

REJECTING THE MYTHS OUR FATHERS TAUGHT US

Purpose: To facilitate the recognition and expose the eternal danger of following in the same false beliefs your parents and family may have taught you.

Objective:

- A. To motivate you to search out and discover for yourself the myths that your family believes,
- B. To help you discover the truth; and,
- C. To gain the courage to wholeheartedly embrace the truth.

God has provided us with the bible for guidance, and frequently uses the sins of others as a teaching example to us. In the following verses, we read some of God's messages to the Israelites of old who were conforming to the same false religious beliefs that their parents had been practicing:

Amos 2:4 I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they have despised the law of the LORD, and have not kept his commandments, and their lies caused them to err, after the which their fathers have walked:

Isaiah 9:16 Those who guide this people mislead them, and those who are guided are led astray.

Jeremiah 16:11-12 ...your fathers have forsaken me, saith the LORD, and have walked after other gods, and have served them, and have worshiped them, and have forsaken me, and have not kept my law; And ye have done worse than your fathers;...

Jeremiah 16:19 Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit.

Matthew 15:14 Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

1 Peter 1:18 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;

Obviously, parents can and do lead their children astray. God gives each of us the

responsibility of validating everything we are taught.

We are to use our brains and test the prophets:

When Amos wrote the above Scripture, the Israelites had been practicing the false religions of the nations around them. To make matters worse, they had been listening to and following false prophets from their own tribes for generations. God had already given them His strict guidelines about how to test a prophet to determine if he was truly sent by God. (Deuteronomy Chapter 13 and Deuteronomy 18:20-22.) Since it was God who gave the guidelines to test a prophet, He obviously wanted them to TEST the prophets. It is NOT wrong to check out what so-called prophets proclaim and predict, in fact - **it is wrong NOT to do it!** It is not showing a lack of faith to question your religious leaders - instead, it is evidence that you have a brain and that you are using it. Its being faithful to do what God has told you to do.

Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. 1 Thessalonians 5:21

Did you know that God gave instructions of where and how to worship Him:

Jerusalem was where God's temple had been built. By God's specific command, the worship of all Israel was centered at the Jewish temple. God had warned them to worship only in the location that He had authorized His name to be placed. That place was at that Temple.

A Biblical principle is thus established that God will not accept a worship of our own contriving. We are required to worship HIS way only. All other worship is rejected by Him, for example, Abel's worship God accepted, but Cain's He rejected.

Deuteronomy 12:5 But you are to seek the place the LORD your God will choose from among all your tribes to put his Name there for his dwelling. To that place you must go;

Deuteronomy 16:11 And rejoice before the LORD your God at the place he will choose as a dwelling for his Name —

God taught and warned the Israelites about “blessings” for obedience and “curses” for rebellion:

The Israelites had come to believe that because they were identified as God's chosen people, they could behave however they wanted and not forfeit God's blessings. They erroneously believed that He would keep His covenant promises to them despite their behavior. However, they forgot to remember

that many of God's covenant promises were conditioned upon their obedience to His commands:

Deuteronomy 30:19 This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live -

Note that the children's well-being was dependent upon the parents faithfulness to God.

Children, by teaching and by rote, will believe and practice the religious beliefs of their fathers:

But, instead of obeying God, they rejected His commands and followed the inclinations of their own hearts, copying the religious practices of the ungodly nations around them. They changed the nature of the one true God, and made up their own rules and rituals of worship. As the years and generations slipped away, genuine worship of God was grossly perverted. Consequently, the children followed the ways their fathers taught them, and they taught it to their children and so on through the generations until the true worship which God had commanded of them was lost and forgotten.

God sent prophets to warn the Israelites to change their ways, or they would be in danger of His discipline. He described specific sins to them, which included their false worship and false doctrines. He warned them of punishment to come if they did not turn back and obey. But just like loved ones today who react in hostility when Biblical truths are held in higher esteem than family tradition, the people of those days reacted the same way, often killing the prophets God had sent. (Hebrews 11:35-38)

No one likes to be told they are wrong, and with religious issues, the devil puts up a fierce battle to keep people spiritually blinded; from understanding and accepting spiritual truths.

God gives frequent warnings to us not to blindly follow the ways of our fathers:

2 Kings 22:10-20 And Shaphan the scribe shewed the king, saying, Hilkiyah the priest hath delivered me a book. And Shaphan read it before the king. And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, that he rent his clothes. And the king commanded Hilkiyah the priest, and Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and

Achbor the son of Michaiah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asahiah a servant of the king's, saying, Go ye, inquire of the LORD for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found: for great is the wrath of the LORD that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that which is written concerning us.

Jeremiah 9:13-14 And the LORD saith, Because they have forsaken my law which I set before them, and have not obeyed my voice, neither walked therein; But have walked after the imagination of their own heart, and after Baalim, which their fathers taught them:

(NOTE: Baal was a false god of the Caananites. Baalim means “more than one” Baal. This tells us that they believed in and worshiped a multitude of false gods.)

Jeremiah 16:10-12 And it shall come to pass, when thou shalt shew this people all these words, and they shall say unto thee, Wherefore hath the LORD pronounced all this great evil against us? or what is our iniquity? or what is our sin that we have committed against the LORD our God? Then shalt thou say unto them, Because your fathers have forsaken me, saith the LORD, and have walked after other gods, and have served them, and have worshiped them, and have forsaken me, and have not kept my law; And ye have done worse than your fathers; for, behold, ye walk every one after the imagination of his evil heart, that they may not hearken unto me:

The same scenario of ancient Israel continues to take place in many of religions today. People born and raised in a religious culture will seldom doubt what they are taught. When doubts do creep in, their deceived conscience tells them that their parents couldn't be wrong. They are good people, they are moral people, this is a good religion, this is what God wants. “How could there possibly be anything wrong with it?”

But our parents and grandparents can be wrong! Remember too, that even though they may have taught you lies (myths) it is probable that they were taught the same things themselves and did not recognize them as deception. Nor, as is too often the case, did they investigate to discover for themselves if those things were true.

Is it safe to follow the traditions of men?

One of Satan's various schemes is to propagate his lies so that they become traditions of men. A specialty of his is to convince people that God will save only those who are members of their particular group who believe their particular way.

After a length of time had passed, the false worship of the Israelites soon became "tradition". Note Jesus' response to Satan's ages-old scheme of "traditions".

Mark 7:6-9 He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, **ye hold the tradition of men**, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye **reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition**.

Mark 7:13 Making **the word of God of none effect through your tradition**, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.

The traditions for which Jesus is rebuking these people were religious beliefs and practices that had been handed down from their forefathers for several generations. Jesus' remarks insulted His listeners then just as they insult people today. Their pride was tweaked, they were ready to defend the traditions in which they had been born and bred. Was it possible that their forefathers could have been so wrong?

Every living soul needs to examine the traditions of their forefathers and comparing them with the truths of God through biblical study. Regardless of what your parents believe(d) and taught you, truth over error must always be chosen, despite whose error it is.

The barrier to the repentance of the Israelites was tradition and pride:

They refused to turn from the traditions of old. They believed in false gods and worshiped them. The religious beliefs of the pagan nations around them included the belief in a multitude of gods. However, the God of Israel had long before informed them that there was forever only ONE GOD in heaven

above and on the earth.

Deuteronomy 5:7 "You shall have no other gods before me.

Isaiah 44:6 I am the first and I am the last; apart from me there is no God.

Isaiah 44:8 You are my witnesses. Is there any God besides me? No, there is no other Rock; I know not one."

Isaiah 45:5 I am the LORD, and there is no other; apart from me there is no God.

John 17:3 Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God,

1 Corinthians 8:4 We know that an idol is nothing at all in the world and that there is no God but one.

1 Timothy 2:5 For there is one God...

But their tradition and belief in only one God changed. They fell into the same idolatrous worship that the surrounding nations practiced.

And so the lies of the fathers were passed down to their children. The children, rather than seek out the truth of God for themselves, believed what their fathers taught them without question, so they too broke God's commandment by worshiping, burning incense and sacrificing to those false gods.

The first commandment of the Ten is this:

"Thou shalt have NO OTHER GODS BEFORE ME...."

Since, in reality, there are no other gods, believing that other gods existed before the one and only true God, is breaking God's very first commandment. (We are not to have any gods after Him either, that's idolatry.)

The Bible warns us that the false gods of the nations are, in reality, demons:

Deuteronomy 32:16-19 They provoked him to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations provoked they him to anger. They sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not. Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that

formed thee. And when the LORD saw it, he abhorred them, because of the provoking of his sons, and of his daughters.

Therefore, a belief that teaches the existence of multiple gods, is a spiritually dangerous system. The Bible says these false gods are demons in disguise. God sent Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Amos, Micah, Isaiah and many other prophets to the Israelites warning them to stop following their traditions of false worship and to turn back to the truth or face God's judgment.

Upon hearing God's prophets, many in Judah may well have said, "Our fathers worshiped like this. You can't convince me my father was wrong. He was a good, moral, honest and upright man. Therefore, I also will continue to worship as he did."

Whatever, or however it was said, the final result was, they ignored God's warnings!

Jesus had said that Isaiah was right when he prophesied against the Israelites. Their worship was false. They may have been sincere, but sincerity doesn't make it right. Their worship was rejected by the God they claimed to be worshiping.

God has said that the worshipers He seeks and will accept, are those who worship Him in spirit and in truth. (John 4:24). If He isn't worshiped according to His way, the worship is not in truth, and is a useless waste of time. Sincerity is not a measure for the salvation of our souls.

Why should we reject the lies our fathers believed and obeyed?

Because if we don't reject the lies our fathers believed, God will reject us and our children. Why our children? Because they will follow the same false teachings as their parents taught them just, like we did!

Hosea 4:6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.

Why should we reject the lies and traditions of our forefathers?

Because God will hold us individually accountable, for what we did with our knowledge of Him.

- # Did we reject His revealed Word and go our own way?
- # Did we accept His word in obedience and by faith, trusting in Him alone for our salvation?

The devil works very hard at leading people away from the truth and the simplicity that is in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He causes them to follow every other conceivable way to salvation and to reject the only way there really is to God - which is: Salvation through grace alone, provided by Jesus Christ alone, as revealed in the Bible alone.

Some of the lies our forefathers believed and taught us are -

1. The lie that: Salvation is purchased through good works.
2. The lie that: The knowledge of salvation is provided only by the particular group you belong to and is revealed only in the particular written and verbal instructions of that particular group.
3. The lie that: Salvation comes through the practice of plural marriage and in learning to properly deal with jealousies and other emotions that naturally come when you share your husband with other women.
4. The lie that: Salvation comes when you work hard for the group and give them your money to use to further the financial strength of the group.
5. The lie that: Salvation belongs to the very few people of the group and that God is against the rest of the world because they aren't in the group.
6. The lie that: The Bible is not reliable having been mis-translated and corrupted through the millennia.
7. The lie that: God is a man and practices plural marriage in heaven and that the righteous will also practice eternal polygamy.
8. The lie that: Jesus and Satan are spiritual brothers.

9. The lie that: The true gospel was lost from the earth and needed to be restored by Joseph Smith.
10. The lie that: It takes more than the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross to pay for our sins.
11. The lie that: There are many gods and that the faithful can become gods.

Those are only a few of the myths our fathers and mothers and religious leaders have taught us. But in reading the Bible and comparing those teachings with what the Bible says, you can learn the truth, throw out the lies and be set free!

“When the Son sets you free, you shall be free indeed”, John 8:36.

and,

“It is for freedom that Christ as set us free.” Galatians 5:1.