflict between Israel and the Gaza-based terror organization Hamas, Bridges for Peace national offices have seen an explosion of anti-Semitism. The blinders have been taken off, as around the world hatred has spilled into city streets, public squares, university campuses, halls of governance—even within the Church. The lack of global outrage and condemnation against this *very* public hatred has been tragic. Jewish people have been targeted in dozens of major cities across the globe. Slogans such as: “dirty Jew,” “rape their women,” “we will finish what Hitler started” and more are chanted through megaphones.

Commenting on the fury erupting across Canada, Daniel Koren, executive director of Hasbara Fellowships Canada, said: “Advocating for Israel and fighting anti-Semitism become one and the same these days. All too often we see demonization of Jews and anti-Israel discrimination.”

In Winnipeg, Canada, anti-Israel protestors shouted, “Stab them in Tuxedo,” a neighborhood known to have many Jewish residents. The city also saw Jewish attendees at a pro-Israel rally assaulted while anti-Israel protestors played pro-Hamas music and burned Israeli flags at the Manitoba Legislature. In Montreal, anti-Semitic protestors screamed, “Cut off the heads of the Jews with knives!” In Los Angeles, video footage showed thugs, armed with steel bars and knives, descend upon a group of Jewish men eating at a sushi bar. In New York City, a mob tried to lynch a Jewish man in public and chased him, his face covered in blood, into a bakery before the police intervened.

Protestors all over the world have flown the flag of Hamas, chanting, “From the [Jordan] River to the [Mediterranean] Sea, Palestine will be Free,” advocating the annihilation of the world’s only Jewish state. In central London, the Palestine Solidarity March numbered nearly 180,000 people. One tweet called it “the largest Palestine demonstration in British history.” Despite the negotiated cease-fire between Israel and Hamas, former Labor shadow chancellor John McDonnell addressed the crowd, “There will be no cease-fire in our campaign to boycott, disinvest and sanction the Israeli apartheid state.” Protestors have hurled rocks, water bottles, even tear gas at Israel supporters, creating

a terrifying environment of intimidation directed against anyone who stands with Israel.

## The Core of Anti-Semitism

These events unfolding around the world remind me of Haman in the book of Esther. In 3:1 we learn that Haman is “*the son of Hammedatha the Agagite.*” We are reminded four times in Esther of Haman’s lineage. Why is this so important? Agag was a dynastic name for the kings of the Amalekites. Biblically, we know the Amalekites to be one of the archenemies of the Jewish people. Exodus 17:16b states, “*the LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation*” (see also Deut. 25:17–19 and 1 Sam. 15:2). In Jewish thought, every generation has an Amalek-type figure who strives to destroy the Jewish people, while God supernaturally preserves His people. This “generational Amalek” has sometimes been referred to as the “Spirit of Amalek,” but I wish to unofficially recoin that title and call it a “Spirit of Haman,” which is anti-Semitism at its core.

Haman’s reaction is quite profound when his servants inform him that Mordechai is a Jew (Esther 3:4–5). Haman is offended when Mordechai does not bow to him, and although one might naturally conclude that the offense should have been directed solely at Mordechai, Haman’s reaction reveals his dark soul. He goes to King Ahasuerus with a plan to murder every Jewish person in the realm (Esther 3:13). He describes them in a way that echoes anti-Semitic rhetoric found in the *Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion* or Nazi Julius Streicher’s anti-Semitic newspaper *Der Stürmer* (1923–1945).

In Esther 3:8, Haman says to the king, “*There is a certain people scattered and dispersed among the people in all the*



provinces of your kingdom; their laws are different from all other people's, and they do not keep the king's laws." Haman effectively labels the Jews as "the others." He insinuates they cannot be trusted and questions their loyalty with lies. He pressures Ahasuerus to sign a declaration to murder all the Jews in a single day (vv. 12–13). Thankfully, the Jewish people were spared. Haman's treachery was exposed, and he was hanged on his own gallows intended for Mordechai. However, the anti-Semitic "Spirit of Haman" has endured throughout history, expressed by the horrific murder of six million Jews during the Holocaust or the current rhetoric from university campuses, leftists, white supremacists, radical Islamist groups, etc.

## An Unshakable Hope

Bridges for Peace has stood against the "Spirit of Haman" since our inception. From the time our founder moved to Israel in 1964, we have steadfastly stood with Israel against anti-Semitism. This is what gives me unshakable hope. We know that God will defend His people and preserve them, but He has also called Christians from all over the world to comfort and stand with them during the storm.

Our international headquarters team, led by International President and CEO Rev. Rebecca J. Brimmer, has addressed these issues head-on. Whether producing media/video updates, writing articles (i.e., "The Death of Sarah Halimi" by Rev. Cheryl Hauer, August 2021, *Dispatch from Jerusalem*), press releases, launching the new BFP mobile app, speaking at the Jerusalem Prayer Breakfast and more, the nations have been resourced with a steady stream of excellent information. On the national office front, our directors around the world have mobilized, comforted the Jewish community, published statements against anti-Semitism and continued to be a shining light as Christians who stand with Israel. Allow me to paint you a

picture with some wonderful examples that demonstrate Bridges for Peace's front line of defense.

In the USA, National Director Jim Solberg co-signed both the ACLI (American Christian Leaders for Israel) open letter supporting Israel and the Genesis 123 Foundation's Unconditional Support for Israel document. BFP USA staff also participated in pro-Israel rallies, held radio interviews and have booked upcoming cable TV interviews.

In South Africa, National Director Chris Eden issued press releases to counter government statements regarding Gaza and mobilized support for the chief justice of South Africa, who made a public statement of support for Israel and received immediate backlash. The Church Leaders Israel Briefings have also been an effective instrument to educate Christian leaders on the biblical context of Israel, geopolitics of the Middle East, and the Israel-South Africa political relationship. Christians who stand with Israel are also a target of anti-Semitism, and Chris found himself flying to Johannesburg to offer support to a government schoolteacher (and his family) who was fired for posting a statement on WhatsApp in solidarity with Israel.

UK National Director Michael Treharne and his team have also been busy. When leaders from the Jewish community, representing the Zionist Federation and the Jewish National Fund, requested BFP UK to support them at a pro-Israel rally at the London embassy, Michael did not hesitate and was joined by his wife and other Christian supporters. The anti-Israel protest had been fierce the week before, but this did not concern the UK

US Rally



South Africa Rally



UK Rally



team, who stood with their Jewish friends amid a strong police presence. Michael said, “We were able to show our support, and this is so important for the Jewish community. One of the more shocking incidents was the [anti-Israel] car protest through the Jewish areas where threats of rape and murder were shouted.”

New Zealand National Coordinator Beth Mather and fellow Christian supporters also joined Jewish community friends at a pro-Israel rally in Auckland. In Canada, members of our team published articles in Jewish community newspapers, held numerous phone calls with Jewish and Christian leaders, launched educational webinars, and offered support to a Jewish business owner who had been the target of an anti-Semitic attack.



**New Zealand  
Rally**

We are on the front line. We must continue to pray, remain firmly entrenched in the Bible, stand with Israel, demonstrate unconditional love and support for the Jewish community, and seek the Lord. Many Christians who condemn this hatred but shy away from speaking up would benefit by recalling the words of Dennis Prager:

Moral non-Jews who fail to act against anti-Semites inevitably suffer from them. Nothing about Jew-hatred is clearer than this. Jew-haters begin with Jews but never end with them, as anti-Semitism is ultimately a hatred of higher standards. The anti-Semites first wish to destroy the perceived embodiment of that higher call to good, the Jews. But they do not hate the Jews alone. They hate whatever and whoever represents a higher value, a moral challenge (Prager and Telushkin, *Why the Jews*).

I believe with all my heart that the Lord is on His throne. He is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of Israel, and He is bound by covenant fidelity to His people (Gen. 12:3, Gen. 15, Ps. 105:7–11). This reality and truth give me ultimate hope that justice will be served. God will defend His people and calls Christians all over the world to equally stand with and defend

them. For, if we desire to love what God loves, we must love the Jewish people and stand against anti-Semitism, or risk opposing God. *“Behold, He who keeps Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep”* (Ps. 121:4). *“For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable”* (Rom. 11:29).

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Scripture is taken from the New King James Version, unless otherwise noted.

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### TERMINOLOGY:

Many of our readers are seasoned supporters of Israel while others are just beginning to understand the importance of standing with God’s chosen nation; some prefer the use of Hebrew names and terms, while others are comfortable with more traditional Christian terminology. Because we want to show respect to all of our readers while providing an enjoyable educational experience, we are making every effort to use both terms whenever possible. The following are some of the most common examples:

- Jesus (Yeshua)
- *Tanakh* (Old Testament or OT) – *Tanakh* is an acronym used in Judaism which stands for *Torah*, *Neviim* or Prophets and *Ketuvim* or Writings.
- Writings of the Apostles (New Testament or NT)
- *Torah* (Gen.–Deut.)

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