

You Are Here – Part 6

The Rise of Judaism: *We Can Save Ourselves!*



Third Wednesday in Advent – 2012

December 19 → 11:00 & 7:00

Wednesdays (12/5, 12/12, 12/19): Services 11 & 7; Meals 12 & 6

Sunday, 12/23: BC & SS 8:30; Fellowship 9:30; Divine Service 10:00

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ, last Sunday we focused on the OT animal sacrifices; the LORD instituted them to point to → *the horror of sin* AND → *the coming Savior!* Think about this: The LORD told the people: ♦do a particular thing ♦for a particular reason, *which points to a particular reality!* So what happened? Some kept ♦seeing their sin, ♦sacrificing animals, and ♦longing for the Promised Messiah! However, *as time went on*, others continued the rituals but *forgot the reason WHY!* The “some” trusted in the Savior, while the “others” trusted in their keeping of the rituals. Today is similar: Some trust in Jesus, while many trust in themselves! This sermon includes a *broad look* at the religion of Judaism.

1. **WHEN Did Judaism Begin?** Its members point to the time of Abraham, *but they do not understand that the FIRST religion of the Jews (of Abraham) was Christianity* (Rev. 2:9; 3:9). So Judaism arose LATER as a *falsification* of Christianity; NOTE: *the Christ was promised in Eden!*
2. **Follow-Through, BUT NO FAITH:** Abraham had faith (Gen. 15:6), *but some after him had only rituals*. These passages jump ahead about 1,300 to 1,400 years:

- a. The LORD said: ^{NAS} **Amos 5:21** “I hate, I reject your festivals, Nor do I delight in your solemn assemblies. ²² Even though you offer up to Me burnt offerings..., I will not accept *them...*”
Martin Luther wrote: “*The wicked do not please the LORD, regardless of how great and splendid their works may be.*” (LSB, 1465)
 - b. ^{NAS} **Isaiah 1:11** “What are your multiplied sacrifices to Me?” Says the LORD. “I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams, And the fat of fed cattle. And I take no pleasure in the blood of bulls, lambs, or goats.” Why did the LORD give that response to the doing His commands? “*They claimed to worship God at the same time they violated His laws.*” (LSB, 1088-1989)
 - c. The LORD said: ^{NAS} **Isaiah 66:3** “...he who kills an ox is *like* one who slays a man; He who sacrifices a lamb is *like* the one who breaks a dog’s neck; He who offers a grain offering is *like one who offers swine’s blood...*” WHY? “*The use of prescribed offerings...as a magical device to immobilize the Lord is as abhorrent to Him as sacrificing human beings or unclean animals...*” (LSB, 1199)
3. **Judaism at Jesus’ Time:** We now focus on the Pharisees – *an important religious group in Jesus’ time which followed the Oral Law* (a legal commentary on the Torah) *in addition to the Torah* (the first five books of the OT) *and attempted to live in a constant state of purity. Faith was completely gone; they trusted in their works!*
 - a. **John chapter 8:12-59** is an argument of sorts between **the Pharisees** and Jesus: Jesus said to

them: ¹²“I am the light of the world...” but they basically called Him a liar. Later Jesus said to them: ³⁷ “I know that you are Abraham’s offspring; yet you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you.... ³⁹ They answered... “Abraham is our father.” ... ⁴¹ “...we have one Father, *even God.*” ⁴² Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love Me... ⁴⁴ “You are of *your father the devil...*” Then, later, they said to Jesus: ⁵³ “Surely You are not greater than our father Abraham, who died? ... ⁵⁴ Jesus answered... ⁵⁶ “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw *it* and was glad.” ⁵⁷ The Jews therefore said to Him, “You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?” ⁵⁸ Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am.” ⁵⁹ Therefore they picked up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself, and went out of the temple.

- b. Jesus—to the Pharisees: ^{NAS} **Mark 7:6** ... “Rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites [*people who falsely profess a relationship with God*], as it is written, ‘This people honors Me with their lips [*outward*], But their heart [*inward*] is far away from Me. ⁷ But in vain [*uselessness*] do they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the precepts of men [*teaching the rules of men as if they were from God*].’ ⁸ Neglecting the commandment of God [*what He taught*], you hold to the tradition of men [*what you makeup*].”

4. **Judaism Today**: The ninth largest religion in the world.¹

¹ <http://www.faithexplained.com/judaism-followers/>

- a. How many? Worldwide there are about 13 million – 5.7 million in Israel, 5.2 million in the USA (with 1.9 million of those in New York City).²
- b. All three types have three things in common: They ♦reject the doctrine of the Trinity, ♦reject original sin, and ♦believe that “the ultimate aim of history is the perfection of humanity through the unfolding of the divine power in man.”
 - i. **Orthodox** – “there is no way to God except through loyalty to the divine laws.”
 - ii. **Progressive** – they deny “the absolutely binding character of the Torah.”³ Basically *they are the same as liberal theology.*
 - iii. **Conservative** – In between the other two.
- c. Did you notice the important things that are missing in Judaism? *Admitting they are sinners who need the Promised Savior!* Think about ♦the first sin, ♦the promise of the Savior, ♦the worldwide flood, and ♦the blood sacrifices; all that are *most important for truth and salvation* are completely gone from Judaism. *How sad!*

Conclusion: It’s not just those in Judaism who are missing the truth, *it is most people in today’s world!* So let us →see our sins, →rejoice in the Christ, and →kindly tell others how much God loves us! And all God’s people said: **Amen!**

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² Ibid.

³ F. E. Mayer, *The Religious Bodies of America* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1961), 527.