

## **The Forgotten Jesus Podcast**

**S2E8**

**Title - Hellenism: Sports That Consume**

**Description - If you think SEC Football in the south in the fall is big, it's nothing in comparison to the Greek Games when they first came to Israel. Today we'll examine the impact of sport on the people of God.**

Last time we talked about the Jewish education system, today we're going to review Alexander's impact on the education system.

Remember, Alexander doesn't conquer by sheer force alone. He uses persuasion, he uses knowledge.

Alexander / Hellenism challenged subtly the way they thought. Why would you not want to learn astronomy? Why would you not want to learn about history or geography? Why would you just study scripture alone?

We're grateful that the Greeks worked on collecting books in antiquity. They along with the Romans are why we have the scriptures we have today.

So not only did Hellenism impact education, Alexander was trying to win over hearts and minds.

Hellenism also impacted culture via the Greek games.

The games were completely naked. Remember, to the Greek, the apex of all things was man / mankind & the human body.

So if man is the crown jewel of creation, if man is the apex of creation, then they will compete with each other in the games to determine who will be the best? Who's #1?

This was starkly different from the Jewish culture. Jewish culture was about supporting and serving together and working as a community. Why would they compete against their brother? Or their cousin who's of the same tribe?

What was the major problem for the Jewish nation? Jews were all about cooperation, the Hellenistic world was all about competition.

The Jews worked together, you're my brother, why would I compete against you?

The Greeks wanted to compete against each other.

Hellenism and the games has so impacted the culture, that Paul uses the games as a metaphor when writing to the church at Corinth.

1 Corinthians 9:24-27

<sup>24</sup> Don't you know that the runners in a stadium all race, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way to win the prize. <sup>25</sup> Now everyone who competes exercises self-control in everything. They do it to receive a perishable crown, but we an imperishable crown. <sup>26</sup> So I do not run like one who runs aimlessly or box like one beating the air. <sup>27</sup> Instead, I discipline my body and bring it under strict control, so that after preaching to others, I myself will not be disqualified.

The competitors in the games would sign a 9 - 12 month commitment to train everyday to be ready to run the race. But they would compete to win a perishable crown, either pine twigs, laurel wreaths, etc, woven into a victors crown.

In the end, there will be two judgment seats:

1. The Great White Throne - Judgment for unbelievers
2. The Bema Seat - Judgment for rewards for believers

Paul says, for all the work these competitors do in the games, they're doing it for a perishable crown, that may last a week or two. But as believers, we're running for something that will last, for eternity, an imperishable crown.

God is looking for a man and woman on earth, who He can trust in the little things when no one is looking to see who He can trust which much more when everyone is looking.