

Simply Christ

Gospel Newsletter

Sharing the simplicity that is in Christ

June 11, 2020

Provoked to Jealousy

“Leroy, Jesus is not my Messiah!” “Why do you say that?” my dad asked. “If Jesus was my Messiah, he would have made an end of sins, and there would not be these prostitutes working the streets in front of my business.” My dad was speaking with a Jewish businessman whom he had known since high school. At their last encounter this man confessed privately that he believed Jesus was his Messiah, but now something had changed. “Jesus did make an end of sin,” my dad answered. “He did it in me. He died on the cross and shed his blood to take our sin away!”

On another occasion, this Jewish friend said to dad, “Leroy, you can’t tell me that we can go out and lie and cheat in business, and come to church and say ‘Father forgive, Father forgive,’ then go out and do it again and it will be alright!” “No! I won’t tell you that!” my dad responded! “Well, that is what the pastor I just spoke with told me I could do if I believed in Jesus.

This Jewish man knew something about Christ that very few Christians seem to understand. According to the prophecy of Messiah given to Daniel by the angel Gabriel, if Jesus did not make an end of sin, he cannot possibly be the Christ. The prophecy plainly declares that Christ would come “...to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in

everlasting righteousness..." Daniel 9:24. The greatest proof to the Jew that Jesus is not Christ is the sinfulness of those who call themselves by the name of Jesus Christ.

If the twenty-first century church thinks its message of "We are all just sinners like you are" is going to reach the Jewish people for Christ, it is grossly and sadly mistaken. Every time that message is spoken it shouts from the rooftops "JESUS IS NOT THE CHRIST! JESUS IS NOT THE CHRIST!" It is proof to those who have rejected Jesus as Messiah that they have made the right choice.

God promised Israel that if they would obey his voice and keep His covenant, *"...then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation."* Exodus 19:5-6. Israel rejected God's voice and never received these promises. In their idolatry they provoked God to jealousy, so God said, *"They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; ...I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people..."* Romans 10:19, Deuteronomy 32:21. Because they gave His glory to something that was not God, He would take their precious promises and fulfill them upon the Gentiles, who *"were not a people."* I Peter 2:9-10.

Rarely, since the end of the first century, have the Jewish people seen a "church" that could provoke them to jealousy. They saw a "church" which took the entire world into the dark ages. They saw a "church" which practiced forced baptisms and conversions. They saw a "church" which raised armies to wage war for control of Jerusalem and commit unspeakable atrocities in

the process. They saw a “church” that used the name of Jesus as an excuse to persecute and kill Jews. In our generation they have seen a “church” which thinks the most spiritual thing it can do is declare in every service that they are all still sinners. And finally today they see a “church” that is increasingly filled with “silly Christians” who think the height of spirituality is to pretend to be a Jew. What in these things could possibly provoke the Jewish people to jealousy?

The Bible tells us the church which Christ purchased *“is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.”* Ephesians 1:23. Have you ever seen a church that is the fullness of Christ? It is described as being *“a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but ... holy and without blemish.”* Ephesians 5:27. Only when such a church is manifest will Israel be provoked to jealousy. They must see with their own eyes that the promise given to them of being a holy nation, a kingdom of priests, and God’s special treasure has been bestowed upon another people through Jesus Christ.

No one will ever see a church that is the fullness of Christ until the truth that *“Jesus is the Christ”* who came to *“...make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness...”* is believed and boldly proclaimed by those who are called by His name. As it was in the first century, God will pour his Spirit out upon such a church, and the fullness of Christ will be manifest. In that day, God will keep His promise to *“provoke Israel to jealousy”* and turn their hearts unto Jesus Christ our Lord!