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## **“Why Don’t You Focus on Preaching the Gospel Instead of Debating Christmas & Easter?”**

By Maria Merola



I receive many comments from people who are truly hungry for the truth and want to get back to the true Jewish Messiah. But then there are those few Christians who want to cling to their false pagan Greek-Roman Jesus who is embedded in the Babylonian sun god worship festivals. They always seem to give me the same old patented responses such as ***“why don’t you focus on preaching the gospel instead of debating about Christmas and Easter?”***

People who say such things are merely trying to deflect from the spirit behind my message to the Church which is ***“come out of idolatry.”*** They use these types of responses as a smoke screen but when you think about the logic behind what they are really saying, it goes something like this:

***“Why not win souls instead of calling the church out of idolatry?”***

**Sounds like an oxymoron doesn’t it?**

Over and over again in the TaNaK (Law, Prophets & Writings), we see that YHWH was always dealing with Israel his covenant people---not unbelievers. Why? Because if Israel walked uprightly and would forsake her idols, the heathen nations would look to her as a light and they would repent.

But if the Christian Church is in idolatry herself she is powerless to win the lost. The Christian Church today is grafted in with Israel. She has not replaced Israel. And so YHWH deals with the Christian Church today no differently than he did with the nation of Israel.

YHWH says that judgment must begin within his house:

*1st Peter 4:17 For the time is come that **judgment must begin at the house of Elohim (God): and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of Elohim (God)?***

Do you see that if it begins with those in the Church first, the end shall be that those who don't obey the gospel at all will be won over also?

When Yahu'shua (Jesus) came to earth he came first for the **"lost sheep of the House of Israel"** and then he sent his disciples to reach out to the Gentiles.

In other words we have to first bring back those in the Christian Church who are **lost sheep** because of pagan influences and then we can win the heathen world. Otherwise it is like the pagans trying to win the pagans. Or in other words the proverbial **"blind leading the blind."**

What happened to Israel in the days of Jeremiah? They became infected with the same religion of Babylon just like today's Christian Church and YHWH had to pluck them up, break down their idols, images, and throw down their false pagan altars. He had to afflict them, and destroy every vestige of paganism in their culture before he could allow them to come back to Jerusalem to rebuild.

*Jeremiah 31:28 And it shall come to pass, that like as I have watched over them, to **pluck up**, and to **break down**, and to **throw down**, and to **destroy**, and to **afflict**; so will I watch over them, to **build**, and to **plant**, saith YHWH.*

You see, YHWH has called me to do the same thing today! He has called me to **pluck up false religious lies** that have infected Christianity, and to break down idolatrous ways of thinking, and then build a new foundation built on the true Jewish Messiah Yahu'shua--- not on a false pagan Jesus that the Church is worshipping today.

**Jeremiah 16:19** O YHWH, my strength, and my fortress, and my refuge in the day of affliction, **the Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit.**

Many in the Church think that they are worshipping the real Messiah but it is **"another Jesus"** not patterned after scripture (2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 11:4).

We cannot save one single soul until we get them back to the REAL Messiah Yahu'shua!

We can preach the gospel all day long and then win them to a false pagan Jesus who is embedded in all of these pagan myths but they will not grow in the faith at all.

The rationale behind saying that we can use paganism to preach the gospel goes something like this:

***“Why not tolerate idolatry and the sin of breaking the 1<sup>st</sup> Commandment in order to preach the good news that Jesus died so that we don't have to keep the commandments anymore?”***

To those who would say that our primary job is to go and preach the gospel, I could not agree with you more!

That is the primary reason why YHWH has called me to educate the Church, because we are not reaching the Jews with the pagan version of the gospel that we are preaching in the Church. And don't give me that same anti-Semitic phrase rationalizing that the Jews have rejected Messiah ***“because their hearts were hard.”*** Many in the Church have hearts that are even more hardened because they won't even try to reach the Jews for Messiah and they reject Messiah's Torah just like Korah in the rebellion against Moses!

We will never reach the Jews with a paganized Jesus. Yahu'shua told the woman at the well ***“you don't know what you worship but we do for salvation is of the Jews.”***

He was telling her that if you don't worship him the same way that the Jews do (keeping the Feasts and the Sabbaths), then **YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT YOU WORSHIP!**

We need to get back to the true Jewish Messiah if we want to preach the true gospel.

### **To the Jew First**

Why are we commanded to preach the gospel to the Jew first? Because the scripture says so:

*Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Messiah: for it is the power of Elohim (God) unto salvation to every one that believeth; **to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.***

*Romans 2:9 Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of **the Jew first, and also of the Gentile;***

*Romans 2:10 But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, **to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile:***

I am the oldest of four children in my family. And so when I was a child, and all of us kids were being scolded for being rowdy, my father would always look at me and say ***“you are the oldest, you should know better.”***

Elohim in his wisdom has chosen the ***weak things to put down the mighty*** and the ***foolish things to confound the wise*** (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 1). And so he uses the Gentiles (the younger brother) to make the older brother come back up to the standard that he was chosen for in the first place. And so he has allowed Ephraim in the story of the prodigal to become as the first born (Jeremiah 31:9) because he wants to provoke the biological first

born to jealousy. Why? Because the first born son became complacent and began to keep the commandments out of habit and lost his first love. He was no longer doing it out of love for the father but out of duty. But when the prodigal came home he desired to obey the commandments because of the father's great love and compassion for him. This what the father wants from the first born as well. Obedience out of love for the father!

### **This is the wisdom of Elohim!**

If we attempt to use lies to win people to Messiah, but then we will have to undo all of the lies we taught them about Christmas and Easter under the guise of getting them saved in the first place.

It reminds me of what Yahu'shua said to the religious leaders of his day:

*Matthew 23:15 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for **ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.***

In Yahu'shua's day the religious leaders were going all over the world to win converts (proselytes) but once they did, they were making them twice the child of hell than they were by teaching them man-made traditions instead of the pure word of Elohim.

In other words, we can preach a false gospel by using lies, about Christmas and Easter, but then what are we really winning them to? There is no power to come out of Babylon and the world in that kind of watered down gospel.

We must preach the message of the cross (self-denial) which says ***“be willing to die for him and give up everything... forsake idols and false pagan systems.”***

That is the true gospel of which the Apostle Paul spoke of---***“the preaching of the cross”*** which is ***“foolishness to them that perish”*** (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 1:18). This means we must preach an uncompromising message of dying to self and the traditions of men.

I have had an affinity for finding old pieces of furniture in people's trash, redeeming it, stripping off the old paint and uncovering the beauty of the real wood underneath. Once that has been done, then I can apply the new finish.

You cannot apply new finish to old paint. You must strip away the old stuff so that the wood will become porous and receive the stain and the new finish.

The same thing holds true with preaching the gospel. We must first strip away the layers of old ways of thinking from people and then we can preach the real Yahu'shua the Jewish Messiah.

Then we can build on that foundation which is him.

I believe in bringing both elements to the Church, spirit & truth, wisdom (law) and revelation (spirit).

The Law of YHWH brings wisdom but the spirit brings revelation. We need both.

The Church has some revelation but they are lacking in wisdom because they think that God's law is done away with.

The Jews have wisdom from the Torah, but many of them reject the Messiah, (who brings the anointing of the Holy Spirit). This is because of the false way Christians have presented Yahu'shua, and persecuted them for centuries.

Why does the Bible teach us to preach the gospel to the Jew first? Because as the Apostle Paul explained in Romans 11 that ***“if the falling away of them is riches to the world, how much more their fullness?”***

In other words, we will win the rest of the world to Messiah when we first reach the Jews! They are the key to world revival! And how do we win the Jews to Messiah? By starting to obey Torah and then we can ***“provoke them to jealousy.”***

### **Ephraim the Prodigal Son**



Can you imagine the prodigal son trying to send letters to his older brother while he is still in the pig pen and trying to provoke his older brother to obey their father? The older brother would just laugh at him and say ***“..look at you hypocrite!...you don't obey our father's instructions and you are trying to win me over to live as you do?”***

In the parable about the prodigal son, Ephraim (Israel) represents the younger brother who was ***“afar off”*** in the land of Egypt (symbolizing bondage to sin). Judah on the other hand represents the older brother who never left home but continued to obey the father's instructions (the Feasts and Sabbaths).



Ezekiel was given a commandment in Ezekiel 37:16-18 to take “two sticks” and to write upon one stick for Ephraim and on the other stick Judah. And YHWH told Ezekiel that **“the two sticks shall become one stick in my hand.”** The Hebrew word for **“stick”** is **ets** which means **“tree.”** In other words these two Olive Trees (Ephraim & Judah) are the Gentiles and the Jews. When these two come together as ONE NEW MAN (Ephesians 2:15), then **the fullness of the Gentiles** will be accomplished (Romans 11:25). And this is when the natural branches will desire to be grafted back into the Olive Tree!



This is when the **“Two Witnesses”** in Revelation 11:4 (the two candlesticks & the two olive trees) will preach an uncompromising message to the world that will cause the biggest revival in history that will unify the Jews and the Messianic Believers in Messiah against the Antichrist and his followers!

Ephraim (Israel) will never win Judah (Jews) to the Messiah until Ephraim comes back home to the Commandments of the Heavenly Father just like the prodigal son. When the prodigal came back home, the Father cleansed him by killing with the **“fatted calf”** (atonement). And then the older brother (Judah/Jews) got jealous and said **“Father, I never left home and rebelled against your commandments (Torah) and yet you never killed a fatted calf for me.”**



Ephraim (the prodigal son) only received the fattened calf (atonement) when he came home to the Father's instructions (Torah) and then he made his older brother Judah jealous! And after Ephraim received the fattened calf (atonement) he also received a signet **“ring on his finger”** (authority in the Father's name) and he also received the **“robe of righteousness”** (provision and covering).

That is the gospel message to the Jew first and also to the Gentile!