

Snake Oil Salesman Jim Bakker: Cyrus Trump is the Hand of God!

Before we get to the always-colorful Jim Bakker, we must begin with Paul of Tarsus.

Paul remains a huge problem for Jews:

<https://www.jpost.com/blogs/the-jewish-problem---from-anti-judaism-to-anti-semitism/anti-judaism-in-christian-scripture-part-four-paul-as-zealot-363735>

I must admit that since DirecTV took the Jimmy Swaggart channel off my system, I have been going through some very painful Pauline withdrawal:

<https://www.jsm.org/message-cross>

Paul is everything to Swaggart:

The entire Book of Galatians, but especially the 5th Chapter, is a warning from Paul to the Church at Galatia, which is also meant for us. The warning is that if they place their faith in anything except *“Christ and Him Crucified,”* that *“Christ shall profit you nothing”* (Gal. 5:2).

The Apostle goes on to say that if the Believer doesn’t adhere to the Way of the Spirit, which is the Way of the Cross, then works of the flesh will manifest themselves.

He said:

“Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God” (Gal. 5:19-21).

Swaggart explains the matter further in his pamphlet “What Must I Do To Be Saved?”:

<https://www.jsm.org/documents/whatmustidoinside1-24.pdf>

It is fully spelled out in the section “Faith and Not Works”:

The only thing required to obtain this glorious and wonderful Salvation is to simply believe on Christ, exactly as Paul said, which means to have Faith in Him.

What does that mean?

It is actually very simple. The Lord made it this way in order that all may have equal opportunity.

It simply means that you believe or have faith In what He did, and accept it for yourself on a personal basis. That's all that God requires. But of course, to believe and have faith, even as we have already said, means to accept the Lord as your Saviour and, as well, to make Him the Lord of your life.

First of all, man must understand that he is a sinner. That includes all (Rom. 3:23). As such, he needs a Saviour. There is only one Saviour, only One Who has paid the price for man's Redemption, and that Saviour is the Lord Jesus Christ. In other words, if one does not accept Christ, one cannot be saved.

Millions attempt to earn their Salvation in many and varied ways other than accepting Christ. Or else they attempt to become saved by accepting Christ as well as adding other things to Christ.

The Scripture says: "FOR BY GRACE ARE YOU SAVED THROUGH FAITH; AND THAT NOT OF YOURSELVES: IT IS THE GIFT OF GOD: NOT OF WORKS, LEST ANY MAN SHOULD BOAST" (Eph. 2:8-9).

That means the Church cannot save you, and neither can Water Baptism save you, or anything else for that matter, as important as those things may be in their own way. I have said this because millions think that they are saved by being baptized in water, or joining a Church, or performing good works, etc.

While those things may be important in their own right, they have absolutely nothing to do with one being saved. One is saved simply by trusting Jesus Christ, even as we have already said.

That means that one can be saved anywhere: in Church, on the street corner, watching a Christian Telecast, listening to a Christian Radio Program, or even reading this Booklet.

Where one is doesn't matter. It is what one believes that really counts.

The moment that one confesses the Lord with one's mouth, and believes in one's heart, and does so truly, at that moment, and wherever you may be, you are saved. As we have stated several times, it is just that simple.

Incidentally, when the Jailer asked Paul the question, "What must I do to be saved?", he was actually at that time in the jail with Paul and Silas. Every evidence is that he at that moment, in that jail, believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, and was instantly saved (Acts 16:27-34).

Paul removed the human element, our good works, from the final scheme of salvation: All we ultimately need to do is to believe in Jesus Christ and his redemptive death on the

cross. Doing the commandments without faith in Christ will not save you! In fact, the commandments ultimately do not mean anything at all. Faith is all that matters.

As we will shortly see, it is this doctrine that is critical in the magical thinking that has brought Lysol Trump and the Evangelical Christians together.

Books on Paul by academic scholars like [Alan Segal](#), [Daniel Boyarin](#), and [Paula Fredriksen](#) mark rabbinic Judaism as subservient to Jewish Apocalyptic and Christianity in a way that reminds me of Swaggart:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1qihywNGjZbuPEY4-cbQ1g02-nOoaCL2Ug0G2qZ12t64/edit>

Beginning with the Segal book back in 1990, there has been a marked uptick in Paul apologetics, seeking to exonerate him from the charge of Anti-Nomianism and ultimately of Anti-Semitism.

Essential Christian categories such as soteriology, our knowledge of salvation, are rigorously applied to Jewish texts as a means of establishing doctrinal harmony between the two faiths. The idea is to distinguish Paul's toxic view of the Torah which is markedly **not** applicable to Gentiles, from his purportedly **positive** view of Jews and Judaism itself.

This, of course, as Jimmy Swaggart knows all too well, misreads the actual Pauline discourse which tends to play very fast and loose with Torah observance in a way that continues to make traditional Jews very uncomfortable, given how these ideas functioned throughout history:

But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. (Galatians 3:23-29)

Indeed, Paul claimed that the "letter" of the Torah kills, but the "spirit" gives life:

He has enabled us to be ministers of his new covenant. This is a covenant not of written laws, but of the Spirit. The old written covenant ends in death; but under the new covenant, the Spirit gives life. (2 Corinthians 3:6)

Christian literalism has indeed amplified these words, which have turned murderous over time.

The net result can be seen in the depredations of the Spanish Inquisition which sought to punish **any** observance of the Jewish ritual Law with draconian penalties:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spanish_Inquisition#Expulsion_of_Jews_and_Jewish_convertos

So, what appears to be the current academic consensus on Paul and Judaism, rooted in the Anti-Semitism of 19th century German Historical Positivism and its Hegelian ways, ignores the larger systemic process of Pauline Anti-Nomianism that has been a key part of Christianity for so many centuries.

The atavistic belief that Paul's often jumbled and sometimes duplicitous ideas can somehow be separated from their socio-political context is naïve at best and downright lethal at worst.

Watching Jimmy Swaggart and other radical Christian Evangelicals makes the point crystal clear.

But, as I said, Swaggart's SonLife channel has been removed from my TV service, and I continue to need my Paul fix.

<https://sonlifetv.com/>

I was therefore quite heartened to discover the new Jim Bakker Show on one of my shopping channels!

<https://jimbakkershow.com/news/shop-til-you-drop-ptl-shop-the-first-faith-based-home-shopping-network-now-has-its-own-network/>

For those of you not old enough to remember, Bakker was the founder of the notorious PTL, and one of the most profitable – and corrupt – of the Reagan-era Televangelists:

<https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/jim-bakker-is-indicted-on-federal-charges>

We will also recall his bizarro-world wife Tammy Faye and her dripping mascara:

<https://www.sfgate.com/movies/article/Sex-Redemption-Mascara-in-Eyes-Tammy-Faye-2711589.php>

May she rest in peace.

Before there was a Joel Osteen, there was Bakker and his gold-plated Evangelical con game that made Reverend Ike look like a novice:

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/obituaries/rev-ike-preacher-who-worshipped-wealth-1770035.html>

Jim and Tammy Faye were the last word in Christian Ostentation:

<https://www.charlotteobserver.com/living/religion/article205362719.html>

He was a serial adulterer in addition to being a fraudster:

<https://popculture.com/tv-shows/news/jessica-hahn-sex-scandal-jim-bakker-ptl-club/>

But Bakker is long out of jail and is now back to his old dirty tricks.

He has been hawking various snake oil products:

<https://store.jimbakkershow.com/product-category/today-s-show-offers/>

And the authorities have again taken notice:

<https://www.npr.org/2020/03/11/814550474/missouri-sues-televangelist-jim-bakker-for-selling-fake-coronavirus-cure>

I wanted to make special note of him here because of his sacred trumpeting of Lysol Trump:

<https://www.aol.com/article/news/2019/05/16/televangelist-jim-bakker-sells-dollar45-trump-coin-calls-it-point-of-contact-with-god/23727628/>

He has partnered with another fraud named Lance Wallnau:

<https://pulpitandpen.org/2017/05/02/false-teacher-of-the-day-4-lance-wallnau/>

Their back and forth on the show is truly awe-inspiring from a traditional Jewish perspective, as it shows us the bare-knuckles literalism of Evangelical Christianity and its demented apocalyptic visions.

There is much talk of Trump, Boris Johnson and Viktor Orban as the new “Cyruses,” who have been sent to us by Jesus himself to take control of a corrupt “secular” world:

<https://store.jimbakkershow.com/product/13-cyrus-trump-bundle/>

It is thus understandable that Bakker and his eschatological allies will parrot Trump talking points like those on the “Wuhan Virus” by pointing to the “unclean” animals that the “heathen” Orientals eat.

What makes that specific point so fascinating is that the Jewish food laws that prohibit “unclean” animals are not at all followed by the swine-eating Christians, who have, as we have seen, abrogated **their** obligation to follow the Jewish ritual Law.

It does seem, both in academic and Evangelical circles, that there is a great deal of shapeshifting and hypocrisy when it comes to how Torah is actually dealt with. Certain parts of the Torah are expeditiously deployed or ignored whenever the specific situation seems to require.

What **is** consistent, however, is the way in which theology and doctrine, especially as it applies to the messianic and the eschatological, are utilized by both groups to undermine Jewish continuity and the integrity of its scriptural heritage.

One of the most important questions to ask in this regard relates to the actual real-time status of Prophecy and Divine Revelation after the destruction of the Jewish Temple in 70 CE. Does God continue to speak to us directly as the Christians insist, or have the ancient prophetic calls ceased to apply? This would naturally lead us into discussions of theodicy and the perpetual problem of the suffering of innocent people.

Our answer to these thorny questions is rooted in how we read the Hebrew Bible, and whether or not it is a Closed Text that is fixed and unchanging.

The Christians believe that the Christ event ended ongoing hermeneutical investigation and elaboration of the text, while the traditional Jewish view of an Open Text embodied by the Midrashic tradition, is that we must continue to expand on biblical narrative independently of the literal, as I have written in my article “Understanding Midrash”:

https://www.huffpost.com/entry/understanding-midrash_b_535249

It is ultimately a question of whether we can continue to increase our knowledge and learn new things through reason and science, as Maimonides believed, or whether we are locked in a temporal prophetic prison that refuses figurative or metaphorical reading.

As I am still doing a lot of reading in Second Temple Judaism, Dead Sea Scrolls, and early Christianity, this sort of biblical connect-the-dots is very much on my mind.

The current academic scholarship on Second Temple Judaism and early Christianity is thus very much tied to the Right Wing Evangelicals like Swaggart and Bakker, as it focuses on how Christian messianism is more authentically Jewish than Talmudic Judaism.

Indeed, Hebrew University’s Moshe Idel, one of the most prominent and influential figures in contemporary Judaic Studies, actually has a book called “Sonship” which makes the connection explicit:

<https://www.amazon.com/Ben-Sonship-Mysticism-Library-Studies/dp/0826496660>

The aforementioned Daniel Boyarin has militantly affirmed the messianic Christian reading of Daniel 7:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B1NQdm28qvXbmt4dmNVSEotUXM/view?ths=true>

Just as he has proclaimed the “Jewish” nature of the Divine Logos, which is identified in the [Gospel of John](#) as marking Jesus as the Son of God:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B1NQdm28qvXNmE5elVBekRkSFU/view?ths=true>

Such scholarship rejects the integrity of Jewish monotheism as presented by Maimonides and other Jewish Philosophers, in favor what Boyarin has repeatedly called “binitarianism” in a Two Powers in Heaven construct:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RJKYDB8z4MzcTaVN8ojqZkf-nZ9CL4Pj/view?ths=true>

When we watch Christian TV today, we see how this literalist reading, rooted in Paul’s abrogation of the Jewish Law, which is replaced with a Faith without Works doctrine, is taken as a precise referent to current events. God is speaking directly to these new “prophets” and they spend a good deal of time linking Trump and the Alt-Right to the Bible.

Whatever Trump says is taken on “faith” as a sign of Jesus Christ’s approbation. Trump is **protecting** the Church and fighting the Anti-Christ in an eschatological battle.

He has become Cyrus, the Persian monarch who restored the Jews to their land after the Babylonian Exile:

<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/second-temple/>

Christians are of course the new Israel, and the Jews are plum out of luck because they do not believe in Jesus.

This magical eschatological vision is the logical extension of the rejection of rationality and science that Lysol Trump represents. What is real is fake, and what is fake becomes real.

“I am the president and you are fake news”!

<https://deadline.com/2020/04/coronavirus-donald-trump-briefing-washington-post-1202916609/>

In order to properly understand the Trump-Christian dynamic it is critical to see how magical thinking has fully taken over the Religious Right.

In my article “Why Kosher?” I presented the Anti-Maimonidean ideas of Tikvah Fund machers Leon Kass and Meir Soloveichik as emblematic of the Jewish attack on rationality and science:

<https://groups.google.com/forum/#!topic/Davidshasha/ZKfBs3DBcFI>

And in a follow-up article “Whose Bible?” I discussed how the Jewish academics have dismissed the historical-conceptual integrity of the rabbinic tradition, in favor of a neo-Christian reading that emphasizes the occult-mystical and rejects the scientific-rational:

<https://groups.google.com/forum/#!topic/Davidshasha/bYWuJSBuNNc>

While those academic scholars are certainly non-believers in the eyes of the Christian Evangelicals, both sides are actually elevating the messianism of the Jewish and Christian apocalypics as a counterweight to the values of Maimonidean Religious Humanism.

Those who know anything about Second Temple Jewish history will easily see the problem with this theological emphasis.

The Qumran radicals and other sectarian groups did not meet with a happy end:

<https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/qumran>

The Apocalypse is not all it is cut out to be!

Allowing magic to replace science has now proven to be a very dangerous thing, as the Lysol Trump adherents might have discovered:

<https://www.rawstory.com/2020/04/nyc-poison-control-center-records-jump-in-lysol-and-bleach-cases-after-trumps-remarks/>

Death is very much an issue in this Brave New World.

So, if you have a chance, I recommend watching Bakker’s show, as it is a chilling reminder of the evils of religion, and how those evils are now tied inextricably to the current occupant of the White House as we continue to suffer from the Trumpdeath Pandemic.

David Shasha

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Why Trump Reigns as King Cyrus

By: Katherine Stewart

The month before the 2018 midterms, a thousand theaters screened “The Trump Prophecy,” a film that tells the story of Mark Taylor, a former firefighter who claims that God told him in 2011 that Donald Trump would be elected president.

At a critical moment in the film, just after the actor representing Mr. Taylor collapses in the flashing light of an epiphany, he picks up a Bible and turns to the 45th chapter of the book of Isaiah, which [describes the anointment](#) of King Cyrus by God. In the next scene, we hear Mr. Trump being interviewed on “The 700 Club,” a popular Christian television show.

As Lance Wallnau, an evangelical author and speaker who appears in the film, once said, “I believe the 45th president is meant to be an Isaiah 45 Cyrus,” who will “restore the crumbling walls that separate us from cultural collapse.”

Cyrus, in case you’ve forgotten, was born in the sixth century B.C.E. and became the first emperor of Persia. Isaiah 45 celebrates Cyrus for freeing a population of Jews who were held captive in Babylon. Cyrus is the model for a nonbeliever appointed by God as a vessel for the purposes of the faithful.

The identification of the 45th president with an ancient Middle Eastern potentate isn’t a fringe thing. “The Trump Prophecy” was produced with the help of professors and students at Liberty University, whose president, Jerry Falwell Jr., has been instrumental in rallying evangelical support for Mr. Trump. Jeanine Pirro of Fox News has picked up on the meme, [as has Ron Dermer](#), the [Israeli ambassador](#) to the United States, among many others.

As the Trump presidency falls under siege on multiple fronts, it has become increasingly clear that the so-called values voters will be among the last to leave the citadel. A lot of attention has been paid to the supposed paradox of evangelicals backing such an imperfect man, but the real problem is that our idea of Christian nationalism hasn’t caught up with the reality. We still buy the line that the hard core of the Christian right is just an interest group working to protect its values. But what we don’t get is that Mr. Trump’s supposedly anti-Christian attributes and anti-democratic attributes are a vital part of his attraction.

Today’s Christian nationalists talk a good game about respecting the Constitution and America’s founders, but at bottom they sound as if they prefer autocrats to democrats. In fact, what they really want is a king. “It is God that raises up a king,” according to Paula White, a prosperity gospel preacher who has advised Mr. Trump.

Ralph Drollinger, who has led weekly Bible study groups in the White House attended by Vice President Mike Pence and many other cabinet members, likes the word “king” so much that he frequently turns it into a verb. “Get ready to king in our future lives,” he

tells his followers. “Christian believers will — soon, I hope — become the consummate, perfect governing authorities!”

The great thing about kings like Cyrus, as far as today’s Christian nationalists are concerned, is that they don’t have to follow rules. They are the law. This makes them ideal leaders in paranoid times.

“When are they going to start rolling out the boxcars to start hauling off Christians?” Tony Perkins, the president of the Family Research Council, asked in 2016. If you’re hearing those boxcars pulling up in the distance, as it were, you don’t merely overlook the antisocial qualities of a prospective leader, you embrace them as virtues.

Mr. Trump himself well understands this longing for the hard hand of the despot “If you don’t mind me saying so, you’ve gotten soft,” he told Mr. Wallnau and other evangelical leaders during the 2016 campaign — much to their delight.

Another important thing to understand about Cyrus is that he is not a queen. In the Christian nationalist world, legitimate political power is largely male power. Mr. Drollinger insists that the Bible describes only “male leadership.”

Of course, there are those on the Christian right who have made a show of holding their noses while supporting Mr. Trump to advance their aims of stacking the Supreme Court or ending abortion. But we are kidding ourselves if we think their continuing support for him is purely transactional.

I have attended dozens of Christian nationalist conferences and events over the past two years. And while I have heard plenty of comments casting doubt on the more questionable aspects of Mr. Trump’s character, the gist of the proceedings almost always comes down to the belief that he is a miracle sent straight from heaven to bring the nation back to the Lord. I have also learned that resistance to Mr. Trump is tantamount to resistance to God.

This isn’t the religious right we thought we knew. The Christian nationalist movement today is authoritarian, paranoid and patriarchal at its core. They aren’t fighting a culture war. They’re making a direct attack on democracy itself.

They want it all. And in Mr. Trump, they have found a man who does not merely serve their cause, but also satisfies their craving for a certain kind of political leadership.

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