



# BIBLEWAY MINISTRIES

MAKING A DIFFERENCE—THE BIBLE WAY



## Many Problems with One Cause!

**A**s I was reading an article regarding the importance of taking care of your teeth, I came to the realization that poor dental care could result in cardiovascular disease, respiratory infections, diabetic complications and even dementia. I had no idea that poor dental care could cause all of these other health problems. If you are like me you probably only think of cavities when you think about dental concerns. It is incredible that one problem can affect so many other areas of the human body.

### Our Universal Problem

The Bible talks about one universal problem that has had multiple effects on the human race. It is the problem called sin. Romans 3:23 makes the startling proclamation, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." The Greek word for "come short" means to be inferior or to fall short in the sense of being deficient. In our human process, we feel a level of satisfaction when we do comparison tests. We feel a sense of comfort when we acknowledge our deficiency; but draw the conclusion that it is not that bad since we know of others with worse deficiencies: The murderer, the rapist or the child molester, for example. And so we've taken the attitude that simply says, "I am not as bad as others."

Of course, there are various degrees of sin, and certainly some are worse than others; but in the divine court of a righteous Judge, all are still found guilty! Regardless of the sin, the fact remains that we have missed the mark. Now that is a theological dilemma! Romans 6:23 prescribes our punishment: "The wages of sin is death...."

### The Source of Our Freedom

But there is good news: Even though we are guilty, Jesus Christ died for our sins so that our death penalty was paid in full! And when we trust Him for our salvation, we can be free from

the ultimate effect of sin, which is eternal separation from God.

Spiritual freedom is important as we celebrate Independence Day. In the United States, Independence Day commemorates the adoption of the *Declaration of Independence* that occurred over 200 years ago. The government ruling party called the Continental Congress consisted of representation from the 13 colonies. The colonies united around the biblical concepts of liberty and human dignity, declaring independence and freedom from the tyranny of the British Empire. Many of the colonists associated national freedom with the spiritual freedom proclaimed in Scripture.

While Americans celebrate the values that unite us on July 4, our country is sharply divided over issues such as unemployment, immigration and healthcare reform. For some, points of discord overshadow the grounds for unity. This makes it difficult to realize the importance of American independence.

For those who are in Christ, let us never forget that our great freedom is in Him. This will not remove the challenges of unemployment, immigration and disunity among our people, but it will allow us to overcome our universal sin problem and share a hope that goes beyond our government or our political parties.

- Dr. L.W. Edwards



# Hacking Hatred with a Better Story

“Hey hey, ho ho!  
\_\_\_\_\_ has got to go!  
Hey hey, ho ho!  
\_\_\_\_\_ has got to go!”

“1-2-3-4 \_\_\_\_\_ no more!  
5-6-7-8 smash the \_\_\_\_\_!”

“Say it loud say it clear, we don’t want  
\_\_\_\_\_ here.”

Perhaps you can imagine hearing similar chants echoing from the walls of a gymnasium as zealous high school cheerleaders will their team to victory against an athletic rival.

But these chants aren’t for a sports team. Read them again, this time with the blanks filled in:

“Hey hey, ho ho!  
Zionism has got to go!  
Hey hey, ho ho!  
Israel has got to go!”

“1-2-3-4 occupation no more!  
5-6-7-8 smash the settler Zionist state!”

“Say it loud say it clear, we don’t want Zionists  
here.”

College students shouted these chants (and others which were even cruder) from tent encampments they constructed at some of America’s top public universities (including Harvard, Columbia, Northwestern and UCLA). As they protested Israel’s war against the Hamas terrorist group after Hamas’ deadly attack on October 7, 2023, they sent a clear message to Jewish students, faculty and people everywhere: You’re not welcome here.

## Hatred Tells the Wrong Story

[The Anti-Defamation League reported](#) between October 7, 2023 and January 7, 2024, antisemitic attacks in the US increased more than 360% compared to the same time in 2022, the year when reported incidents reached an all-time annual high. It’s clear hatred targeting the Jewish people runs deeper than mere disagreement with Israel’s government and military. A false narrative has been promoted about this people group which has fanned the flames. The only way to overcome this evil — and all others — is to tell a better story.

Behind the terms “Zionism/Zionist,” “occupation” and “settler” is a belief that the land of Israel does not truly belong to the Jewish people. According to the story, [Israel is an oppressive, racist colonial power](#) which is occupying the territory of the Palestinian people.

If that was the only story you heard about Israel, it would undoubtedly shape your perspective of the Middle East conflict and the Jewish people. But this is only one side of the story.

Few people realize Israel’s claim to their land goes back to the days of Moses more than 3,000 years ago, when God outlined the borders of the land He would give them (Numbers 34:1–12). There’s always another side to the story. There is always a better story.

## Love Tells a Better Story

Did you know, for example, that Israel once [provided life-saving medical care](#) to imprisoned Hamas founder Yahya Sinwar? Or that Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) have [cancelled airstrikes to prevent civilian casualties](#)? Or that the IDF has used millions of leaflets, text messages and phone calls to warn civilians to leave conflict zones? Or that more than 250,000 Palestinians safely evacuated northern Gaza because the IDF opened a humanitarian passageway in the middle of the conflict? Or that the [IDF offered 100 gallons of fuel to medical personnel](#) at Shifa Hospital, but Hamas prevented them from accepting it? Or that even former US military officials believe the IDF’s restraint toward civilians has [met or exceeded the Law of Armed Conflict](#) (LOAC)?

Seeing another side to the story doesn’t eliminate the complexities of the conflict or undo the suffering and evils of war. It sadly will not change the hatred many still feel toward the Jewish people. But through Israel’s acts of compassion, mercy and longsuffering, the Jewish people are telling a better story.

## Better-Story Living

A Jewish rabbi named Jesus said, “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven.” (Matthew 5:43–45a) Anyone can “hate them back.” That’s easy. Jesus told a better story: We are most like God when we repay love for hatred and prayer for persecution.

Saying the right words isn’t difficult. Living a better-story life that turns the other cheek when hatred punches you in the face is the hard part. Jesus did both. What He taught with His lips, He sealed with His blood as He submitted His hands and feet to a soldier’s nails and hammer. He did it as He submitted His body to be beaten and whipped. He did it as He submitted His heart to the emotional lashes of rejection, betrayal and injustice. He demonstrated better-story living as He pleaded for the forgiveness of those whose hatred had put Him on the cross. At the climax of His suffering when He had breathed His last . . .

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