

The Jewish Final Solution to the World's Problem - Revelation, Part 12- The Jewishness of Christmas

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- [0 : 00] to please turn to the first chapter of 1st Corinthians. And in the first chapter of 1st Corinthians, we'll be looking at verses 18 through 25.
- For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.
- For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the cleverness of the clever I will set aside.
- Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debtor of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?
- 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, preached to save those who believe.
- [1 : 24] For indeed, Jews ask for signs, and Greeks search for wisdom. But we preach Christ crucified.
- To Jews a stumbling block, and to Gentiles foolishness. But to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.
- Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. Amen. Quite some time ago, I delivered a message here at Grace that focused upon the very subject that we are talking about this morning.
- I don't recall exactly how many years ago it was. It could have been five or six, and when I say that, it usually ends up being ten or twelve. But at any rate, the theme was the same, and that had to do with the Jewishness of Christmas.
- Because Christmas was, and is, in reality, Jewish. I suspect that this message may raise a few eyebrows, and cause some to wonder just exactly what is he getting at here.
- [2 : 52] Because I've always thought of Christmas as being the epitome of a Christian holiday, certainly not a Jewish holiday. And is it not true that the Jews certainly do not regard Christmas as a Jewish holiday?
- And that most assuredly is true. They do not. Though I have found this in my own mind and heart to be extremely reinforced, particularly after we have engaged the series of studies that we still are engaged in, having to do with the Jewish final solution to the world's problems.
- And it has convinced me more than ever that Christmas is as Jewish as it can possibly be. Now, there is no question that we who are Christians have incredibly benefited from that holiday, if that's what you want to call it.
- And by the way, the word holiday really has its roots in the meaning of the word holy day. Except we spell holiday a little differently than we would holy day.

The Jewish people, as I mentioned, have never known or believed this to be a Jewish holiday, and they still don't to this day. Now, this message this morning will, I suppose, be somewhat different in that I put it together in a way that I suspect I probably never have before, and I just sat down and started writing.

[4 : 23] I don't claim any kind of divine inspiration, but I just jotted down thoughts as they came to me about this particular day, the significance of it, some of the events that surrounded it, and of course, the consequences that flow from it.

So, as I just wrote, I just continued writing, and all I'm going to do now is essentially read to you what I've written. It just doesn't sound right to say Christmas is Jewish.

Doesn't everyone know this day to be a premier day for Christians? In a sense, Christmas truly is a day deservedly revered by Christians simply because it is recognized worldwide as the day our Savior was born with the task of redeeming all of humanity, Jews and Gentiles as well.

So, while Christmas is Jewish and the celebrated birthday of the Savior, it is those who are Christians that have, as I said, benefited from Christmas far more than have the Jewish people.

Christians, since the birth of Christ, see it as an incalculable positive while the Jewish people see Jesus as an illegitimate Messiah and thus a negative, not a positive.

[5 : 54] Most Jews see Jesus as an impediment, a negative in every way to things Jewish. Their perception is, because of this man Jesus, embraced by Gentiles, the Gentiles have held Jews responsible for the death of Jesus and have sought revenge upon the Jewish people throughout the ages, extending even to the present day.

Great hatred and persecution has been heaped upon the Jewish people from the second and third century to the present, because they, in the minds of many, are held responsible for the death of Jesus the Messiah.

This persecution has produced an overwhelming fear and distrust on the part of Jewish people toward those calling themselves Christians.

It was from these professing Christians that the great majority of persecution came, and this persecution was perpetrated as it was fueled by ignorance on the part of those who carried it out.

To this day, Jews everywhere remain very suspicious and skeptical toward those calling themselves Christians. The persecution was carried on, but as just, and it was seen by those who were doing the persecuting as just punishment, and some who call themselves Christians really believe that they are called of God to exact vengeance and punishment upon the Jewish people for having crucified the Messiah.

[7 : 47] We are persuaded that there was involved with the Gentile ignorance and hatred a very generous involvement on the part of the adversary, none other than Satan himself.

It was only with great effort over a long period of time that an element of Christians has been able to gain some amount of trust by the Jewish people.

These are referred to as evangelical Christians, of which we here at Grace Bible Church are a part. Historic and traditional Christians who maintain the concept of replacement theology or supersessionism still hold the Jewish people in contempt and consider themselves as Christians to have replaced the Jewish people as the Christian Church.

As the Jewish people were once the favored people, the chosen people of God, these believe they no longer are and have been replaced by the Christian Church.

Christians this, by the way, remains the majority position to this day among Christendom. If you simply consult the historical record, you will see that thousands upon thousands of Jewish people over a period of hundreds of years were forced into converting to Christianity by being publicly baptized and if they were not willing to do that, they would be punished in some other way.

[9 : 25] Many of them would be exiled and driven out of land. So the forced conversions have gone on under the guise of Christianity in much the same way that forced conversions go on today in the name of Islam in areas where they have conquered territory and forced the people there to submit and be converted to Islam.

Jesus was born Jewish and will always be Jewish. Jewish people who believe in Jesus as their Messiah and Savior do not become Christians and cease to be Jewish.

They become Jewish believers or completed Jews. The Jewishness of every Jew who embraces Jesus as their Savior remains as fully Jewish as ever.

Christmas is Jewish. That is little understood if at all especially by the Jews themselves.

Christians and Jews regard Christmas exclusively as a Christian holiday. And that's the way the world at large sees this.

[10 : 45] Christians of course see Christmas as a Christian holiday. And Jews the same. I suspect you will not find any bona fide Jews anywhere who would consider Christmas a Jewish holiday.

But it really, really is. And for these reasons. Number one, Jesus was and is Jewish and he is Christmas.

He really is the reason for the season. And I am surprised at how many Christians, I mean people who truly know the Lord, think of Jesus as being the model Christian.

That Jesus was the best Christian there ever was. No, he wasn't and he isn't. As we try to make clear here repeated times at Grace, Jesus Christ was not qualified to be a Christian.

In order to be a Christian, you have to recognize your sin, repent of your sin, and embrace Yeshua HaMashiach as your Savior. That makes you a Christian.

[11 : 57] That's called justification by faith. So you see, only sinners are qualified to become Christians. Jesus wasn't qualified. Sinless Son of God had no need for repentance or anything of the kind.

So he is not and never has been a Christian. Abraham, the Hebrew, is the origin of the Jewish people. Following in his train were his sons, Isaac, grandson Jacob, the twelve sons of Jacob, the fourth of which was Judah, who was the head of the royal tribe.

Jesus was to be born as the lion of the tribe of Judah. Genesis chapter 49 makes that quite clear. and item three, it was to these Jewish people that one of their own would come forth from the line of Judah through David the king, who of course was Jewish.

And upon coming to his own people, the Jewish nation, he was rejected of them, according to John 1, says he came into his own, and his own received him not.

item four, Jesus' birth and station were announced by the many Old Testament prophets, all of whom were Jewish.

[13 : 16] And this, by the way, is probably the more outstanding evidence for the veracity and the authority and the accuracy of the Bible as being the word of God.

If you look at none other prophecy other than those regarding the person and work of Christ in the Old Testament, you will find compelling evidence there that simply cannot possibly be dismissed as coincidental, at least not by any thinking individual.

Prophecies given regarding our Lord Jesus dating all the way back to Genesis chapter 3 and enumerated many times through the prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel and Daniel and all the minor prophets, all of them point to the coming of this Savior in such a precise way that there is no way in the world that it can be attributed to coincidence.

There had to be a divine mind behind all that information that was so carefully spelled out. He was to be born of a Jewish maiden, a virgin in the Jewish town of Bethlehem, reared in the Jewish town of Nazareth, crucified and raised from the dead in the Jewish town of Jerusalem.

And, at his birth, he would be visited by Jewish shepherds at the instructions of an angel. Now, nowhere does the Bible say that the angels were Jewish.

[14 : 48] I suspect they were not Jewish or Gentile. They were just angels. angels. And, these Jewish shepherds were to find this Jewish baby lying in an animal feeding trough in the nearby Jewish town of Bethlehem.

Later, this Jewish baby would be sought out by magi, or wise men, who came from a great distance in the east following a mysterious star that would lead them to Jerusalem, and then to where the baby was.

They came, said they, in search of the one who was to be born king of the Jews. Now, if these men were not themselves Jews, who were themselves familiar with the Jewish prophecies about one being born king of the Jews, why should they go out of their way to find him?

Why would they even care? But they did. And not only did they care, they said, explicitly that they had come to worship him.

And worship, as any Jew would know, was to be strictly reserved for God alone, not for any mere human. So, Christmas is as Jewish as it can be.

[16 : 15] The incarnation, and its extended consequences, constitute the divine irony of the ages. And for the benefit of young people who may be here, I want to explain what an irony is. When we say something is ironic, what do we mean?

And one of the dictionary definitions is, an irony is an incongruity. Well, maybe I ought to spell incongruity. An incongruity is something that doesn't seem like what it is.

It seems the opposite of what it is. It is an incongruity between the actual result of a sequence of events and the normal or expected result.

Now, let me give you just a brief example of an irony. an irony could be expressed in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ in connection with what the consequences of it turned out to be.

[17 : 27] And although we don't ordinarily think of the crucifixion as being a matter of irony, from a literary standpoint, it certainly was. Because the thought and intent behind the crucifixion of Jesus Christ was simply this.

to kill him, get him out of the way, to finish him off, to be able to hear from him or about him no more, to be done with this man.

That was the intent and purpose. But those who were involved had absolutely no idea at all in their wildest imagination the consequences that would flow from what their original intentions were.

Because it is through that death, burial, and resurrection, that crucifixion on that terrible cross, that God had planned all along to be the instrument for the redemption of the entire human race.

God this has to have been one of the greatest backfires in all human history as far as the adversary Satan was concerned.

[18 : 42] Remember the night he was betrayed? We are told that Satan entered in to Judas. And Judas went out and found the chief priests and closed the deal for handing over Jesus of Nazareth.

And none of them, not Judas, not the priests, not any of them, had any idea at all that in effect they were mere pawns in the plan and program of God.

And he was going to turn the tables on that event and bring out of it a glorious redemption for the human race. That is a divine irony.

The outcome was a total opposite of what any logical person would have expected. Another illustration that comes to my mind has to do with Naomi when she went down into Moab with her husband.

And there her husband died and her two sons died and she had but these two daughters-in-law left and one of them, Orpah, left her and stayed there in Moab.

[20 : 02] And Ruth was the one who insisted that she not be separated from her mother, Naomi, and she said, where you go, I will go, and where you lodge, I will lodge, your people will be my people and your God will be my God.

And this was Ruth the Moabitess coming from a land of pagans where they worshipped idols and even offered their children as human sacrifice.

And this constitutes a conversion to Judaism on the part of this woman. And Naomi was so upset when she returned home and all of her relatives gathered out, Naomi, Naomi, we're so glad to see you back.

Naomi, Naomi, Naomi, Naomi, Naomi, Naomi, Naomi, Naomi, Naomi's back from Moab and she's going to live here again. And Naomi said, don't call me Naomi, call me Mara.

And Mara is a Hebrew word that means bitter. And she said, God has dealt bitterly with me. Long story short, Ruth met Boaz and the sparks flew.

[21 : 17] And romance followed. And marriage followed. And a baby followed. And the baby was going to be the grandson of David, the grandfather of David the king.

And who would have thought God maintaining that royal line and even using a Gentile, a Moabitess in the mix?

That is a divine irony. All, all poor Naomi could see was disappointment and heartbreak and how can anything possibly good come out of this?

Here I've gone down to Moab, lost my husband, lost my first son, lost my second son. All I've got to show for my life now is this one daughter-in-law.

And who would have imagined in their wildest dreams that that would complete that aspect of the royal line of the seed of David.

[22 : 24] And out of that relationship, out of that deprivation, out of that marah, out of that bitterness, out of that loss of a husband and loss of two sons, God turned it all around.

That's nothing but an Old Testament example of Romans 8.28 working way back there in the Old Testament. That is a divine irony. We look at something like that and we see the outcome as being predictable thus and so and God pulls an old switcheroo, turns the whole thing around and he specializes in that.

So, there are multiple ironies involved in the entire scope of the Christmas story. Not only began with the irony of a baby, but of a Jewish baby.

And why is this so ironic? Well, is there anything that is more helpless and more harmless than a baby?

And yet, that's what God started out with. This innocent, precious little baby. This baby will, of course, become a man, yet he will still be characterized as meek and mild and gentle Jesus.

[23 : 44] And he who began his incarnation as a baby is going to have a thing for babies. And he's going to love little children. Let them come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven, and forbid them not.

So, in his manhood, though possessing immeasurable strength, Jesus made himself a person of weakness.

how weak, how weak is one who is nailed to a cross.

He's not going to do anything. He's not going anywhere. He just hangs there and quivers, feeling it in every nerve of his body as his life blood just oozes out of him.

That is an epitome of weakness. And out of that perceived weakness, he succeeded in elevating the entirety of humanity to a position of redemption.

[25 : 04] How ironic is that? How completely opposite was this event from what it seemed to be. It is ironic that God should become man, and it is as opposite to our thinking as possible.

It is ironic that the Savior of mankind should be born of those regarded as the least man among humanity.

I mean, who were these Jews? They were just a bunch of ragtag nobodies. In the structure of humanity as it existed at the time, they were the smallest of all.

They were the most insignificant of all. They were looked down upon more than all the others. They were the nobodies of their time. And, it is ironic that the very people to whom this Savior came would, in return, reject him as such.

I mean, after all, how long had they awaited their Messiah and longed for their Messiah? And then when he came, they rejected him.

[26 : 34] It is ironic that the very one who is the salvation of the Jewish people is the same one, not only rejected by them, but actually hated and feared of him among many Jews throughout the world.

There are many Jews living throughout the world who will not even use the name, Jesus of Nazareth. You know what they call him? That man.

That's as far as they'll go. That's true in many Jewish households. That man. Many of you have read Adventures of Zvi in Israel, My Glory.

A man who was a completed Jew, came to faith in Christ as a young man, spent the rest of his life witnessing and evangelizing his own people in and outside the land of Israel, had many encounters with his own countrymen, the Jews, who would not even in his presence repeat the name, Jesus of Nazareth.

That man. That man. That's as far as they would go. He has seen that man as the nemesis, the enemy of many Jews, when in fact he Jesus loves these rejecting Jews more than they love themselves.

[28 : 04] Isn't that ironic? It is equally ironic that the Jewish race is so gifted as outstanding in so many ways they have excelled among humanity in the fields of intellectual pursuit, including science, medicine, engineering, technology, and the arts.

Yet, they are spiritually incapable of comprehending the one who is behind it all. And Paul reminds us as a Jew, as a completed Jew, Paul reminds us in Romans that blindness in part is happened unto Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles become in.

The day will come when the cover will be removed from this multitude of ironies, and the ironies will be seen for the realities behind them.

And, lastly, it is ironic that the way of receiving the benefit of salvation provided by this Savior is also related to an acknowledged weakness on the part of the recipient.

One would think, and human logic would compel us to reason this way, that God is looking for a few good men and good women, so that he can claim them for himself.

[29 : 47] And God is looking out over the sea of humanity, and he wants to find those who are outstanding. People who are moral examples, people whose character and reputation is above reproach, and people who are really good people.

And those are the kind of people that God is trying to recruit. After all, if you were going to take on a large kind of responsibility, wouldn't you want to garner only the very best people that you could, the cream of the crop?

That's what human logic would compel and would even require. But isn't it ironic that God chooses the foolish things of the world, the weak things, the sinful things, things that are not, that he might make them what he wants to make them.

That is completely ironic. God is not looking for a few good men or good women. God is looking for acknowledged sinners who understand they have no merit and nothing to brag about on their own.

They have no reason why this God should want to recruit them or call them to his side. Those are the kind of people that God is after.

[31 : 20] Weak people, failing people, flawed people, and frankly, those are the only kind of people we have. But out of all those people that we have, there's only an element who's willing to be honest enough to admit it.

And God delights in that. Because when we admit who and what we really are, all we're doing is lining ourselves with the truth. And God is a lover of the truth.

And God aligns himself with those who align themselves with the truth. And that leads us to see ourselves as we really are. And then, out of this sense of awareness and acknowledgement and admission, and by the way, the Bible calls this confession.

it means to agree. God says thus and so, and thus and so, and thus and so, is sin and sinful behavior. And we look at that list and we say, swallow hard and say, that's what I am.

That's what I am. Then you are making a confession. You are agreeing with God as to your true state. God loves that. God loves for us to see things as he sees them, because that's the only right way of seeing them, other than being self-deceived and thinking we have this going for us or that going for us or all the rest.

[32 : 49] No, no. It is totally ironic that God is looking for the helpless, the hopeless, the sinful.

But the Son of Man came not to call the righteous or the supposedly righteous, but sinners to himself. And Jesus was soundly rebuked by that, because if he was any kind of an upstanding savior at all, he wouldn't even associate with the likes of these people who were tax collectors and prostitutes and the profligates of the earth.

And those were exactly the ones he were, because these were people who were honest enough to admit what they were, and that delighted his heart. So, all of these ironies come into play.

It is ironic that men and women are redeemed and brought to faith through Jesus Christ by acknowledging who and what we are, by confession, agreement, by repentance, that is a changing of mind.

We're willing to say, this is what I am. This is what I am. And God knows I don't want to be this. repent. And I recognize my sin, and I recognize things that I have done in the past that I have been able to justify in my own mind, been able to convince myself that those things were okay, and now I know that's not true.

[34 : 19] And I am changing my mind. That's exactly what the word repent means, to change your mind, change your position, your convictions.

And then, the next step is to embrace or to receive this one who became sin for us. And we do that as an act of our will.

It is a conscious, deliberate decision, has nothing whatever to do with your feelings or emotions. It has everything to do with your mind, your will, your intellect, your decision maker.

You assess the situation. You see what needs to be done, and you're willing to activate your will in order to do it. And you take Jesus Christ as your Savior in the same way that you take a mate for your spouse.

You exercise your will in doing so. All of these things constitute a huge conglomeration of ironies.

[35 : 27] So much of it works in an opposite way of what we would suspect would be the natural outcome or the way it would come together. And yet, God specializes in these things.

And you know, one of the reasons that these things are so ironic and there's the twist put on them and the opposite end is because his ways are not our ways, saith the Lord.

As the rain comes down from heaven, and the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it to bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes forth out of my mouth.

It shall prosper, it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it, and it will not return unto me void. All of these ironies are all wrapped up one way or another in the word of God and spelled out there.

And when you try to put all of these things together and look at the scriptures and all of these ironies from a strictly human viewpoint, all you've done is create a house of cards that just collapse.

[36 : 38] There is an intelligent mind behind all of this who's orchestrating all of these ironies, works everything after the counsel of his own will. It is a beautiful thing, a beautiful thing.

Father, we are, once again, we are just humbled by the incredible intelligence that is set forth in this document that we call the Bible.

We just marvel at the way it is put together, at what is revealed, at what is withheld, as what is explained fully, as what is left, as symbol and type and shadow and all the rest of it.

We are just standing in utter amazement at who you are and what you have done. We see no possible human explanation for any of these things.

There is this great loving mind and heart that is behind it all. we are beneficiaries of that in so many ways, many of which we do not even understand.

[37 : 53] So even in our ignorance, we are thankful. But in what little intelligence and understanding we do have, enables us to grasp some of these great truths just by the corner of them.

we are so grateful and we can only imagine what you have in store for us as we hear more about the rest of the story.

Thank you for all that you have made available to us. Thank you for the glorious nature of this season of the year for this Christmas day and for those who are gathering themselves together throughout the world to extol the honor and the virtues of this wonderful baby who became a man and was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

We bless you for it until the day we die and afterwards we'll bless you in the afterlife. In Christ's wonderful name. Amen. Well, again, Merry Christmas and you are dismissed.