

## The Stupidity of Christmas

### Commentary for December 7, 2007 — Learn Not the Way of the Pagans

Most of you reading the ASK website know what God said to Israel in Jeremiah 10:2 as stated in the King James Version:

**“Thus says YHWH, ‘Learn not the way of the heathen [goy, nations], and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them.’”**

• *Jeremiah 10:2 KJV*

The King James Version puts it in a way that makes the thought seem suggestive or desirable that you not learn **“the way of the heathen”** as in, “please don’t do it.” However, the force of the passage is more powerful than that. You must not do what is prohibited. See how the Net Bible translates it in a modern force and form:

**“The LORD [YHWH] says,**

[1] **‘Do not start following pagan religious practices.**

[2] **Do not be in awe of signs that occur in the sky even though the nations hold them in awe.”**

• *Jeremiah 10:2 NET Bible Translation*

Israel was also commanded not to do as the Egyptians did in their religious practices (Leviticus 18:3), nor to do the practices of the nations in the Promised Land (Leviticus 20:23; Deuteronomy 12:30; 2 Corinthians 6:15, etc.). Jeremiah 10:2 speaks about a wider world.

In our present day the Christmas observances by those who purport to be Christians are easily seen to be unbiblical and even stupid. I direct you to the several articles that Dr. Martin has written about observances. Simply type “christmas” into the ASK search engine and several articles will come up that will give the details. Also, there are numerous sites on the World Wide Web that show the origins and practices of Christmas to have pagan derivation and symbolism.

Very little research will reveal that the observance of Christmas and the practices associated with Christmas traditions are actually rather late in history, and certainly they had no warrant or basis in biblical practices or the practices of the early *ekklesia*.

### **Pleasing God**

There is an old joke about teaching a pig to sing: **You will never succeed and you will irritate the pig.** I am writing today to show the futility of holiday rituals, observances, ceremonies, and liturgies of the “Christian” churches (the word “church” comes from *circe*).<sup>1</sup> Doing and performing “Christian” (and I use that word ironically) holiday observances, ceremonies, and liturgies of the churches, in whatever context, simply is not pleasing to God, no matter how beautiful or “spiritual” they may seem to be.

You will never please God by observing Christmas traditions, but you may irritate Him. But, do you really care about that? Do you think that somehow “God will understand”? Such

1. Our word English word “church” is derived from the Greek word for the goddess Circe, who in Homer’s *Iliad* turned men into pigs. Not even that mythical pagan goddess was so stupid as to try to teach pigs to sing!

observances and traditions do not honor God. Is the glory of God your first concern (1 Corinthians 10:32)?

On the contrary, such observances show Him that you are either ignorant or a child who still needs teachings of milk, not meat. Like a petulant and peevish child, you don't really care what He wants, even though what He wants is clear (Jeremiah 10:2). Do you really think you can please God by singing hymns to Him during ceremonies with pagan origins and history, deluding yourself that doing so will please God? Is this not stupid?

Of course, if you already follow pagan religious practices, then stop doing it. If you feel the need to explore the origins of such traditions then study their origin from books or the internet, not by doing and practicing them. There is a statement posted at our local YMCA "You are what you do." This is corollary to the biblical admonition of Proverbs 23:7: **"For as he [a man] thinks in his heart, so is he."** There are times when we should do what is right, even when we lose face. There are times we should do right even when it has a cost.

You are free to do as you please in this matter. You are always free to sin and act foolish, but consider whether what you and your family do is pleasing to God — or merely pleasing to man. Most often those we try to please do not care as much as you might think.

**"Wherefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed [obeyed God], not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling [toward God]. For it is God which works in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."**

• *Philippians 2:12–13*

Your salvation may not be at stake regarding such actions on your part, but you should want to do what is right simply because it is right. It will have a bearing on your reward whether you do what God wants, or whether you do what people want.

If you are under "duress" and too weak to resist observing holiday traditions, observances, ceremonies, and liturgies, ask yourself these questions while you perform like a trained dog:

- "Where is this ceremony, this tradition, found in the Scriptures?"
- "Why am I doing this?"
- "Why are they doing this?"
- "What do those symbols really represent?"
- "Why would anyone think this pleases God?"
- "Does anyone really care what God thinks? Do I care?"

Try to be an example to others, doing so wisely and with mildness.

**"Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be you therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves."**

• *Matthew 10:16*

Just as Christ advised His disciples that He sent forth out in the world, so too God has placed you in the world and you should act likewise with wisdom and mildness. It will not be easy, but it will be the right thing to do. Stop **"following pagan religious practices"** (Jeremiah 10:2, NET Bible). Do what is right. Be a good and proper example. Let God not be shamed by you:

**"Let not those who hope in you be put to shame through me, O Lord YHWH of hosts; let not those who seek you be brought to dishonor through me, O God of Israel."**

• *Psalms 69:6 RSV*

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