

GNITN

#617

An Ancient Hatred

It's A Common Thing

In fact, unless those days are shortened, all mankind will perish. But they will be shortened for the sake of God's chosen people. (Matt 24:22, TLB)

I recall watching a lot of B horror movies as they were called and the story plot was as predictable as the sun rising in the morning. A group of scientists create a new life and want to study it. Then it appears that it could be a danger to the world so they contain it safely but still study it. Then it breaks out and kills all who kept it from freedom and then goes on a rampage destroying everything it can and threatens to do much more if not stopped. Fortunately and miraculously a way to stop it is found and the threat is ended and a happy ending transpires. I know, it's a predictable formula and yet it is also very Biblical if we look at our Bible and see how it plays out over and over again. And if we read about the events just ahead of us the blueprint for how things will happen look very much like those B horror films of my youth. When reading all three of what we call the Olivet Discourses in **Matthew 24**, **Luke 21**, and **Mark 13** we see the elements of an end time plot that culminates in the rise of the Antichrist and his ultimate end seven years later. In between the start of that infamous predicted time and the miraculous ending Jesus warned His Jewish listeners about the worst time in world history and what to look for. We would be wise to take a look at all three narratives because we are seeing all the signs of those scenarios blossoming all around us.

The Spirit Of Antichrist

This is the spirit of antichrist that you heard was coming. Well, here it is, sooner than we thought! (1 John 4:3, MSG)

If we want to follow the movie plots, the discovered evil is the spirit of the antichrist and as we see in the verse above, it's here now lurking, growing, and becoming the eventual evil that will dominate the world. And what it hates is also laid out for us in the three renditions of the same speech Jesus gave His followers after they asked Him what the signs of end would be. Here are the verses from each one for you showing who will be the target of hatred:

Then you will be tortured and killed and hated all over the world because you are mine, 10 and many of you shall fall back into sin and betray and hate each other. 11 And many false prophets will appear and lead many astray. 12 Sin will be rampant everywhere and will cool the love of many. (Matt 24:9-12, TLB)

"But before all this occurs, there will be a time of special persecution, and you will be dragged into synagogues and prisons and before kings and governors for my name's sake. 13 But as a result, the Messiah will be widely known and honored. 14 Therefore, don't be concerned about how to answer the charges against you, 15 for I will give you the right words and such logic that none of your opponents will be able to reply! 16 Even those closest to you—your parents, brothers, relatives, and friends will betray you and have you arrested; and some of you will be killed. 17 And everyone will hate you because you are mine and are called by my name. (Luke 21:12-17, TLB)

“Brothers will betray each other to death, fathers will betray their own children, and children will betray their parents to be killed. 13 And everyone will hate you because you are mine. But all who endure to the end without renouncing me shall be saved. (Mark 13:12-13)

Sadly, these telling portions of Scripture describe an overall hatred for Jews and Christians and it won't just come from governments, it will even come from those closest to you who may even call themselves believers. Yes, the divide is going to happen from those who sit in the pews with you and even currently attend Bible studies with you right now. And it extends to hatred of God's chosen people, the Jews.

Hating What God Loves

How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!

13 For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:

14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. (Isa 14:12-14, KJV)

This hatred is an ancient one, though as it finds its beginnings before time even began. The account of Lucifer pridefully taking on his creator and wanting to replace Him is a classic one that has played out in human history because fallen mankind naturally opposes God, too. The same hatred that started in ancient heavenlies will also be seen now. And this extreme dislike will also feel demonic because it is. The words Jesus used are telling and ominous:

... Even those closest to you—your parents, brothers, relatives, and friends will betray you and have you arrested; and some of you will be killed... Brothers will betray each other to death, fathers will betray their own children, and children will betray their parents to be killed. 13 And everyone will hate you because you are mine.

How is that playing out today? We tend to only look at America, but believers are being targeted all over the globe as we can see casually looking at a [web site](#) by *Voice of the Martyrs*. They highlight how Christians in nations like China, North Korea, and Eritrea, a country between Sudan and Ethiopia are persecuting believers. Some were arrested for something as small as protesting the cross on their building being taken down. Many were arrested simply because they dared hold fast to being a Christian when told to recant. And while we may be seen as wimps compared to these strong believers, we need to note that the government attitudes toward Christians here in America is quickly trending to doing the same exact things to believers.

Are You On The Watchlist?

Although the [study](#) I'm about to cite is old (from 2012) it still makes the point:

In the studies, various groups deemed to be a threat to American safety were categorized and outlined. Included in the list were “extreme right-wing” groups, “extreme left-wing” groups, “ethno-nationalists,” religious groups, and “single-issue” groups. Extreme right-wing groups were defined as those “that believe that one’s personal and/or national ‘way of life’ is under attack and is either already lost or that the threat is imminent ... [and are] anti-global, suspicious of centralized federal authority [and] reverent of individual liberty.” Ethno-nationalists were stated to be “regionally concentrated groups with a history of organized political autonomy with their own state, traditional ruler, or regional government, who are committed to gaining or regaining political independence through any means...”

So when we talk about taking back our freedoms we are terrorists. Great. Just great. The article goes on to tighten the noose around our necks:

Religious groups were labeled as those “that seek to smite the purported enemies of God and other evildoers, impose strict religious tenets or laws on society (fundamentalists), forcibly insert religion into the political sphere (e.g., those who seek to politicize religion, such as Christian Reconstructionists and Islamists), and/or bring about Armageddon.” Single-issue groups included those that were anti-abortion and anti-Catholic in belief.

So if you are against abortion, you are the terrorists. But if you believe in the coming Tribulation, well get in line with all the other terrorists like Hamas and Hezbollah:

The “Profiles of Perpetrators of Terrorism” report further outlined, “There are five main varieties of religious terrorism: (1) Islamist terrorism; (2) Jewish fundamentalist terrorism, primarily inside Israel; (3) Christian terrorism, which can be further subdivided into fundamentalist terrorism of an Orthodox (mainly Russia), Catholic, or Protestant stamp (which, in the US, is especially aimed at stopping the provision of abortions) and terrorism inspired by apocalyptic Christian identity doctrine.”

Even though this study found that of the terror related crimes from 1970 to 2008 only 14 were religiously motivated, still it is listed as a danger. And a closer look at those 14 shows that they were by people who were motivated by other things and would now be seen as mentally unstable over all. In short, not the people who actually love God in a Biblical way.

And About Your Relatives

Could we devolve into a country that actually promoted us being turned in as terrorists by our loved ones? Well, it already happened once and as recent as three years ago when people were encouraged to snitch on their parents or children for not complying with the health “laws.” Churches were threatened with closure and stiff fines for simply saying no to being told to they couldn’t meet when bars, strip clubs, and marijuana dispensaries remained open. It is already dangerous to be a Christian now in a land that has religious freedom right in its founding documents. I’d say Jesus was right to warn us the way He did. Did He know all about this way back then? I’d say yes. He saw a time in the future where social credit systems existed, where digital health passports kept you from even shopping if you weren’t considered safe and where churches checked your temperatures at the door. The divides are big and getting bigger and now extend to loving or hating Jews. How far will this go? **Matthew 24** says this again:

Even those closest to you—your parents, brothers, relatives, and friends will betray you and have you arrested; and some of you will be killed... Brothers will betray each other to death, fathers will betray their own children, and children will betray their parents to be killed. 13 And everyone will hate you because you are mine.

Jesus actually saw it happening. And it’s happened before in history if we’re willing to learn from it.

How Do We Resist?

In the United States we have the constitutional right to vote and that's a logical place to resist. But to make a difference often times we need to also hold our elected official's feet to the fire by reminding them to represent us or face the collective consequences. And we can be part of the system by running for office or being a part of campaigns for those running for office. But ultimately the best way to resist is simply living out our Christian lives in the fullest and complete way. We have examples in the Bible to use as well. Daniel resisted by praying when he knew it would result in punishment and spent a night with a bunch of hungry lions. His friends, the three Hebrew boys stood when they were told to bow to an idol and were thrown into a fiery furnace for their steadfast faith. Do you want a New Testament example? Peter and John wouldn't stop preaching and healing people even after they were told to cease and desist by their leaders at the time. They were beaten before being released and stood firm. Against seemingly insurmountable odds and impossible situations, the faith of the martyrs speak to us today and their collective voices are telling us to stand firm. They are urging us to run the race set before us:

Since we have such a huge crowd of men of faith watching us from the grandstands, let us strip off anything that slows us down or holds us back, and especially those sins that wrap themselves so tightly around our feet and trip us up; and let us run with patience the particular race that God has set before us.

2 Keep your eyes on Jesus, our leader and instructor. He was willing to die a shameful death on the cross because of the joy he knew would be his afterwards; and now he sits in the place of honor by the throne of God.

3 If you want to keep from becoming fainthearted and weary, think about his patience as sinful men did such terrible things to him. 4 After all, you have never yet struggled against sin and temptation until you sweat great drops of blood. (Heb 12:1-4, TLB)

If Jesus can do it, so can we!