***The Destiny of the Jews –
RO140-02***

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Today, we conclude our study of Romans 10:18-21. Our subject is "Revelation Rejected," and this is segment number nine.

**The Jews' Destiny**

In Romans 10, the apostle Paul describes the current condition of the Jewish people as one of total apostasy from the will of God. The Jews need a qualified Savior to die in their place; to pay the penalty for their sins; and, thereby, to satisfy the justice of God against them. God therefore sent into the world His Own Son, Jesus Christ, to suffer for the sins of Israel in His death on the cross. The Jews, however, rejected the Lord Jesus Christ as their promised Messiah Savior. And today they still look for the arrival of their Savior. Thus, today, practically every Jew in the human race dies without trusting in Jesus Christ for salvation, and is thereby destined to spend eternity in the suffering of the lake of fire.

The apostle Paul also points out, in Romans 10, that the Jews today are not rejecting Jesus Christ because they have not been told about Him. In Romans 10:18, the apostle Paul quotes Psalm 19:4 to point out that the star constellations illustrated the gospel story to all nations, and to all societies on earth. The most amazing thing about the rejection by the Jews of the long-awaited Messiah Savior was that their own prophets predicted that they would do this.

So, today, we begin with Romans 10:19: "But I say, did not Israel know?" The words "But I say," you will notice, are a repeat of the opening words of verse 18. Paul is repeating those words deliberately to emphasize that the Jews possessed information from God. This is another one of those rhetorical questions to make his point – that the Jews are without excuse in rejecting Jesus Christ. He does not expect an answer. But again, he says, "But I say." He said it in verse 18. He said, "But I say again," concerning their information: "Did not Israel know?"

In the Greek language, we have the Greek negative "me" that goes with the word "Israel." But the Greek also has the other Greek negative "ou" which goes with the word "know." So, the Greek has what we call a double-negative: "Did not Israel not know?" And this is the Greek way of indicating that the answer they would expect is a negative answer. The question is: "It is not true that Israel did not know, is it?" The Greek expects the "no" answer: "No, it is not true that they didn't know." And the way the Greek does it is by throwing these two negatives in there. When we translate it into English, they just make it a straightforward, positive statement: "Did the Jews not know?" And the answer in the English is: "Yes, they did know." In any case, the point is very emphatically made that the Jews have information. They had information from God, and this information that they specifically knew about (the consequence not only about Jesus Christ as Savior), but they also knew about what the consequence was going to be for rejecting Him.

This is what Paul is going to point out to them. He' going to say, "I'm going to tell you what Moses said, and I'm going to tell you what Isaiah said would happen to you if you reject that Messiah when He comes on the scene of human history. This was the warning that was given to them; namely, that they would lose their special place with God to the gentiles, if they rebelled against His word.

So, he says, "But I say, did not Israel know?" The answer is yes, you bet they knew: "First, Moses said." And he says, "First, I'll give you this authority. I'll quote Moses – Moses, the greatest of all the spiritual authorities to the Jews. And what Moses says is this." Now what he refers to is Deuteronomy 32:21. He's quoting from Deuteronomy 32:21. There, Moses says, quoting God: "I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you." If you look back in Deuteronomy 32:21, you will notice that the first half of the verse tells what the Jews did to God: "They have moved Me to jealousy with that which is not God. They have provoked Me to anger with their vanities. The first half of Deuteronomy 32:21 says that: "The Jews turned from Me, their true God, and they went after idols." And God said, "That made Me jealous." Here, God is talking in terms of human language and relationships that we can understand.

The last half of Deuteronomy 32:21 tells what God, therefore, is going to do to them: "And I will move them to jealousy with those who are not a people. I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation." So, this is the verse that Paul is quoting, where they have rejected God for idols, and God says, "I, in turn, am going to reject you, and I will turn to the gentiles, and you will be out."

Now, you have to try to put yourself in a position that you are a member of your family, and your parents throw you out, and they take in a stranger, and they give the stranger your place. How would you feel about that? And that's what God is pointing out to the Jews: "You were on the inside track. But the way you've acted, I'm putting you out, and I'm putting somebody else into your place."

This whole chapter of Deuteronomy 32 describes the mercies of God to the Jews, and describes their rebellion against Him, which is exactly the same situation in Paul's day, relative to the Lord Jesus Christ. Notice, for example, in Deuteronomy 32:8, to give you a little perspective on this: "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance; when He separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel." Everything in history revolved around the Jews: "For the Lord's portion is His people. Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found them in a desert land, and in the waste, howling wilderness. He led them about. He instructed them. He kept them as the apple of His eye." They were nothing but a bunch of flea-bitten nomads when He picked them up off the desert.

Verse 11: "As an eagle stirs up her next; flutters over her young; spreads abroad her wings; takes them; and, bears them upon her wings, so, the Lord alone did lead them, and there was no strange God with them. He made them ride on the high places of the earth, that He might eat the increase of the fields; that He made them to suck honey out of the rock, and oil of the flinty rock; butter of cows, and milk of sheep, with fat of lambs and rams, of the breed of Bashan; and goats with the fat of kidneys of wheat, and you drank the pure blood of the grape."

Compare that now with the verses that follow – such wonderful treatment at the hands of God. But what did the Jews do in return? "But Jeshurun, the upright one, grew fat, and kicked: you have become fat. You are grown thick. You are covered with fatness." As they ate well, they got fat: "Then he forsook God who made him, and lightly esteemed the rock of his salvation. They provoked Him to jealousy with strange gods; with abominations they provoked Him to anger. They sacrificed unto demons, not to God; to gods whom they knew not; to gods who came newly up, whom your fathers feared not. Of the rock who begot you, you are unmindful, and have forgotten God who formed you.

"And when the Lord saw it, he abhorred them because of the provoking of His Sons and His daughters. And He said, 'I will hide my face from them. I will see what their end shall be. For they are a very perverse generation – children, in whom there is no faith. They have moved Me to jealousy's with that which is not god. They have provoked Me to anger with their vanities. I will move them to jealousy with those who are not a people. I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation. For a fire is kindled in my anger, and shall burn unto the lower Sheol, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains."

So, here in this passage, in Deuteronomy 32, you have, on the one hand, the enormous grace of God to a people who had no claim upon Him. And on the other hand, of all things, they turn from Him, and start worshiping idols. And behind every idol, there is a demon god, so that they are, in effect, worshiping demons. And God said, "Finally, I've had enough of this. And it angered Me. And I have brought judgment upon them." As the Jews provoked God to jealousy by worshiping idols, so now God says that He would make them jealous by substituting the gentiles of the church as His special people in place of the Jews.

The Jews in Paul's day were guilty, then, of the same fatal mistake of unbelief toward their God, as were their fathers. This is indicated for us in Acts 7:51 – this same characteristic: "You stiff-necked, and uncircumcised in heart and ears, you do always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you." So, the Jews in the past insulted God with their idolatry. And today they do the same with rejecting Jesus Christ as the Savior.

So, with that background, Paul here in Romans 10:19 says, "I will provoke you to jealousy." The word "provoke to jealousy" is one word in the Greek. It looks like this: "parazeloo." It simply means "to make a person jealous." God, at some time in the future, he says, is going to do this to the Jews by his deliberate choice.

**The Ten Commandments**

We have this same word used in 1 Corinthians 10:22, to illustrate it. He says, "I'm going to make you jealous by turning to a people who are no people." That is, they are not God's special people in any way. And furthermore, he says, "These people that I'm going to turn to not only do not have a special place with Me the way you Jews do, but these people are going to be a foolish people." The word "foolish" is the word "asunetos," and "asunetos" means that they have no understanding – senseless. You can see our English word "asinine" in this Greek word. These people are without understanding because they don't have the Ten Commandments. They don't have the moral guidelines that God gave the Jews, which preserve them as a nation. And never forget that that was the basic purpose of the Ten Commandments, the moral code for Israel. It was to preserve their freedom. When a society begins violating the principles of the Ten Commandments as the moral code of God, that society begins losing its freedom. It always happens. It always will happen. It always has.

So, these people, that God is going to turn to, lack moral discernment. They didn't have the information. A nation which is spiritually stupid is the idea here. God says, "I'm going to turn to that kind of people." And, of course, God says, "And I'm going to do it because it's going to make you mad. The result will be that it will anger you." The word "anger" here means "to exasperate." It's an intensive world. It's what you said Ephesians 6:4, when it says, "Fathers, don't act in such a way that you exasperate your children, and create a needless indignation and anger in them." So, you Jews, who should have been happy, are going to prove to be unhappy, and very indignant, because of what God is doing.

So, in verse 19, you have really two lines of poetry. The first says, "I will make you jealous over a non-nation." The other says, "Over a nation without understanding, I will anger you." This is the same thing that Jesus tried to warn the Jews about when He came on the scene – repeating the same principles and warnings of the prophets: "If you turn against Me, and if you turn against what God is telling you, you are going to be out, and the gentiles are going to take the message, and they're going to come in." How many people, in the circle of our association, can we look upon, who grew up in spiritual opportunity, and turned their back upon it? And people who had nothing, who had parents who were indifferent, walked in and grabbed the lion's share of spiritual blessing. I can roll off all kinds of names. Some of you are sitting right here. You grew up in homes which were completely indifferent, or totally disoriented from spiritual things. And you came into the blessings of the knowledge of the Word of God. Whereas, we've had people who've grown up among us who've abandoned it, and gone out into the world, and suffered all the consequences of that foolish move.

The Lord Jesus tried to remind the Jews that God had told them that this was going to happen, and that they better backtrack. For example, in Matthew 8:10, Jesus heals a Centurion's servant. This man's request demonstrates an enormous faith, because Jesus says, "OK, I'll come and do it." The man says, "Oh, Jesus, I know you. I'm an officer in the Roman military. I understand what authority is. When I tell a soldier to do something, he does it, because I carry the authority. You are a man of authority over disease. You just tell it to go. You don't have to come. It'll be done." Verse 10 says, "When Jesus heard it, he marveled. And He said to them that followed: 'Verily, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith. No, not in Israel. And I say unto you that many shall come from the east and the West, and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven. But the sons of the kingdom shall be cast out into our darkness, and there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

This is exactly the same thing we're talking about here: "You gentiles sitting here today are going to enjoy God's kingdom in eternity with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, while the Jews, who had first choice upon it, are going to be sitting, looking across the gulf at you, out of the lake of fire."

Matthew 21:33 reiterates this same warning to the Jews that they ignored from the Lord Himself. "Hear another parable: There was a certain householder who planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and dug a winepress in it precedent, and built a tower, and leased it to the tenant farmers, and went into a far country. And when the time of the fruit grew near, he sent his servants to the farmers that they might receive the fruits of it. Add the farmers took the servants; beat one; killed another; and, stoned another. Again, he said other servants, more than the first, and they did the same unto them. But last of all, he sent unto them his son, saying, 'They will reverenced my son.' But when the farmers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come. Let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance.' And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him.

"When the Lord, therefore, of the vineyard comes, what will he do unto those farmers? They say to him, "He'll miserably destroy those wicked men, and will lease his vineyard unto other farmers who shall render him the fruits of their seasons.' Jesus said unto them, 'Did you never read in the Scriptures: the stone which the builders rejected, the same has become the head of the corner? This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes. Therefore, I say unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits of it. And whosoever shall fall on this stone (Jesus Christ) shall be broken, but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.' When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard this parable, they perceived that He spoke of them. But when they sought to lay hands on Him, they feared the multitude because they regarded Him as a prophet." So, the Lord Jesus, who warned them on the basis of what Moses and Isaiah had told them would happen to them, they turned their backs on Him, was rewarded by having them try to kill Him on the spot.

Well, indeed, we gentiles have been exalted by God. The Jews had been selected by God from all the nations on the earth to be His special people. Exodus 19:6 and Deuteronomy 7:6 point that out. They were given the privilege of receiving the gospel first. And there is an enormous difference in the position of a person who is no God and no people. And that's what we gentiles were: no God; and, no people, as over the Jews, who had a God, and were His people. Anything significant we do is because we are God's people. And God's main plans in history are always associated with Jesus Christ.

So, the Jews were privileged to be the special people of God, and to bring mankind the Savior of the world. God's great blessings on the Jews show the value of obeying the Word of God in Scripture, and designing a society around the Word of God. When the Jews obeyed, they prospered. So, it's incredible that the Jews, who had received such divine grace, would have turned to idols. They were then no better than the gentiles. They became a "no God and a no people" situation.

The Jews thought that they had an exclusive claim on salvation, and they thought that it was a sure thing for them. We pointed this out before. The Jews said, "We've got salvation, and it's a sure thing." They were wrong on both. This was even a problem for some of the early apostles like Peter, James, and John. You can read about this in Galatians 2:11-16, Acts 11:15-18, and Acts 15:5-11, as the apostles struggled through the fact that gentiles were going to be part of the church. That was offensive to them. So, you have to understand how maddening it was to the Jews to be told: "You people are out. Gentiles are in, in your place." That really did anger them. And Moses said that that's exactly what was going to happen.

**Did the Jews Know?**

So, the answer to the rhetorical question in Romans 10:19 is that the Jews did know from Scripture that their rebellion against God would forfeit their special place to the gentiles. It shocked them. They became jealous when they found that it was happening – that God had abandoned them, and the gentiles had entered a new covenant with God. The gentiles had a new covenant because the old covenant had been abandoned by the Jews. When the veil was torn in the holy of holies at the death of Christ, it told the whole story about God's provision for the Jews, and the end of that Mosaic system. But they wouldn't turn from it.

So, today, the believing gentiles of the church are taken into heaven by the Jews' Messiah, of all things, while that same Messiah sends the Jews into the lake of fire. While the Jews in Paul's day were not engaged in idolatry anymore, they were still resisting the illumination of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 10:20-21 bring us the warning of the prophet Isaiah. In verse 20, we have the response of the gentiles. Paul begins with the word, "But," indicating as if what Moses said was not enough to make the Jews mad," he said, "I'll give you an even stronger statement from Isaiah." And with the statement from both Moses and Isaiah, you have two statements from the prominent parts of the Old Testament Scriptures: from the Law; and, the prophets. So, it covers at all. Deuteronomy 19:15, furthermore, established the law of evidence for the Jews, which said that you establish the truth by the testimony of two or three witnesses.

So, Paul says, "I'll complete my case by giving you this other evidence of Isaiah who will clinch what I'm saying." And he says, "Isaiah is very bold," which means that Isaiah does not mince words when he speaks about the consequences to the Jews of their rebellion against the Messiah, Jesus Christ. He says this with great boldness. Part of the reason that Isaiah must have been bold in saying this is because of the Jews' contempt for the gentiles. They therefore did not believe what Isaiah was telling them – that they would be substituted for by the gentiles. And, furthermore, because of their emotional domination by the sin nature, they were indignant at their own prophet for even suggesting such a thing. So, they were ready to take his life. So, it took some boldness for Isaiah to stand up and say, "This is what God has said is going to happen to our nation down the line. And you people today are contributing to it. You're setting the pattern."

What does he say? He says, "I was found by them that sought me not." The word "found" looks like this in the Greek Bible. It's the word "eurisko." "Eurisko" means "to discover. God was discovered by the gentiles. At some point in time, this is what happened. The gentiles found God. The thing that's strange about this is that they weren't seeking Him ("zeteo"). That means that they weren't searching for Him. This has a negative – that the gentiles were devoid of interest in spiritual things. So, by nature, they didn't seek after God or His salvation. What they did seek for was those self-gods and that idolatrous lifestyle.

So, here you have something that is constantly true. It's present tense. They never looked for God. They obstinately were disinterested in anything that God had. We've already learned that this is true of every human being, by nature. You remember in Romans 3:10-11, we read, "As it is written, there is none righteous; no, not one. Nobody is born sinless. There is none that understand. There is none that seek after God. Nobody looks after God.

You and I love to sing that hymn: "I found Him. Oh, I found Him." I cannot sing that hymn without thinking, in the back of my mind: "Yes, but I wasn't looking for Him when I found Him: "I found Him. Oh, I found Him." Yes, but I wasn't looking for Him when I found Him. It was because He barged into my life – that made Himself clear to me, such that the Spirit of God alerted me to the Savior, and then I found Him.

So, this is what Paul is saying – that it is characteristic of these gentiles that they just do not look for God. And yet, wonder of wonders, they find the living God. The Jews who had the living God, knew Him, and they ignored Him.

Then the next part of verse 20 says, "I was made manifest unto them that asked not after Me. I became revealed," he says, "to those who were not asking." The word is "eperotao," which means they were not asking, "Where can I find this God? Tell me about the true God. Where can I find some information about getting into heaven? How can I avoid the wrath of this God?" The fact that God was found by the pagans, who were not seeking Him, and He was revealed to them when they were not asking about Him, shows us again the sovereignty of God in bestowing salvation on those that He has chosen to enlighten. This is so important. God makes it clear. Until God the Spirit alerts you to the need of salvation, and to the solution, you won't look for Him.

**The Gentiles**

So, here are these gentiles, totally indifferent to God. They were not looking for Him. They were not asking about Him. And yet, suddenly, they are brought into the family of God as His special people in the body of Christ. This shows us God's sovereignty of choosing those that He will enlighten. The rebellious, but privileged, Jews were working hard to earn their eternal life in heaven by keeping the Mosaic Law. And what they ended up with was relative righteousness. Romans 10:2-3 pointed that out. They had a righteousness that they did not understand was not enough with God. The pagan gentiles, on the other hand, who were not trying to be saved at all, were responding to God's grace – His offer of salvation, and they were preserved from the lake of fire.

So, Isaiah, through the Holy Spirit, had predicted hundreds of years beforehand that the gentiles, whom the Jews despised, would find the God in salvation that the Jews had rejected. The early New Testament church, of course, was all Jewish. And that's why the original Jewish Christians found it hard to believe that God was going to include these gentiles. So, it was even a problem for the apostles until they got that straightened out. Later on, the church became mostly gentile, and that's the way it is today. The body of Christ, the people of God in this age, are almost all gentiles. There are very few Jews.

So, the last verse of chapter 10 (Romans 10:21) emphasizes the rebellion of the Jews: "But to Israel," he says. And here's a sad note upon which to close this chapter. It's a sad note. It's a grim note. Paul, in Romans 10:21, is quoting Isaiah 65:2, which says, "I have spread out My hands all the day unto a rebellious people, that walk in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts.” And I want you to notice that. God says, "I've been making an appeal to the Jews all day long. I constantly do. But what do they do? They walk after their own human viewpoint thinking."

Now do you know why it's important to learn doctrines? Now can just from that one verse in the Bible that the whole disaster that came upon the Jews was because their thinking was sin-nature thinking. It was not God's thinking, because they were not subject to the Word of God, which would have given them that orientation to God's thoughts.

So, he says, "To Israel (that is, the Jewish people as a whole), He said (and He says this to them all day long)." That means: Constantly, I have stretched forth." That is this very significant Greek word: "ektetannumi." "Ektetannumi" literally describes a person who is standing there with his arms outstretched in an appeal for a person to come to him. It's a gesture of invitation. God says, "All day long I am constantly standing out there with my hands extended. I choose to do this, but the Jews look at Me, and they turn their backs."

That's like a little child. Sometimes a little child, and he's a very attractive little kid, and you want to reach out and hug him. And you put your hands out, and he turns off and walks away. Now that's rejection. And you feel bad, so you run around the other side, and try to catch him the other way. You hold your hands out, and he turns and goes to somebody else, and lets them hug him. That's rejection. This is the picture you have of God. He's holding His hands out. And these who are His children, who should be rushing into His hands, won't do it. It's a very sad picture.

God says, "To Israel, all day long, I've stretched My hands to you." And their response has been that they have been disobedient. That is the Greek word "apeitheo," which means "to disobey." And it applies to the Jews' attitude toward God's messengers. This is constantly. Its present tense. It wasn't that they just disobeyed Him sometimes. This word says that they did it all the time – constantly refusing to obey God.

Furthermore, he says, "You were not only a disobedient people, but you were a contrary people. And this is an interesting word indeed, because it's "antilego." And "antilego" is made up of two words. The first part "anti" is a preposition which means "against." And "lego" means "to speak." So, what it says is, "You are a people who are constantly speaking against Me;" that is, we would say, "You're talking back. All the time, you talk back." And that's what the Jews were doing. They were constantly talking back. They were, in effect, contradicting God.

You have this word in Titus 1:9 and Titus 2:9 – the same concept of argumentative, talking back and contradicting. Every time God spoke to them and said, "This is the truth, they said, "Oh, no, that can't be the truth. That doesn't make any sense. No, we don't want to do that. We want to readjust it." That is just like people today. You can't believe even what Christians will tell you. I have had people who are Christians who should know better, who have told me, "Well, OK, it's acceptable to you to believe that all those people in all the nations of the world, who have their own religions, are just going to be wiped out by God: that the Jews are going to be cast off; and, that the Muslims are going to be cast off, such that you can just wipe out those people. OK, but I can't do it." And I'm appalled to hear that coming from the mouths of Christians who should have understood that the Word of God is the deciding factor on this. And if there's anything of Romans 10 is telling us here at the very end, it is that God is going to wipe out all the Jews of all these centuries in the lake of fire, for the simple reason that they were disobedient to the Word of God, and they talked back to Him in contradicting His doctrinal statement. When God said, "This is the truth, and this is the way I work," they objected to it. And they rebelled against it.

Why was that? Because, as Isaiah 65:2 points out: "They walked in their own thoughts." They believed that they had the brains; they had the IQ; and, they could make these decisions. And they could not understand that they were contaminated by the sin nature, so that they could not see things from God's point of view. So, they were an obstinate, disobedient people to the gospel, and it resulted in God finally delivering them over to the consequences of their unbelief. That's the tragic thing about saying, "No." When somebody gives you the gospel, you say, "No, I don't want that." You tell them that you go to heaven without works. They say, "No, I don't want to believe that.” You say, "It's a gift from God." They say, "No, it can't be that." Finally, God says, "OK, if you want it 'No;' have it 'No.'" And He commits you to your human viewpoint decision. It happens to us Christians all the time. We violate and ignore the principles of Scripture on the conduct of our life, and disaster comes in.

Turn over to Isaiah 65 or just a moment, as we finish up this chapter. This chapter makes it very clear that the Jews were responsible for their rejection of God because they rebelled against the Word of God. In Isaiah 65:3, God says, "A people that provoked Me to anger continually to My face; that sacrifice in gardens; and, burn incense upon altars of brick." This is, again, to the pagan gods: "That remain among the graves, and lodge in the monuments; that eat swine's flesh, and broth of abominable things in their vessels." The Jews found it attractive to roam around the cemeteries. They ate pig's meat, which they were forbidden to do for sanitary reasons. They offered incense in worshiping the false gods, like Buddhism, and the Eastern religions burn incense to this day. They're following a custom of pagan demon worship.

Verse 5: "That say, 'Stand by yourself. Come not near to me, for I am holier than you.' These are a smoke in my nose; a fire that burns us all day." These people were doing these things that were a violation of God's Word, and they actually thought they were better than the other people. They said, "Stand off. You don't understand what it is to be holy. I am holy. I eat spare ribs, and ham, and all that good stuff. Those pickled pigs feet – Oh, I love it." And they said, "Are you eating swine meat?" And they and they answered, "Oh, I'm holier than you." God says, "You must be really nuts." They said, "I'm burning incense to the false pagan gods. I'm holier than you. I'm near to God." And God says, "You are really crazy." It was unbelievable what they were doing. But this is the background of what Paul is referring to. It was astounding that these people had the gall to stand up to the living God in this way.

Isaiah 65:6 says, "'Behold, it is written before Me. I will not keep silent, but will even recompense into their bosom your inequities; and inequities of your fathers together,' said the Lord, 'who have burned incense upon the mountains, and blasphemed Me upon the hills. Therefore, I will measure their former work into their bosom." And you notice that it includes what the fathers have done, and it is going to be upon the children as well.

This same principle of divine judgment for this absolute insanity against the Word of God is repeated in Matthew 23:37, where Jesus sits upon the Mount of Olives; looks across the valley to the city of Jerusalem; and, says, "Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you that kill the prophets (because the prophets told of God's Word), and stones them who are sent you. How often would I have gathered your children together, even as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and you would not?" He said, "Jews, you have no complaint. God gave you every opportunity, and you turned your back. Christian, you have no complaint when things come apart in your life, and when you violated doctrinal principles. God has given you a chance. You have been informed. You are deliberately guilty. You deserve what happens. You've got it coming.

"Behold, your house is left onto you desolate. God's patience with outstretched arms has a point of termination. I'll mentioned a few Scriptures. Proverbs 29:1 says that. Acts 17:26-29 says that. And certainly, Hebrews 9:27 says that you're going to get a chance to die once, and you're not going to be reincarnated again, no matter what Shirley MacLaine says. And when you die, you're going to face your judgment.

What's God's attitude? 2 Peter 3:9 says that God says, "I want all of you to be in My heaven. I don't want any of you to perish. So, God's salvation has been offered from the very beginning to Adam and Eve, and to all their posterity. God told Adam and Eve that He would supply them with a plan of redemption. He explained that plan to them, and then He pegged that gospel message to the signs of the zodiac so that they would remember it. God has especially chosen the Jews to be His people, and He cared for them above all nations. Deuteronomy 32:9-14 has told us that. And it is these same objects of God's grace, who are the ones who talked back to Him, who rebelled against His word.

Notice Jeremiah 44:15. This passage tells us about the Babylonian mystery religion, that was all around in the land of Canaan, which has been incorporated into the Roman Catholic Church today. These people were worshiping the queen of heaven. She is now Mary in the Roman church. In the Babylonian system, she was Semiramis. Can you believe that these Jews started worshiping that goddess woman there, after centuries of divine blessing upon them? And here's what Jeremiah was speaking against:

"Then all the men who knew that their wives had burned incense unto other gods." Burning incense is a way of worshiping demon gods: "And all the women who stood by, a great multitude, even all the people who dwelt in the land of Egypt and Pathros, answered Jeremiah, saying, 'As for the Word that you have spoken unto us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto you.'" Now, that's pretty clear cut: "We will certainly do whatsoever thing goes forth out of our own mouth." That's known as doing your own thing: "To burn incense unto the queen of heaven." This is not the virgin Mary. This became the virgin Mary as the queen of heaven later. This was still Semiramis, Nimrod's wife: "To the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, as we have done, we and our fathers, our kings, and our princes in the cities of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem. For then we had plenty of food, and were well, and saw no evil." They say that when they worshipped the queen of heaven, everything was going well for them. Things are going very good for them now, because God is bringing the judgment down: "But since we ceased to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, we have lacked all things, and have been consumed by the sword and by the famine. And when we burned incense to the queen of heaven, and poured out drink offerings unto her, we made cakes to worship her."

Those are the little hot-cross buns. They had an "X" on them, which was a "T" in the Babylonian language for Tammuz, her husband. And they had these little cakes with this cross on it, which then the Catholics took over, and said, "This is the cross of Jesus." They make little cakes at Easter time, and call them hot cross buns: "'And pour out drink offerings unto her without our husbands.' Then Jeremiah said unto all the people, to the men, and to the women, and to all the people who had given him that answer, saying." The women were saying, "You're complaining, but our husbands say it's OK for us to do this." The incense that you burn in the streets of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, you and your father, your kings, your princes, and the people of the land – did not the Lord remember them, and did it not come into His mind, so that the Lord to longer bear because of the evil of your doings, and because of the abominations which you had committed? Therefore your land is a desolation, and a horror, and a curse, without an inhabitant, as at this day."

Jeremiah says, "No, it's not because you're not worshiping the false gods that things have gone against you. It's because you violated the Word of God," you ding-a-lings. That's why God is bringing judgment upon you. Haven't you made the connection between disobedience to the Word of God and the consequences that are on you? "Because you have burned incense, and because you have sinned against the Lord, and have not obeyed the voice of the Lord, nor walked in his Law, nor in His statutes, nor in His testimonies, therefore, this evil has happened unto you as at this day. Moreover, Jeremiah said unto all the people, and to all the women, "Hear the Word of the Lord, all Judah who are in the land of Egypt. Thus says the Lord of Hosts, and the God of Israel, saying, 'You and your wives have both spoken with your mouths, and fulfilled with your hands, saying, 'We will surely perform our vows that we have vowed, to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her.' You will surely accomplish your vows, and surely perform your vows. Therefore, hear the Word of the Lord, all Judah, that dwell in the land of Egypt: 'Behold, I have sworn by My great name, said the Lord, that My name shall no more be named in the mouth of any man of Judah in the land of Egypt, saying, 'The Lord God lives. Behold, I will watch over them for evil and not for good. And all the men of Judah who are in the land of Egypt shall be consumed by the sword and by famine until there be an end. Yet a smaller number that escape the sword shall return out of the land of Egypt, into the land of Judah, and all the remnant of Judah, who are gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall know that these words shall stand: mine or theirs.'" God says, "You may count upon it that I'm going to bring judgment upon you. Those of you who have turned to Egypt, you're going to die there.

So, the perversity of Israel, as you look back upon their ancient practice, and what they were doing in Jesus' time, was in stark contrast to the loving kindness of God. So, Isaiah, like Moses, had forewarned the Jews that their rebellion against God would result in the loss of their favor with God. It's the very situation that existed in Paul's day. And Paul is trying to say the same thing to them: "If you continue the path that your fathers have followed, and reject this Messiah, you too will find yourself angry as you see God turning to the gentiles, who will accept this Messiah, and who will enter His heaven, while you spend eternity in the lake of fire.

There's only one safe way to deal with the Word of God. I leave these verses with you for your consideration: Psalm 95:7-8; and, Hebrews 3:7-8. That safe way is to obey God.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1988

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