

The Jewish Final Solution to the World's Problem - Information Origins Part 1

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Preacher: Marvin Wiseman

[0 : 00] Information origins. And the scripture reading is on a white sheet of paper in your bulletin.

And when we read this, only read the scripture passages. Okay? And we're going to do it just slightly different. I would like you to read the first paragraph. I'll read the second paragraph. You read the third paragraph. And I'll read the fourth paragraph.

But I will read along with you so that it's recorded on the CD when you're reading. Okay? Proverbs 16.25 There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.

Romans 1.18-21 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because that which is known about God is evident within them.

For God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world, His invisible attributes, His eternal power in divine nature have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

[1 : 57] For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks. But they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

For since in the wisdom of God, the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well pleased through the foolishness of the message to save those who believe.

And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formally walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.

Among them, we too all formally lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

I want to call your attention especially to a phrase that is mentioned in the last line of the second portion of scripture that was read this morning from Romans 18 through 21.

[3 : 41] You will note the last line says, And their foolish heart was darkened. Their foolish heart was darkened.

And then the next passage in 1 Corinthians 1. Since in the wisdom of God, the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.

And then the last two lines on the last reference. Now today we are going to launch an entirely new series that is going to encompass a great deal of history.

Some, of course, from the present. And then we will capsule that with a prophetic look at things that are to come. All of this will have to do with the dynamics and the unfolding of the plan and program of God for humanity all through the ages.

It's going to be rather extensive and I trust somewhat comprehensive, although I'm sure there is a great deal that we will miss. But we will do what we can to cover the bases.

[5 : 01] I'm not going to predict how extensive or how lengthy this series is going to be because every time I've done that in the past, I've always missed it.

So I'm not even going to make a prediction this time. But it seems to me only logical that we begin this particular series with a discussion of information origins.

What do I mean by that? Just this. Everything that you think and everything that you do is invariably based upon the information you have in your mind.

That's what prompts you to act. That's what prompts you to do the things that you do, whether they are right or whether they are wrong. We all function out of a base of information.

And this information is gathered from all kinds of sources. You and I, on a daily basis, are exposed to an enormous amount of input from all different kinds of directions.

[6 : 12] And all of that information that comes to us is formulated in our mind and we process it. Sometimes we just almost immediately dismiss it as being invalid and we don't give it any consideration at all.

Sometimes we begin to think seriously about it. And then sometimes we promptly act on the basis of that information. Information is so critical.

When we talk about this, we're talking about data. We're talking about facts. We're talking about things that we either know or think we know.

That's information. And as much as I have studied this subject over the years, I've come to one conclusion. And, of course, it is subject to revision.

But I've given it a great deal of thought. And my conclusion is that there are only three possible sources of information. If you can think of a fourth, I would appreciate knowing it because I'd like to include it.

[7 : 17] But I can only think of three possible sources of information. And the first one has to do with the mind of man.

It is information that you provide yourself based on the information that you get. You process the information. You take the data and you functionalize it in your mind.

You process it. It goes through a very complex system of the brain, the network, the neurons, and all of that.

And we are comparing and evaluating and weighing and thinking within ourselves as to what we are hearing, whether it is valid, whether it deserves to be acted upon or dismissed or whatever.

It is the mind of man. And when you read a column in the daily newspaper, you are receiving information from a man or a woman, a human source.

[8 : 20] When you read a book, you're getting man's information. When you look at a billboard, you are receiving man's information. That's a principal source of information.

All of us receive it. If you're blind, you still receive it. If you're deaf, you still receive it. Because our ear and eye gate gives us the data and we process it.

This is the first that we will consider. It is the mind of man. And then secondly, there is the mind of Satan.

This is scripturally referred to as the adversary. He has a game plan. The apostle Paul talks about Satan and his devices.

And he says, we are not ignorant of his devices. That means Satan has schemes. He has a methodology. He has favorite scams that he likes to work.

[9 : 23] And he's always looking for people that he can work them on. He is a fallen angel. And the scriptures reveal him to be an original rebel against the authority of God.

So Satan has his own ideas, his own imaginations. Peter tells us that Satan is like a roaring lion who walks about the earth seeking whom he may devour.

And perhaps Satan's greatest single exception is his ability to convince people that he doesn't even exist. So why fear him?

Many consider Satan to be nothing more than a myth or a fabric of man's imagination. But he has no reality. But we know different because the scriptures make it very, very clear.

He is a source of information. And he deceives. When you deceive someone, you cause them to think that things are other than they really are.

[10 : 27] Satan is the enemy of reality. And he creates unreality. And people buy into the unreality. And they are led astray by it.

Nonetheless, he is a source of information. None of it is good, but it's still information. Pornography is information.

Movies are information. Television is information. Talking to your neighbor next door is information. All of these things constitute information. And then, of course, the third source of information is the word of God.

And that is designed to give us an infallible source of information. Because if we get information from a man, it may or may not be true.

If we get information from Satan, he's called the father of lies. He wouldn't know how to tell the truth. So any information obtained from him is going to be wrong information.

[11 : 30] And then lastly, of course, from the word of God. And thy word is truth. The entrance of thy word gives light. This is the only reliable source we have for infallible information.

It comes from one who cannot lie. God cannot lead you astray. God cannot do anything but be truthful. So that is why we constantly have to appeal to the authority of scripture.

Because all other authority is suspect. When we set a human up as an authority, it very often is just a question of time until he is proved to not be an authority.

After all, we've seen that happen time and time again. When Adam and Eve underwent the experience of disobedience, they fell away from their original status with which God had created them.

In the same way, or in some ways, they became less than they were. And in some ways, they became more than they were.

[12 : 43] That is, as God created them. For instance, how they become less than what they were is they experienced a loss of innocence.

They are no longer innocent as God created them. Some feel that God created Adam and Eve perfect. I would question the use of that word perfect because I think of perfect as being incapable or unable to sin or to disobey.

But we know that they were not. So I prefer to use the term that God created Adam and Eve innocent so that they had no moral blemish or spot on them.

But they nonetheless had the capacity, the ability, the potential to disobey their maker.

And when they did, they also became more than what they were created to be. More in the sense that they now have gained.

[13 : 48] They have gained the knowledge of evil, which previously they did not have. Adam and Eve subsequently passed both the lesser and the greater on to their progeny.

These lesser and greater consequences remain with us today. Every child born of Adam and Eve, beginning with Cain and Abel and continuing even to this present dispensation, were born with a loss of innocence.

And they are born with an innate kind of knowledge of evil. And that will show itself as soon as they are old enough and able enough to rebel against parental authority.

And that usually shows up around the time of potty training. Doesn't it? Or maybe even a little bit earlier. The net consequences of their actions is death.

You really need to understand that. The net consequences of Adam and Eve's moral failure and fall is death.

[15 : 02] And when God said, in the day that you eat thereof, you will surely die. In other words, he didn't say, you might put yourself at risk when you eat of it.

And there is a possibility that you may die. No, no, no. You will surely die. Well, we all know that when they ate of that fruit, whatever it was, neither of them keeled over physically.

But something about their being did die. And what it was that did die was the human spirit that God created within them.

He breathed into Adam the breath of life. And Adam became a living soul. This spirit part of our being, of your being, of every human being's being, this human spirit, is that which has the ability and the capacity to connect with God.

When you became a believer in Jesus Christ as your Savior, your body physically was not affected at all. But something on the inside of you was.

[16 : 24] That is your human spirit. That is that which connects with God, is able to respond to God. That is that which God regenerated.

He made you new on the inside in your human spirit. Didn't change your kidneys. Didn't change your stomach. Didn't change your brain. It changed the immaterial part of your being.

And we don't have any idea how he did that. But we know that we are a new creation in Christ. And that capacity to relate to God, Adam and Eve, forfeited.

And that's how they died. That day that they ate. They died spiritually. The connection they had between themselves and God was somehow severed.

And whereas previously, they are described as communicating and walking with God in the garden in the cool of the day.

[17 : 27] And they obviously had some kind of a connection, a fellowship, a friendship, a togetherness that came to an end.

And now, when they hear God coming in the garden, they don't go out to meet him. They hide from him.

Why? Because they're afraid. The connection has been broken. They disobeyed. And when they did, guilt.

Guilt set in. Guilt. Guilt is an awareness that we have engaged in a moral wrongdoing.

Guilt rises up within us. It pricks our conscience. It makes us uneasy and nervous and agitated and always looking over your shoulder.

[18 : 32] That is the fear that sets in and is generated by guilt. And when God came looking for them, they hid. They were afraid.

And they hid. What did they have to be afraid? They had a new psyche. They had a new dimension to their being. They never had guilt before. But they have guilt now.

And they hid from God. So it is this spirit that died and was disconnected from God. Just like all who are today unbelievers, they are alienated from God.

And Ephesians 2 makes this quite clear. When Paul spells out the true plight of the Gentiles who had their existence before Christ came along and what their picture was before they believed in Christ.

And that was true of humanity. And it's true of all humanity today too. They are without God, without hope in this present world. That's about as bad off as you can be. That is separated, alienated from God.

[19 : 39] And of course, what Jesus Christ was all about was to establish the reconnection. It has been said, and I think rightly so, that God is so committed to relationships that he went to the extent of giving up his only begotten son and sending him into the world to die for the sins of the human race simply so he could restore broken relationships between the creature and the creator.

That's why Jesus came. That's what the cross is all about. That's what the empty grave is all about.

That's what the person of Christ and his work is all about. It's reconnecting a broken connection.

This spiritual death, of course, is that which was realized immediately upon their partaking of that fruit. That's when they died spiritually. Now, we know, and the scriptures bear this out, and I'm not going into the explanation of the longevity of life, but yes, those are actual literal years, and the world was functioning under an entirely different circumstance, different atmosphere, different climate, different everything.

So that Adam lived to be 930 years old before he died physically. And I take it that the connection that was lost between Adam and Eve and God was reconnected in light of the animal that was slain and the sacrifice that was made in order to provide a covering for Adam and Eve.

It's very symbolic, and yet at the same time, it was a very powerful thing, much more than just a symbol then. So the reconnection between Adam and Eve and God was able to be realized because penalty had been paid for their disobedience.

[21 : 44] And the penalty was in the person of an animal, an innocent animal. We don't know what kind it was, but it was slain, and God made coverings for their naked bodies from the skins of that animal.

And that, by the way, forever set in motion the whole principle of sacrifice and substitution, which is a picture of that which is innocent, guilty of no wrongdoing in its own, that which was innocent, dying in the place of the guilty.

And we look at that and say, well, that isn't right. You're right. It isn't right. That isn't just. No, it isn't just.

That isn't fair. No, it isn't fair that the innocent should die for the guilty. It isn't right. It isn't just. It isn't fair. But it is grace.

And that's a hurdle that man has great difficulty getting over. God is a gracious God. And God demands that the scales of justice be balanced.

[22 : 54] And it can be balanced only when adequate payment is made for the wrongs committed. And that's precisely what he did through Jesus Christ. And in setting up this principle of sacrifice, and this, by the way, this is what Christianity is all about.

It's substitution. It is Christ died for our sins. That's it. That's the whole message. And if you have anything related to Christianity that doesn't include that, it's something else than Christianity.

Christ died for our sins. That's the essence of it. That's the gospel. That's the good news. That's what we are commissioned to proclaim. So, we have spiritual death setting in immediately upon the

violation, followed by physical death 930 years later.

And this, by the way, is why we are all going to die physically unless Christ returns. Because even though you may be a believer, and you have a regenerated spirit that is connected with God, you don't have a regenerated body.

And Paul makes it clear in Romans chapter 8, that the time is coming when this body, this body will be changed like under the glorious body of Christ, Paul talks about in Philippians, and how the whole creation groans and travails in pain until now, waiting for the redemption of our bodies.

[24 : 22] The redemptive work that Christ paid was complete, entire, lacking nothing, nothing undone, nothing unpaid for. But the application of it hasn't been made yet, except to our spirit.

And that is the down payment of the spirit, or the first fruits, if you will. That is God's guaranteeing us that he is going to complete what he began.

And you're not completed now. None of us is. You won't be completed until your body is glorified and regenerated, just like your spirit is.

So we are all a work in process. So the net consequences of their actions is death, and it encompasses all things living, plants and animals, all biological life is now assigned to death.

Everything that has life is going to die. You are, your dog is, your favorite pet is, whatever it may be, your favorite flower is going to die, your favorite plant is going to die, trees are going to die, everything is going to die.

[25 : 36] And you read in the fifth chapter of Genesis, what happened to all of humanity. It's the death chapter. And as you read the chapter, and so-and-so lived so many years, begat you, and he died.

And so-and-so lived so many years, begat you, and he died. And so-and-so lived so many years, begat you, and he died, and he died, and he died, over and over and over again. And as you pick up today's newspaper, and look at the obituary column, all you can say is, these all died.

These all died. And what you are doing, right now, is waiting your turn. Because you're going to die too. All of us are. It is appointed unto man once to die.

And after this, the judgment. Question. If God knew this to be the end of what he began in creating our first parents, why did he do so?

Or why did he create them with this capacity? I've been asked this question a number of times. And it comes from people who feel they have a bone to pick with God.

[26 : 44] Because if this God is supposed to know everything, then he knew what was going to happen. when he created Lucifer, that he would rebel against him.

He knew what was going to happen when he created Adam and Eve. And look what has followed in their trail. Death. Death. Disease. Heartache.

Illness. Incapacity. Wounds. Hurts. On and on and on. Pogroms. Genocide. People shedding blood wantonly.

Atomic bombs that wipe out thousands of lives with one dropping. All of these things come. If God knew that that was all going to be the reality, why in the world did he create them that way?

And may I suggest, and I realize it's kind of dangerous to do this, but I can't see it any other way, and that is God had no choice.

[27 : 51] What do you mean? God always has choices. He's the God of options. He can do whatever he wants to do. He's God. Well, he had no choice if he wanted to grant his creatures a volition.

Now, if he wanted to make sure that they wouldn't really mess up things and bring down death upon the whole human race and all of the misery and wars and everything that goes along with it, God could have just created Adam and Eve in a perfect kind of state where they just didn't have the ability to do wrong, stupid things.

That everything they did would be right. and then there would be no problem. No heartache. No death. No disease.

Because they didn't have the ability to disobey. All they could do was obey. So man would be little more than a human computer who answers only to the programmer.

And God programs you and you just yes, master, just like a robot, just like a puppet. You do no wrong because you can't do wrong.

[29 : 12] But what kind of creation would that be? There would not even be a desire to please God on the part of the automaton because you couldn't do anything else but you not only would not have

the capacity to do right to do wrong because you chose to.

You wouldn't even have the ability to do right because you chose to. You would only do right because you were programmed to do right. You couldn't do anything else. Now if you transfer that to a human and human level how would that apply?

like obedience when your child obeys you isn't there a certain something that exists there that is different from when he disobeys you?

Isn't there a pleased parent with voluntary obedience and would the parent have the right to be pleased if the child couldn't do anything but obey?

What's the point of that? What's the value of that? And if you transfer obedience to love what would what would your mate's love be worth if your mate loved you because they had no choice they had to love you wasn't an option with them what would that love be worth?

[31 : 02] Not very much because we all want to be loved because the person who loves us just loves us just chooses to love us wants to love us of their own free will wants to love us that's love worth something and I think God feels the same way about it not only that but it is our having a volition that provides God with the basis for evaluating and judging our actions there's nothing to judge and nothing to evaluate if everything you do is a result of being programmed but there is a basis for accountability if we are made with a volition with the capacity to obey or disobey so in my estimation volition volition became a divine necessity unless God wanted to create robotic like beings who had no choice but to do as he programmed them God endowed them with the power of choice from the day he created them the potential for their disobedience was with them from their creation and if they didn't have the potential for disobedience there would have been no point in warning them about the tree of which they were not to eat because

God would have reasoned I know they couldn't do that anyway they wouldn't do that anyway well we all know the story of what happened and of course today it is fashionable to even deny the historicity of Adam and Eve and you can read even in some so called Christian commentaries where there are those of considerable standing in academia who suggest that Adam and Eve were simply mythological characters that they never really existed and even continuing that theme how then did humanity come about according to the mind of many men how did humanity come about according to the mind of many men now here is an information source the mind of many men how do they account for there being something rather than nothing the vast majority of academia today insist on the concept of evolution without any necessity of a creator

Stephen Hawking who for several years has been confined to a wheelchair with a very persistent case of Lou Gehrig's disease he communicates with just tapping a computer with one finger that's all he can do he is generally hailed as the world's greatest living physicist on both sides of the pond there isn't hardly anyone anywhere who would contest the genius and the brilliance of Stephen Hawking he's one that wrote the best seller a brief history of eternity and in his book he posited the idea that it was entirely possible and even likely for the universe to create itself because of the existence of the law of gravity now if he went on to explain exactly how that would work I'm sure I wouldn't have the mind capable of understanding his explanation but of course the first question we have to ask is where did gravity come from but apparently he doesn't give the answer to that and we don't know exactly how this universe was supposed to have created itself because of the existence of the law of gravity

Richard Dawkins who has written a number of best-selling books and is one of the more prominent world-famous atheists has actually posited the idea when he was confronted by with a creationist as to what his theory was then of course he's an evolutionist but how did these things begin how did life begin and this by the way Stephen Hawkins I'm sorry not Stephen Hawkins but Richard Dawkins is not an uneducated man he's on the faculty of Oxford University and he's generally regarded as one of the most brilliant minds around and pick up on this from one of the most brilliant minds around being at a loss is to explain and to account for life and the beginning of life as we know it he suggested that there is every bit the probability that alien beings from another planet came to earth and implanted spores on the earth that mutated and evolved and eventually became biological life and that started the whole process of evolution now of course there isn't one single whit of evidence to establish anything like that and yet we are supposed to be the ones who are far out because we say in the beginning

God created the heavens and the earth surely you can't believe that isn't aliens from another planet coming here and planting spores on earth isn't that a lot more reasonable now what I am telling you

is this listen this is some of the finest minds available today generally agreed upon and this is what they come up with incorporated in the fall of our first parents was the intellectual capacity with which they were endowed originally by their creator that too experienced the fall and the passage that we read earlier from Romans and their foolish heart or mind and the heart is the core of our being we know when the Bible speaks of the heart it's not talking about the blood pump but it's talking about the essence of our humanity it says their foolish heart was darkened what's that mean as a man thinketh in his heart so is he that's the essence of your thinking and thought processes it involves the mind the brain and all the rest of it and it's not talking about your blood pump that's what our cardiologists are talking about but that's not what the

[37 : 53] Bible's talking about and when it talks about the foolish heart being darkened it means that man's mental capacity his intellect has a cloud over it it is obscured it is veiled it is darkened so that he is not able to see reality clearly in fact I think it is safe to say that spiritually speaking man borders on insanity spiritual insanity we talk about a definition of what it means to be insane and we say that someone is mentally insane if they are unable to distinguish right from wrong or if they cannot recognize reality that's insane there is a spiritual insanity as well which keeps man from seeing issues as they really are and this is part and parcel of our fallenness man is not able to take information that he gets and process it and come to a right conclusion because his thinking processes are skewed he has a warped intellect and this enables him to reach wrong conclusions because he is not really plugged in to what is really real he may think he is but he isn't spiritually speaking and there are a couple of passages that I think really bring this out some Christians in talking about the evolutionary hypothesis come if you will to

Exodus chapter 20 and I just have a couple of verses to give you before we before we conclude this Exodus chapter 20 and while you're turning to it in an effort to mollify or to satisfy the critics because science seemed to have so many people of sterling credentials and academics on their side who were insisting on evolution many in the Christian community and I'm talking now about back in the 1880s and 90s shortly after the origin of species came out by Charles Darwin it left a lot of the clergy here and in Europe scrambling because what Darwin presented seemed to be so ironclad that there was just no way around it and of course many of our evolutionist friends feel that way today and they insist that evolution is a proven fact case closed and that's where many of them are coming from this they are they are very certain and in an effort to avoid embarrassment and not look bad among the public a number of theologians and clergymen in the late 1800s adopted a thing called theistic evolution and what that does is it makes it makes all life having evolved from a common source but

God did it God created but he used evolution to do it and that's why they call it theistic which of course refers to the presence and the power of God it is God's evolution and their estimation was that that solved both problems that answers the evolutionist yes evolution is true and Genesis yes God created that's true too so you've got the best of both worlds the only problem is for the Christian who takes the Bible seriously we've got Genesis 1 to contend with and for those who want to make it figurative or plug in the day age theory or the millions and millions of years or whatever I am persuaded and you don't have to buy this I am persuaded that the Bible is a book that is intended to reveal to communicate to let us in on what

God wants us to know and Genesis 1 by far and away makes the best sense and the clearest sense when it is taken at face value and we could enter into arguments from now until doomsday over the meaning of yom and the meaning of a day in Hebrew but if you take Genesis 1 to be at face value as I am confident it was intended to be we have what some would dismiss as simplistic which I think is very very profound there's nothing simple about it the six days of creation and God resting on the seventh and by the way we still have all over the world seven days in our week where did that come from how was the seven day week established I think it was established from Genesis chapter 1 and there's no reason to look for it any place else and if you look for it someplace else you won't find it Genesis 1 is the only place you'll find it seven day week and the passage that I referred to earlier in Exodus chapter 20 and verse 11 Moses is speaking as God inspires him and he says for in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth the sea and all that is in them and rested on the seventh day therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy I see no justification at all for reading into that poetry it's just a straightforward fact now it may appear too simplistic for those of a very profound kind of thinking mind but I think that the vast majority of the things that are recorded in the Bible are simple to the point plain straightforward

intended to be understood and taken at face value it's designed to communicate not obfuscate not complicate but to reveal the Bible is a book of revelation not concealment we don't have a record where God is giving us certain data and he says now let's just see you try and figure that out that's not what we have we have a clearly intentioned text that is designed to communicate in a straightforward understandable easy to grasp manner and that's the way it ought to be taken our [44 : 56] Lord spoke of this in Matthew 9 19 I'm sorry Matthew 19 and verses 1 and 5 1 through 5 and he said have you not read that he who created them created them male and female now what can a Christian do with a clear-cut straightforward statement like that from the Savior if God did not create them in the beginning male and female just like Genesis says then one of two things is true regarding Jesus first of all he didn't really understand he was confused too when Jesus said he created them male and female he was sadly mistaken so you have a mistaking

Savior you have an ignorant Savior really or if Jesus really knew that it was human beings caused by an alien from another planet putting spores on the earth and bringing he really knew that's the way it actually happened but he went along with it because that's what the masses believed this creation stuff then you have then you have a Savior who really knew better but was willing to continue the scam because he thought that's what most of the people believed does that sound like the Jesus you know not to me either in the first case he's an ignorant Savior in the second case he's a deceptive Savior and the bottom line is he's not worthy to be anybody's Savior you see we cannot play with these things fast and loose they are given here in the record for our information and we take that information

I want to give you one more example and it's in Acts chapter 17 and this is just so typical of where humanity is it is remarkable Acts chapter 17 this is Paul's encounter on Mars Hill and I want to remind you again that these people on Mars Hill were the philosophers of the day I mean let me put it this way these guys were a bunch of brains they were a bunch of intellectuals you remember Athens Athens was the center of learning the center of intellectual thought the center of the big brains and the high IQs this is the hometown of Socrates and Plato and Aristotle these are major thinkers that still have a profound impact on the world today especially of philosophy and what does Paul say chapter 17 and verse 16 while Paul was waiting for them at Athens his spirit that's his part of him that connects with God his spirit was being provoked within him as he was beholding the city full of idols each of these idols represented a Greek god it was a statue with the name of the Greek god below it a statue of a supposed deity that had no reality or objective existence at all none just made up in the minds of men because men have to have something to worship some are contented with worshipping themselves but some want an external quality like a deity and here this whole city is covered with them on the corner of every street you'd find a different idol and Paul points that out and he goes on and encounters them in a debate and it is quite interesting they call him they are the Epicureans and stoic philosophers who were conversing with Paul and some were saying what would this idol babbling wish to say others he seems to be a proclaimer of strange deities because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection these people were into idolatry they didn't believe that there was a god they believed there was a multiple of gods there was a god of the hunt there was a god of the sea there was statues around with their names on them and Paul said there is one god that you don't know and I've come to tell you about him and that of course is the true god but the one that just absolutely blows me away is a couple chapters later Acts chapter 19 this is just so stunningly revealing as to what man is really all about when he is left to his own devices chapter 19 and verse 23 this is remarkable

Paul is at Ephesus he's in this huge stadium seats thousands of people and they're having a big confat big city meeting and he is there and he stirred up a lot of commotion and we begin reading in verse 23 about that time there arose no small disturbance concerning the way of course this is the Christian way the way of Christ and when the Bible says no small disturbance what's that mean it means a really big disturbance it means a big brouhaha there's no small disturbance this is on the order of a riot and a certain man named Demetrius a silversmith who made silver shrines of Artemis made these little silver tokens of this goddess Artemis some translated Diana and they were little amulets and they would wear them around their neck they would put them on them and they were their gods in miniature and these silversmiths had a very cushy business going because they made these things out of silver and sold them in the marketplace they were very popular this was a going concern a real business that they had going here and it says he was bringing no little business to the craftsman what does that mean no little business means this was a major player in the local

economy these people had clout and they had connections and they had a going business that everybody recognized and we are told these he gathered together with the workmen of similar trades and said men you know that our prosperity depends upon this business this is our livelihood you're talking about putting food on the table and you see in here that not only in

[52 : 12] Ephesus right here but in almost all of Asia or Asia Minor this guy this guy Paul has persuaded and turned away a considerable number of people saying that gods made with hands are no gods at all what can you imagine that gods made with hands our hands fashioned silver our hands that they aren't really gods at all no how could anyone say or think such a thing everybody knows that they're gods just like everybody knows that evolution is a fact doesn't everybody know that at least every respectable scientist knows that same thing same principle same blindness same processing of information with a warped fallen intellect read on and not only is there danger that this trade of ours fall into dispute but also that the temple of the great goddess

Artemis be regarded as worthless no here they had this temple and many other temples erected in name and honor of their gods and their gods in reality do not even exist at all not at all and Paul says when he writes to the Corinthians about eating meat offered to idols he says an idol is nothing an idol is nothing it has no objective reality or existence to it but what is behind the idol they don't know that when they sacrifice to this idols they are sacrificing to demons and they don't even know it demonic power is behind this whole thing all of it and so it is here in Ephesus and they don't know it why don't they know it because they don't have the ability to see reality as it is and to understand that there is but one true

God they make gods with their hands I remember hearing this missionary talk about these people in a remote tribe in Africa they cut down a tree and from this tree they fashioned and carved an image like an idol and out of the rest of the wood they put in the fire and use it you call part of the tree God and you call part of it fuel worthy for burning that's nuts that's crazy yes it is but it is also the conclusion reached by a warped intellect skewed thinking they cannot see things as they are and as we read on with this it is it is remarkable verse 27 and not only is there danger that this trade of ours fall into dispute but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis be regarded as worthless and listen to this and that she whom all of

Asia and the world worship should even be dethroned from her magnificence and boy that was the fat in the fire when they said that these people just rose up and it says when they heard this they were filled with rage what does that mean it means you have insulted our deity they acted just like Muslims act today when they say Allah is a non-existent being rage I'll kill you for saying that well it's quite a passage I would encourage you at your leisure to read the rest of it it is quite striking as to the conclusions that man comes to when left to his own devices and this is precisely where humanity has been and still is we construct and manufacture all kinds of things because we do not have the proper thinking capacity that is needed to reach right conclusions what's the antidote there's only one and that's the word of

God the word of God is designed to offset all of the error and all of the phoniness and all of the falseness that's out there by giving us the real scoop that's why it has to be our only source for authority and practice it's there in the scriptures so this is foundational to the series that's going to follow and I trust that you will be with us right along and if you cannot be here you can make arrangements very easily to get copies of the messages if you're interested sent to you at no charge at all well would you stand please father we are so grateful that the entrance of your words give light and we are satisfied that nothing else really does so in the time that is to come help us to evaluate everything that we teach and everything that we believe in the light of the word of

[58 : 15] God and we are so grateful for this revelation because without it the darkness would be so great it would be just utterly overwhelming thank you for the record that you provided thank you for the son that you provided thank you for the salvation through him that you provided we want to drink deeply of the wells of information that you have provided and we are so grateful that because you have regenerated us as believers you have given us a mind a renewed mind that is capable of thinking the thoughts of God after you and we are so grateful thank you for the presence of each one this morning for the introduction that we have obtained from the scriptures and we pray that we use it as a foundation to build upon in Christ's name Amen