

Synagogue Of Satan – mp3 2012 series - 24

“I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.”
Revelation 2:9b

A. *“I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.”* Revelation 2:9 - οίδα σου τα εργα και την θλιψιν και την πτωχειαν πλουσιος δε ει και την βλασφημιαν των λεγοντων ιουδαιους ειναι εαυτους και ουκ εισιν αλλα συναγωγη του σατανα.

Smyrna was a large and prosperous city made up of Jews, who were very prosperous, Gentiles and Christians, who, because of their relationship to Jesus Christ and the doctrinal stand they took, were kept outside of the loop of the economy by the unsaved Gentiles and the Jews. The reason why is that they refused to offer incense to Caesar and state that Kaiser est kurios, or Caesar is Lord. Now the Jews had no problem in doing that, neither did the Gentiles, only the Christians refused to do it. Their faith in Christ and doctrinal stand on the Word resulted in them being under constant pressure economically and socially with the result of them living in dire poverty. But the Lord said that they were rich.

Now the Jews held to the traditions of their fathers and worshipped in their synagogues, and at the same time had no problem with going along with the religious system of Rome. Their goal was to make money and compromises in these areas were not a problem to them. They were not about to go against the hand that was feeding them.

To begin with we need to see that these words are from the mouth of Jesus Christ after he had died, was raised from the dead in his resurrection body and ascended into heaven. It is after he had gone to heaven he spoke to the Pastor-Teacher of the church in Smyrna, through the Apostle John, and made this bold and profound statement that those who call themselves Jews are not Jews at all and that the place where they portray themselves as worshiping the God is not an assembly of the true God, but an assembly of Satan! And he also calls them blasphemers!

Now Christ was totally aware, (I **know**), of this group of people attending synagogue service and what they were saying. He says, *“I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews,”*. He begins with the word **blasphemy**, *blasphemian*. Now there are several words used to speak evil of something, or someone, but blasphemy was the worse. It went beyond a lie and was a false and malicious statement designed to injure the reputation of someone or something. It was the malicious utterance of false charges, misrepresentation, slander, or defamation with deception involved.

So Christ states that the Jews living there, and elsewhere, such as in Sardis, were committing blasphemy, **but what was it that they said that amounted to the charge of blasphemy?** It was over their personal belief and statement **that they were Jews! They had no right to call themselves Jews!** They may have done it, but they had no right to do so, and in their doing that it was an attack on God! To say that one was a Jew was a claim that they worshiped the true God and that they were the people of God. Now they may have been racial descendents of Abraham, but that doesn't mean that they were believers in the true God and that they belonged to Him! They may have racially descended from Abraham, but they were certainly not the children of Abraham, because they wanted to murder Jesus Christ, whom Abraham loved, served, obeyed and worshiped! And to say that they were Jews was **blasphemy** for it was making a deceptive misrepresentation about their relationship to the true God.

Christ addressed this very issue in John 8:37-40, “*I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you. I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father. They answered and said unto him, **Abraham** is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham.*”

“*I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not,*” . There are those today, who call themselves “Jews”, because they attend religious service in synagogues. There are those today, who call themselves “Jews” because their mothers are “Jewish”. There are those today, who call themselves “Jews” because they live in the state called Israel. And sad to say, there are many Christians today who join in with their deception and blasphemy by calling the people in these three groups “Jews”, because we have been deceived and believed their lie! So the question is, “do we go by what they have to say about themselves, or are we going to go by what Christ has to say about them”?

“*Which say they are Jews,*” - *ton legonton ioudaios einai heautous*. To **say** is the present active participle of *lego* used with the definite article, the. The present participle denotes continuous action that is occurring at the same time as the main verb. But it also has the idea that this has been going on for such a long period of time that **it had become a practice!** In other words, these people had adopted the practice as referring to themselves as Jews! And in the active voice it tells us that it was **they** who were the ones referring to **themselves** as Jews – but not God, nor his Son, Jesus Christ! And being found with the definite article it is in the attributive position and is to be given the translation of, “**the ones** who are saying **they** are **Jews**”! **They** are calling **themselves** Jews! But Christ says they're **not!**

And as we have seen, Christ states that this is **blasphemy** for they are making a false claim about themselves and their relationship to God, and even to their relationship to Israel! And they are doing so with the idea of **deception** involved! They not only have deceived themselves about this important matter, but **they are also seeking to deceive others!** This practice has gone on for so long over the years that they not only have deceived themselves, and the world at large, but they have also deceived churches and most believers in Christ! And why have Christians been deceived? Because they have chosen to believe their false claims, but not the clear statement of Jesus Christ!

Now they are saying that they are Jews, but the Lord says that they absolutely aren't! “*And are not,*” - *kai ouk eisin*. The Lord uses the emphatic negative ouk here to make a point. He says they aren't Jews! Now they may call themselves Jews; the world may call them Jews; and Christians may call them Jews, but the Lord says they aren't!

The word **synagogue** comes from two words: *sun* – together, and *ago* – to come or bring. It was used of the people, and/or the building they assembled in. The term was used for the gathering place of Jews, who had not believed on Jesus as the Messiah, for worship and instruction. A practice that has been going on for over 2,500 years.

In fact he says, that the gathering place of those who call themselves Jews, the synagogue, is not the assembly of God, but the synagogue of Satan! Which tells us that Satan is the god of the synagogue, not Jehovah! “*But are the synagogue of **Satan**.*” - *alla sunagoge tou satana*. Which the Lord makes very clear in John 8:44, “*Ye, (religious Jews), are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.*” The Lord made it clear that their Father was none other than the devil.

B. *“Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.”* Revelation 3:9 - ιδου διδωμι εκ της συναγωγης του σατανα των λεγοντων εαυτους ιουδαιους ειναι και ουκ εισιν αλλα ψευδονται ιδου ποιησω αυτους ινα ηξωσιν και προσκυνησωσιν ενωπιον των ποδων σου και γνωσιν οτι εγω ηγαπησα σε.

The term **Jews** was used by a variety of people. Christ used it, the Apostles used it, Christians and Gentiles used it, and so did the Jews living back then and today. It's somewhat acceptable to use it in a general sense, when wanting to refer to a group of people having a general distinction due to their race, religion, self imposed identification, or national identity. But when one does the problem many get into is ascribing to it any theological significance. Similar to the idea today where there are many people who call themselves Christians because they go to church, or because their parents were Christians, or because they live in a Christian nation. But they are not truly Christians because they have never been born again through faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior!

If we are going to use the term **Jews**, then we must depart from generalities and hold to the specific definition of the term. And the Lord and the Apostle Paul give us the true meaning of the word Jews and that word should only be used when referring to those who possess the qualities as defined in the word by the Lord and the Apostles, which refers to all believers in Christ. Words have meanings and applications. Our responsibility is to uncover their true meanings, so we can have proper application. That's what truth is about! But Satan and his people work constantly to change the meanings of words, so they can bring about their applications to their own evil end.

First of all, we see the Lord bringing this subject up in the passage and he says, *“Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie;”*. He says, even though they call themselves **Jews** – they are not! And he says they're liars! So regardless of whatever the unsaved have to say about this matter; or the Christians, or those who call themselves Jews, the Lord says that they're not!

And who better would know what the term **Jew** really means than the Lord Jesus Christ, for **He is the king of the Jews!** *“And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, **King of the Jews!**”* Matthew 27:29 *“And set up over his head his accusation written, **THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.**”* Matthew 27:37 *“And Pilate asked him, Art thou the **King of the Jews?** And he answering said unto him, Thou sayest it.”* Mark 15:2 Therefore, because Jesus is the king of the Jews he is the only one qualified to define for us what the word Jew means!

Paul defines a **Jew** as the spiritual seed of Abraham, not the physical. *“For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a **Jew**, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.”* Romans 2:28,29 So the term **Jew** cannot be used for those who practice Judaism, or for those living in the nation of Israel, not even for those who actually descended from Abraham, if they could even prove it, which the overwhelming majority can't!

And Paul tells us once again what the word Jew means, and who it applies to. *“Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.”* Romans 9:6-8

B. *“Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.”* Revelation 3:9 - *idou didomi ek tes sunagoges tou satana ton legonton heautous ioudaious einai kai ouk eisin alla pseudontai idou ποιησω αυτους ινα ηξωσιν και προσκυνησωσιν ενωπιον των ποδων σου και γνωσιν οτι εγω ηγαπησα σε.*

Once again the Lord is referring to those people who call themselves **Jews** and he says that they aren't! In fact, he calls them liars in this verse and says that they are from the synagogue of Satan! He stated this same doctrine to the Apostle John, who was in turn to pass it on down to the pastor of the church in Smyrna, now he he stating the same message, through the Apostle John, to the Pastor of the church in the town of Sardis. The doctrine is that those people, who are congregants of the synagogues in these towns, who are calling themselves Jews, are not really Jews at all.

He begins with the word *idou*, translated as **behold**, which was the word used whenever someone had something important to say and that he wanted everybody to pay attention. The Lord is stating this truth directly to his people, those born again believers in Christ, because he wants us to stop being fooled by the lies the “Jews” were saying in reference to themselves about them calling themselves Jews! He says that they aren't, that they are liars and blasphemers and that they're from the synagogue of Satan! And who else would know better, as to who the true Jews are, than the King of the Jews!

“Behold, I will make them, who are calling themselves Jews, from the synagogue of Satan, and are not, but are lying.” He uses the preposition ek to denote their true origin. Here we have a group of people, of varying races and ethnicity, who are saying they are Jews. As they come out of their synagogues, they are identifying themselves with the synagogue saying they are **Jews**. Now *ek* is used to denote one's origin as to race, family, city, people, or district. But when it is coupled with the word Satan, it is telling us that **their origin is from Satan himself, for their synagogues are the synagogues of Satan!**

Then the Lord uses the word behold again to grab his people's attention to tell them something else that is very important! He is going to make those, who call themselves Jews, who really aren't, but are lying and blaspheming, come and worship at the feet of Christians and know that the God of Israel loves believers in Jesus Christ! *“Behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.”* - *idou poieso autous hina exosin kai proskunesosin enopion ton podon sou kai gnosin hoti ego egapesa se.*

A true Jew, which is what the term **Jew** actually refers to, as compared to a false Jew, who is not to be called a Jew at all; a true Jew is one who has found forgiveness and life in Jesus the Messiah of Israel. While a false Jew is one who rejects Jesus as the Messiah and should never be called a Jew. Christ said that they are lying and blaspheming, and the Apostle John calls them **antichrists!** *“Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.”* 1 John 2:22

To **deny** here is *arneomai* and it meant to openly state, or declare something is not true, to state that (something declared or believed to be true) is not true, to refuse to agree or accede to, to refuse to recognize or acknowledge, to disown; disavow; repudiate. It doesn't mean that someone doesn't know whether something is true or not, but has already become aware of something, that others believe to be true, and has taken their stand against it stating their repudiation verbally. **Anyone who denies that Jesus is the Messiah of Israel is an antichrist!** Most eastern religions have no opinion one way or another, but Judaism and Islam firmly deny that Jesus is the Messiah making them antichrists!

“Behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.”

This is a very interesting statement that he now makes to John, the Pastor of the church at Sardis, and to all believers in Christ, that he is going to make all those who falsely call themselves Jews come and worship at the feet of believers in Christ!

One of the tenets of Judaism, whether they all know this or not, or believe it or not, is that the self-proclaimed Jews are gods on earth and that the *goyim*, which is how they refer to all Gentiles and Christians, are nothing more than cattle, no higher up the scale than animals. And that when their messiah comes, he will have all these *goyim* serve them and worship them.

But the passages that they held to in the OT, which they believed referred to them, will be reversed when the true Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God comes back to earth. *“Thus saith the LORD, The labour of Egypt, and merchandise of Ethiopia and of the Sabeans, men of stature, shall come over unto thee, and they shall be thine: they shall come after thee; in chains they shall come over, and **they shall fall down unto thee, they shall make supplication unto thee**, saying, Surely God is in thee; and there is none else, there is no God.”* Isaiah 45:14 *“And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers: they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I am the LORD: for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me.”* Isiah 49:23 *“The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and **all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet**; and they shall call thee, The city of the LORD, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel.”* Isaiah 60:14

The Jews, (then and now), vehemently denied that Jesus is the Messiah, openly persecuting Christians, who maintained that testimony. They said that one had to keep the Law of Moses to be saved. *“And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.”* Acts 15:1 And this persecution of the Christians by the Jews, who held to the name of Jesus, was not just restricted to the nation of Israel, but went on past its borders into the world of the Gentiles! It appears that was what Revelation 3:8 was about concerning the name of Jesus. *“I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and **hast not denied my name**.”*

But the Lord says, *“Behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.”* Now as to **when** this will occur, as to the specific time, we do not know. But we do know that it will occur at his Second Advent, when Christ returns to raise the dead and establish the Father's rule over the world. Which is getting closer everyday.

There are three words used here that really are quite dramatic: **come, worship** and **feet**. Something that we have not seen, nor covered in our studies. To know that **I have loved thee** we understand. The Jews maintained that they were the recipients of God's love and favor because of their racial descent from Abraham, which the Scriptures overwhelmingly prove that is not the case. God's love and favor comes through having the faith of Abraham, thus making us his spiritual children, regardless of our race or sex. *“And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. **So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.**”* Galatians 3:8,9

What the Lord is telling us here is that those self-proclaimed Jews, who mistakenly assume that they are the ones loved by God and under his favor and that the Christians aren't, will find out the opposite, that it is the Christians that God loves, when Christ returns to earth!

Now the words before thy **feet**, *enopion ton podon sou*, is an expression of total subjugation. If someone is above you, then it means that they are superior to you. If they are at your side, then it means that they are equal to you. If they are at your feet, then it shows that they are beneath you, or inferior to you. Even the head of a body shows that it is a part of the body, only that it is the part that makes the decisions for the body. For these unsaved “Jews” to come and “worship” at the feet of the Church, that is, believers in Christ, shows that they are totally inferior to believers.

The word **before**, *enopion*, denoted place, that someone is in the presence of someone, in the sight of someone, before them. When used with **feet**, *pous*, it tells us exactly where they will be before them and that is that these Jews will be placed at the feet of believers in Christ.

To be a **footstool** for someone means that person has conquered you, which is what the Father is going to do for his Son. “*But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?*” Hebrews 1:13 To be **under one's feet** means that the person has total dominion over what is under his feet. “*And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,*” Ephesians 1:22 “*Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.*” Hebrews 2:8 To **sit at the feet** of someone meant that you were a student of that person. To be **placed at the feet** of someone, that is, in their presence or before them, but at their feet, showed that they were totally in a much superior position than you.

The word to **come**, is the future active indicative of *heko*. Now the word *heko* wasn't the normal word for to come, or to go, but was used in a religious setting for the coming of a deity in a solemn appearance, or the coming of the worshipper to the deity, which is what we have here concerning those who called themselves Jews, who hated and persecuted the Christians.

Now it says that, “*I will make them to come and worship before thy feet,*” using the present active indicative of *proskuneo*. It doesn't say that they are worshipping Christians, **but that such “worship” will be done in the presence of, at the feet of, and through the agency of the Church of Christ!**

To understand this we will have to see what the role of the Church will be in eternity as kings, priests and members of the royal family of God, as sons and daughters of God. As **kings** we will be reigning over the kingdom of God the Father and his Son, Jesus Christ. As the **priests** of the Most High God, then all worship of the eternal God will be conducted only through his priests, which is us and all believers in Christ!

Now some have concluded that these Jews will be saved before they die and worship God at the end, only at the feet of the believer-priests of the Church. But the tone of the passage really doesn't allow for that. This probably refers to the idea of everyone **being made to bow the knee** at the name of Jesus Christ, when he returns to earth - Satan included. It would be their final confession that Jesus is Lord of heaven and earth before the righteous go into the kingdom and the wicked are thrown into the lake of fire. “*That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;*” Philippians 2:10 The bowing of the knee was the expression of not only worship, but acknowledging that they are over you. Then there is the word **worship**, *proskuneo*, which could mean to worship as we would think of it today, but actually spoke of **obeisance**. It showed deference and obedience to the one over you, such as a king over his people, and depending on their station in life, they would show their deference either by, bowing before him, kissing the ring on his hand, or prostrating themselves on the floor.