

“Idolatry – the Curse of Religion” - Addendum

Article by Brian H. Butler B.A., D.O., F.A.S.K.

Class of '64 Graduate & former Faculty Member of Ambassador College, England.

These notes are based on a taped lecture given by Dr. Ernest L. Martin, Ph.D., formerly the head of Theology for the Worldwide Church of God who resigned in January 1974 because of unresolved doctrinal issues with the administration. Sadly Dr. Martin died in January 2002, a great loss to the world and to those who seek Biblical truth.

Paul wrote that the historical events recorded in the Bible, including that of the Exodus of the Israelites and the forty years wandering in the Sinai Desert were written in the Bible for our admonition today.

Admonition definitions include advice, caution, counsel, rebuke, and warning. So they are not just interesting stories, they are there for us to learn from. They made a long film about the Exodus, an interesting spectacle, but no real message.

The message of the Exodus is that 650,000 Israelites were miraculously delivered out of slavery by God. The horrific plagues on the Egyptian people, the last being the death of their firstborn children, and the deliverance of the firstborn of the Israelites by putting the blood of the Passover Lamb (a type of Christ) over their doorposts were evidence of God's power.

650,000 people crossed the Red Sea without getting their shoes wet, and the Egyptian soldiers were all drowned when God let the sea return.

Jesus Christ as YHWH miraculously gave them manna to eat every week day, and a miraculously provided them with continuous supply of water which issued from under His throne.

When Moses went up into the mountain to receive the Ten Commandments, Aaron gave into the Israelites demands for an idol, and proceeded to worship God by bowing down to a golden calf. For that idolatry, 3000 died immediately.

For the next forty years, Jesus Christ the Rock was with these 650,000 people as they wandered through the Sinai Desert providing daily miracles for their survival.

But, because of their idolatry, because of their murmuring and complaining attitude, because of their 'attitude of ingratitude', because of their complete

lack of appreciation for all God had done for them, all but two of these 650,000 people died during those forty years.

Joshua the son of Nun,
and Caleb the son of Jephunneh,
were the only two,
who ever got through,
to the land of milk and honey.

Only the children of those who left Egypt went into the land of milk and honey.

The death of 650,000 of God's children should contain some admonition for us, a warning and a lesson for us. It should show us and teach us just how seriously God takes the idolatry of His people.

'Christians' today see no 'harm' in observing the idolatrous festivities of Easter, or Christmas or Halloween, nor in surrounding themselves with pictures and statues of a false Jesus, while they listen to a false gospel, quite the contrary. They actually don't want to know the truth, they do not want to hear it.

Jesus says: Matthew 13:15 For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

This verse is repeated for emphasis by Paul in Acts 28:25-27. And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, 26 Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: 27 For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

Yet most 'Christian' people think that what they are doing is right, and that in the scriptures above, Jesus must be talking about another group of people who do not attend church or who are not 'Christians'. They certainly do not think those words of Jesus Christ concerning closed mindedness,

'deafness' and 'blindness' apply to them. So they go on with their idolatrous behaviour oblivious of the consequences.

Hebrews 10:29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

The day will certainly come when they 'see' and 'hear' and realize that their activities have been an insult which denies the grace of Jesus Christ whose name they bear as 'Christians'.