

The “New” Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
July 24, 2021 --- Issue No. 25

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Contributors: Curtis Dahlgren, Eddie Hyatt, Royce Mitchell, Jr., Cam Rea, James Steinle, Craig White

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Other Items

A CHART COMPARING OFFICES IN THE SYNAGOGUE AND THE CHURCH

By C White
 (extracted from *Synagogue and Church: Comparative Structures* by C White)

Offices in the Synagogue	Historical evidence for offices in the NT Church	Ephesians 4:11-12	1Cor 12:28-29	Old WCG Structure
	Apostle (apostolos) ¹	Apostle (apostolos)	Apostle (apostolos)	Apostle
	Prophet (prophetes)	Prophet (prophetes)	Prophet (prophetes)	N/A, unless some senior men who brought truths to HWA may have functioned in this capacity in some way at various times
Senior or Chief Elder (nasi = president) ²		Evangelist (euaggelistes)		Evangelist (many were Regional Directors)
Community Chief/Pastor & Elders in Council (including Notables) (chazen or zeken)	Community Chief (archisynagogos) & Elders in Council (poineri)	Pastor & Elders in Council		Pastor sometimes Assistant Pastors Local Elders Local Local Elders (pastor presided over regular meetings with Elders and Deacons (DELS))
Teacher (rab)	Teacher (didaskalos)	Teacher	Teacher	Simmonette presenters, Youth class leaders

¹ This is probably also known as the Angelos (as Ekklisia) (cp Rev 2:18, 12:18, 3:1, 7, 14)
² This aspect is still not clear to me. It may have been a parallel title to the magis who traveled around and raised up local churches and proclaimed the Gospel to the community. See II Tim 4:5; Titus 1:5.

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Offices in the Synagogue	Historical evidence for offices in the NT Church	Ephesians 4:11-12	ICor 12:28-29	Old WCG Structure
Assistants (Deacons) (almoners or <i>parnasim</i>)	Deacons (in Councils)	(Deacons are mentioned elsewhere in the NT)	(Deacons are mentioned elsewhere in the NT)	Deacons & Deaconesses
Apostoli (shaliach or announcer)				
Prophets (outside the jurisdiction of the synagogue) (<i>esha elichim, nabyi</i>) various gifts were noted and utilised, but were not ministerial rank; scribe, commissioner, priest, reader, apostle, prophet. One such was the preceptor or song-leader. Another was the <i>meturgaman</i> who translated into the local language the teaching of the Law in Hebrew. He stood next to the teacher as he undertook the translation. ³			(various gifts such as miracles, healings, helps, governments, languages) See ICor 13:1, 8; 14:1-28	Members in general

NB: further detail on the structure of the synagogue could be added here, however the above suffices. The striking feature is the similarity between the synagogue and that postulated by Paul. Also the non-rank role of apostle and prophet. These were evidently raised by Paul to highest office in the early Church of God.

³ See the *Talmud: Meg. 4, Mishna, Tephillah, 12, Mis-vacheti* Soph. 103

A pain in the 'BUT': even National Review? Say it ain't so! (Copyright) by Curtis Dahlgren (Stephenson, Michigan)

"The Trump movement often is described as a 'personality cult,' which it is, in no small part." – National Review, 11/02/20, Kevin Williamson (also posted on Facebook)

IT DOESN'T DO MUCH GOOD to preach to the choir unless the choir "shares" with their uninformed friends and relatives. So, to Biden voters I say, "You aren't really thinking things THRU unless you look at both sides of the choice. You may say you're for 'choice.' but do you really look at both sides of the coin?"

Thank God for Tucker Carlson because parts of Fox News are going wobbly. Even National Review is a bit wobbly. My Nov. 2 issue came, and it contains pieces by 3 writers: one for Biden, one "maybe" for Trump, and one for Trump. But even the latter, Andy McCarthy, uses the "but" word:

"But to make the election all about Trump is to ape the president's signature self-absorption," etc. [a back-handed endorsement?]. The NEVER-Trumper, Ramesh Ponnuru, says:

"All presidents have lapses in judgment, honesty. . . [but] Trump is alarmingly deficient in all of these qualities at once, and their lack has marked every day of his presidency[!]" The "maybe Trumper" says:

". . . he's a shallow, ignorant, capricious, incorrigible self-destructive fool. For a while, I was convinced that he would change. . . But he didn't. . ." You have to consider the sources.

These are so-called "bright" people from Academia with degrees in poly-sci and so on (like Bill Kristol and Charlie Sykes). People from the upper Midwest who get their hands dirty just "wouldn't understand"! The opening line in this mag is:

"We would tell you the joke, but then it would become an issue, so we'll wait until after the election." Wonder if they have a Trump joke; NR says Democrats are favored to take the Senate AND the White House. Just for giggles, I tried to count the number of "buts" in this issue "but" stopped at 76. For example: regarding orthodox Jews in NYC:

"Believers rightly protest regulations that are enforced more stringently against worship services than liquor stores. BUT faith-blind health regulations must be obeyed by all... "

"[Trump's habits} sometimes served him and the country well, as when he moved our embassy in Israel to Jerusalem over the hysterical objections of alleged experts. . . But they also made him a consistently unpopular figure. . ." (in whose minds, I wonder?).

I hate to have to be the one to point out the obvious, but you do have a CHOICE, popularity, or no popularity. Are the "pro-choice" people able to admit the weaknesses in their talking points finally? The anagram for "talking points" is TP. But they are no more useful than used toilet paper.

P.S. The best part of the current NR is a book review of "Breaking Bread with the Dead" by Alan Jacobs. It takes the smarty-pants generation to task for ignoring their own national and historic identities. The reviewer Tracy Simmons says the author believes in intelligent judgments about the past, not just negative ones:

" . . while recognizing the easily overlooked fact that we too inhabit a place along the timeline of history, and that our descendants may not come to share our high opinions of ourselves. . . If fortunate, after much reading and reflecting, we land with the virtue of humility, without which intelligence is simply a loaded gun in reckless hands."

PPS: Paraphrasing Jacobs, the reviewer says: "The faith invested in education has always overshot its capacity to deliver." Ponder THAT ONE!!

Articles

Were the Early Great Kings of Persia Israelites?

by Cam Rea (Kendallville, Indiana)

The Achaemenid dynasty's foundation is based on a man by the name of Achaemenes. Not much is known about the man himself. However, he is considered the eponymous founder according to the Behistun inscription of Darius I listed in his genealogy. Cyrus the Great says nothing on the Babylonian cylinder about the founder of their dynasty. However, Cyrus refers to himself as an Achaemenid on the inscriptions found at Pasargadae, but it is also debated whether the inscriptions are of Cyrus the Great as it could be quite possible that Darius I wrote those inscriptions after Cyrus died. Nevertheless, their most likely was a man by the name of Achaemenes. The only problem surrounding Achaemenes was, who was he?

Let us start with the name Achaemenes. Achaemenes is a Greek form of his name. His name in Old Persian is Hakhamanish,ⁱⁱ or Haxamanis, or in Babylonian Ahamaniis, and in Elamite Haakkamannuis.ⁱⁱⁱ In addition, we also have Hakhamanas^{iv} and Hakhamaneshi^v as well as Hakamanish.^{vi} As you can see, there are various spellings and pronunciations of his name. Now, the name Hakhamanish is said to possibly mean "friendly-minded". Hakha or Sakha means "friend or friendly", while the man in "manish" means "mind or minded."^{vii} This may be true, but there is another alternative to his name that should be considered. Sakha is Sanskrit and Hakha is Old Persian. Both languages are related to a certain degree.^{viii} However, the term Sakha that is used in India is also used when referring to the Saka and you can find the name Saka in Sakha Sakha. In-addition, there was a tribe of Scythians called Sakha/Saka that migrated into Northern India^x and seem to have settled in the Panjab/Punjab region. In-addition, the Sakha/Saka are also called Shaka, and their capital was Shakala in Eastern Punjab.^x It now becomes possible that Hakha in Hakhamanish is another form for the term "Saka". To give you a fuller detail let us look at the similarities between the two names. Now, the Hakha and Sakha, both obviously have "akha" found in the name but consider that both share the letters aka which is found in the word "Saka". Now, look at the name Hakha and the Scythians called Shaka. Both once again share the "haka" in the name and if you remember reading earlier Haka was another form of Hakha. It also seems that Sakha/Hakha are similar to the name "Sahak" as you read earlier which was another name for King Astyages which means Isaac, and Isaac in Hebrew is "Ishak". Notice the "hak" in Ishak, which bears similarities to Hakha and Sakha. In-addition, it also becomes possible that Hak is an epithet of "Haik", which also means Isaac. Thus, it becomes quite possible to suggest that Hakha or Sakha is not just the word friend or friendly, but can also represent an origin, and that name seems to point to none other than the Saka/Scythian tribes that bear the name Isaac.^{xi}

The next bit that needs to be focused on is the manish in Hakhamanish. As you have already read, there is a number of ways it is spelled. Manish, Manis, Maniis, Mannuis, Manas, Maneshi, Menes. When looking at the various forms of Manish, it becomes possible and thus speculated that all the various names for Manish you have just read, point to the tribe known as Manasseh. Take the name Manas that you have just read. Manas is also another name for Manasseh. The same can be said for Mannuis, which seems to be similar to Mannus, and is also linked to Manasseh. The name Menes could be linked to the name "Menesen", which also seems to be connected to Manasseh as well. In-addition, the name Hakhamanish also bears the suffix "ish or esh" which represents a sense of being or be-longing to a certain tribe or a person of ancestry. Thus, in conclusion to the meaning of the name Hakhamanish, it seems plausible that his name could mean "Isaac of Manasseh".^{xii} **(End Notes are at the end of this Newsletter on Page 12.)**

America – Under a Curse?

by Royce Mitchell, Jr. (Manvel, Texas)

Judging from what can be seen in the United States, some people sense that our nation seems to be under a curse. There's good reason for that; the nation IS under a curse. How can I say that? Can I prove it? One does not have to be a prophet to see the curse coming. One merely needs to understand a few things. First, God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34). Secondly, God does not change (Mal 3:6).

What is this curse that God has pronounced on our nation? Here's the first indication: Lev 18:21 "And you shall not let any of your seed pass through the fire to Molech, neither shall you profane the name of your God. I am Jehovah."

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God made sure, after having given His commandments at Sinai, that Israel could understand what He meant by issuing His statutes. One of the commandments was that they should not murder (Ex 20:13). He expounded on that by prohibiting the action of killing one's children by giving them to Molech, i.e., passing them through the fire.

He repeated the command for emphasis: Deu 18:10 "There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter to pass through the fire. "

But Israel and Judah did exactly what was prohibited. They caused their children to be put into the fire on the statue of Molech. 2Ki 17:17 And they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire. After Israel had done that great evil, Judah did exactly the same thing: Jer 32:35 "And they built the high places of Baal, in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire to Molech; which I did not command them, nor did it come into My mind that they should do this abomination, to cause Judah to sin. "

Eze 23:36-37 "And Jehovah said to me: Son of man, will you judge Oholah and Oholibah, and declare to them their abominations, that they have committed adultery, and blood is on their hands? And they have committed adultery with their idols and have also caused their sons whom they bore to Me to pass through the fire to them, to devour them."

What was the result of this great evil? Eze 23:46-48 "For so says the Lord Jehovah: I will bring up a company on them, and will give them to be removed and stripped.

"And the company shall stone them with stones and cut them down with their swords. They shall kill their sons and their daughters and burn up their houses with fire.

"So, I will cause wickedness to cease out of the land, that all women may be taught, even not to go after your wickedness."

And it came to pass as God stated. First Israel and later Judah were violently taken into captivity as the result of the protection of God being removed from them. Israel never returned and is known today as the "Lost Tribes." But Judah was allowed to return, eventually. Why that happened is important, but not the subject of this article.

How does this affect the United States? The deliberately ignorant might say that they have never sacrificed their children to Molech. They make the mistake of not understanding that Molech was just the symbol of the great evil of murdering one's children.

This country, which has been the recipient of the blessings promised to the children of Abraham, has been murdering huge numbers of its children since the evil decision of the Supreme Court in the case of Roe v. Wade.

Indeed, the website numberofabortions.com states that over 60 million babies have been sacrificed to the false idols of our convenience and money since the legalization of abortion.

But it gets worse! Did you know that people in charge of getting foreign "aid" to other countries hold the sword over their head of their needing to control their population growth to get the "aid?" How do most of those nations comply with the American demands? Yes, you guessed correctly: abortion.

The same website mentioned earlier indicates that well over 1.5 billion babies have been sacrificed to the evil of American "aid."

Recently, to compound the issue, a number of states have begun enacting laws that allow for those babies to be killed right up until the moment of birth!

Our legislators have no courage against the Planned Parenthood money for reelection. It would take only the simplest of definition changes in their criminal codes to end abortion immediately. What is it, you ask? All they would have to do is to define that life begins when doctors can detect a beating heart. But our so-called servants have left their chains and continue to allow this great evil to create a stench in the nostrils of God.

They don't seem to care that God said in Exo 13:2 "Sanctify all the first-born to Me, whatever opens the womb among

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the sons of Israel, of man and of beast. It is Mine." The first-born children belong to God! How many children have we in this country stolen from God in all these years?

Therefore, yes, we are sacrificing our children to Molech figuratively. Whether we throw them onto the burning arms of the statute of Molech, or cut them, screaming in pain, from the mother's womb, they are just as dead—just as murdered.

We should not make the mistake of thinking that God is not paying attention to what we are doing. This nation is the recipient of the great blessings promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who later became named Israel. If God hated the evil that was done to children during those days, then He still hates it today.

If God brought invasion and captivity on Israel for these sins back then, He will most certainly bring invasion and captivity on any nation participating in this great evil of child sacrifice now.

If He sent Judah into captivity for not learning the lesson that God did not want children sacrificed to false gods, He most certainly will send this nation into captivity for sacrificing our children to the false gods of convenience and money.

I have heard the excuses put forth by some that abortion ought to be legal for the health of the mother, and for cases of rape and incest. Without a doubt, much evil is being done in this nation because rape and incest are likewise evil in God's sight. Deu 22:25 "But if a man finds an engaged girl in the field, and the man forces her and lies with her, then only the man that lay with her shall die."

That statute applies to ALL men, related or not. Further, we read in Lev 18:8-18 that incest is likewise strictly prohibited.

However, in no case does God say that the child of such illicit unions is allowed to be killed. He was very specific in His statements that children were not to be given up to a false god, even if that false god is our convenience or our inability to support another mouth. There is a better solution than murder.

We in this nation compound one sin with another, and another. We use our own reasoning to determine that what we want is good—just like we did in the Garden of Eden. But, just like then, it is God who determines what is evil and what is good. Every time we choose that evil for ourselves, we are choosing the fruit of the forbidden tree once again.

Concluding, this nation is living on borrowed time because of the promises made to Abraham and his descendants. Is there any way for this nation, at this point, to avoid the destruction that is most assuredly coming? There is always the path of heartfelt repentance. We must quit electing spineless servants who leave the chains of the constitution and drag this nation down the hellacious pit of the murder of children. It is only by a national repentance and revival that this nation can be saved from the destruction that is coming on it.

Sadly, I do not see anything that will cause the people of this nation to rise up and remove the evil men and women from leadership who are about to bring destruction on all of us.

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Fret Not Because of Evildoers

by James Steinle (Swanville, Minnesota)

In this world, which currently is Satan's world, we see many things that strike a believer as being wrong or evil. We see nation against nation threatening war. We see crime from all walks of life; white collar crime involving millions and billions of dollars. Sexual crimes of all kinds. Violent crimes involving kidnapping, torture, murder, or injury. We see corruption of governing officials all over the world establishing laws to subjugate their peoples. Here in America, it does not seem to matter which particular party is in office; corruption and special interests often seem to dominate. No one party or official seems to want to use the commands of the Creator of this world as to how they should govern. This has been going on since Adam and Eve fell even up to our time.

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We, as believers and followers of Yeshua the Messiah are actually trying to learn how to govern ourselves, and once we learn to do that, we will actually be able to help our Elder Brother Yeshua govern the world when the time comes for him to come back.

(A Psalm of David) Psa 37:1 **Fret not thyself because of evildoers**, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity. 2 For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb. 3 Trust in Yehovah and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. 4 Delight thyself also in Yehovah; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. 5 Commit thy way unto Yehovah; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass. 6 And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday. 7 Rest in Yehovah, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass. 8 Cease from anger and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil. 9 For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon Yehovah, they shall inherit the earth. 10 For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. 11 But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

King David continues, 12 The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth. 13 Yehovah shall laugh at him: for he seeth that his day is coming. 14 The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, and to slay such as be of upright conversation. 15 Their sword shall enter into their own heart, and their bows shall be broken. 16 A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked. 17 For the arms of the wicked shall be broken: but **Yehovah upholdeth the righteous**. 18 Yehovah knoweth the days of the upright: and their inheritance shall be forever. 19 They **shall not be ashamed in the evil time: and in the days of famine, they shall be satisfied**. :20 But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of Yehovah shall be as the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away.”

In verses 35-36 David continues, “I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree. 36 Yet he passed away, and, And lo, he was not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found. 38 But the transgressors shall be destroyed together: the end of the wicked shall be cut off. 40 And Yehovah shall help them and deliver them: he shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, **because they trust in him**.”

Yehovah told Job about the wicked in chapter 38:15, “And from the wicked their light is withheld, and the light arm shall be broken.” or, as the CEV version says, “But its light is too much for those who are evil, and their power is broken.”

David’s son Solomon continued this theme; he said, “**Don’t fret yourself because of evil** (men), neither be you envious at the wicked; for there shall be no reward to the evil (man); the candle or lamp of the wicked shall be put out.” (Proverbs 24:19-20)

A warning and some wise advice is given by Solomon to those of us who see the wicked being punished. In Proverbs 24:17-18 we are warned, “Rejoice not when your enemy falls, and let not your heart be glad when he stumbles, 18 lest Yehovah see and it displeases him, and he turn away his wrath from him.”

The apostle Paul also saw the situation in his day and for the days ahead, as he says in 2 Timothy 3:13, “But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.”

THE HARD PART

But it is hard, isn’t it, not to fret about the things we see in this world. The evils we see do work on our emotions! To fret (H.2734 khaw-raw) means to grow warm and usually meaning to blaze up! It can mean to be grieved or to be incensed. And how easy it is to do this! Do we think we are the only ones to feel this?

We are not the only ones who have a hard time with the things we see going on. Yehovah’s prophets had a hard time with what they saw.

Jeremiah 12:1-2 “Righteous are you O Yehovah, when I plead with you; yet let me reason with you of your judgments. Why does the way of the wicked prosper? Why are they all happy that deal very treacherously? 2 You have planted them, yes, they have taken root; they grow, yes they bring forth fruit; you are near in their mouth and far from their reins.

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Habakkuk 1:1-4 The burden (load) which Habakkuk the prophet did see. 2 O Yehovah, how long shall I cry, and you will not hear! Even cry out to you of violence, and you will not save! 3 Why do you show me iniquity and cause me to behold grievance (trouble, misery) for spoiling and violence are before me and there are that (those who) raise up strife and contention. 4 Therefore the law is slackened, and judgment does never go forth; for the wicked does compass about the righteous; therefore wrong (or wrested) judgment proceeds. (Habakkuk wants Elohim to do something about it).

Malachi prophesied about the priests and quotes that Yehovah says in chapter 2:17, "You have wearied Yehovah with your words. Yet you say, "Wherein have we wearied him?" When you say, "every one that does evil is good in the sight of Yehovah and he delights in them" or, "Where is the Elohim (or Mighty One) of judgment?" Malachi writes in 3:13-15, "13 Your words have been stout against me, saith Yehovah. Yet ye say, What have we spoken so much against thee? 14 Ye have said, It is vain to serve Elohim: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before Yehovah of hosts (armies)? 15 And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered."

Psalms 73: is a Psalm of Asaph - a Gershonite Levite whom King David gave charge of "service of song" in the tabernacle. In v.1-16 the wicked appear to have no problems and it puzzles the author. However, the picture now starts to become clear in v. 17-28 as to what awaits the evil doers. "17 Until I went into the sanctuary of Elohim; then understood I, their end. 18 Surely, thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction. 19 How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors. 20 As a dream when one awaketh; so, O Yehovah, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image. 21 Thus my heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my reins. 22 So foolish was I, and ignorant: I was as a beast before thee. 23 Nevertheless I am continually with thee: thou hast holden me by my right hand. 24 Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. 25 Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. 26 My flesh and my heart faileth: but Elohim is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever. 27 For, lo, they that are far from thee shall perish: thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring from thee. 28 But it is good for me to draw near to Elohim: I have put my trust in the Master Yehovah, that I may declare all thy works."

Jeremiah recorded the words of Yehovah also in talking about the fate of the wicked in chapter 30:23-24. "Behold, the whirlwind (hurricane 5591) of Yehovah goes forth with fury, a cutting whirlwind; it shall fall with pain (or remain) upon the head of the wicked. 24 The fierce anger of Yehovah shall not return, until he have done it and until he have performed the intents of his heart; in the latter days you shall consider it." And I think you can believe that Jeremiah said that with emotion!

HOW WE SHOULD HANDLE THESE WICKED DAYS

Solomon had this to say in Proverbs 23:17-18, "**Let not your heart envy sinners, but you be in fear of Yehovah all the day long.** 18 for surely there is an end (or reward) and **your expectation shall not be cut off.**" Solomon also continued in Proverbs 24:21-22 after saying "Don't fret yourself." "My son, fear you Yehovah and the king, and meddle not with them that are given to change. 22 For their calamity shall rise suddenly, and who knows the ruin of them both?"

In 1 Chronicles 5 we have the example of the armies of Ruben, the Gadites and Manasseh whom fought against their enemies and won. How did they win? The chronicler records in verse 20 that their enemies were delivered into their hand for "**they cried to Elohim in the battle, and he was entreated of them; because they put their trust in him.**",²² "For there fell down many slain, because the war was of Elohim", or as the CEV version says, "because God was fighting this battle against them."

Our Savior is recorded in Luke 6:22 as saying, "Blessed are you when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you (from their company) and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil for the Son of man's sake."

Paul advises us on how to handle these days in Romans 12:17-18 "Recompense no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. 18 **If it be possible as much as lies in you, live peaceably with all men.**"

Paul told the Thessalonians, "See that none renders evil for evil unto any, but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves and to all." (1 Thessalonians 5:15)

And to Timothy, Paul said, "Yes, and all **who live piously** in Messiah Yeshua shall suffer persecution." (2 Timothy 3:12-

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14)

Paul advised his friend Titus in chapter 3:1-2, “Put them in mind to be subject (subordinate) to principalities (authorities) and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work. 2 To speak evil of no man, to be brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness unto all men.”

The apostle Peter knew how the last days were going to be and that Yehovah through His Son is going to come and destroy this old earth and establish a new one. That being the case, Peter said in 2 Peter 3:17, “You therefore, beloved, see you know these things before, **beware lest you also, being led away with the error of the wicked fall from your own steadfastness. 18 But grow in grace (or favor, which reflects a person who repents of sin, who also has the attitude of joy and thankfulness) and in the knowledge of our Lord or Master and Savior Yayshua Messiah.** To him be glory both now and forever. Amen.”

The writer of Proverbs 10:30 encourages us, “The righteous shall never be removed; but the wicked shall not inhabit the earth.”

NOW WE COME TO THE FINAL END

In Revelation 20:1-15 we find that Satan was put away for a 1000 years. Those who had not given in to Satan’s demands came up in the 1st resurrection and reigned with the Messiah. That is the hope of the righteous. Then Satan’s prison is opened up again after the 1000 years and Satan goes out to deceive the nations once more, but all the wicked were put down. After that, the 2nd resurrection and the Great White throne Judgment happens and all who had not been judged before were judged. Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

Yehovah reveals in Revelation 21:8, “But the fearful” (like the one Yayshua talked about who was given a talent in M. 25:24-30 and buried it), “and unbelieving” (can also mean faithless or infidel) “and the abominable” (S.948, to stink; to feel disgust towards, detestable, abhorred; for example Lev 18:22 homosexuality among other things), “and murderers” (Matt. 5:22 ‘whosoever shall say ‘you fool’ [S.3474 English = moron or morally worthless. Telling someone this is to emotionally kill them!]) “shall be in danger of hell fire, whoremongers” (S.4205 male prostitutes) “and sorcerers and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

Malachi 4:1-3 “For, behold, the day comes that shall burn as an oven, and all the proud, yes, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble, and the day that comes shall burn them up, says Yehovah of hosts (armies) that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.” 2 **But unto you that fear my name** shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings, and you shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. 3 And you shall tread down the wicked, for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, says Yehovah of hosts (armies).”

My brothers and sisters in the faith, let’s not fret because of evil doers but let us feel what our Savior said in John 14:27, “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”

How I Learned that the Spirit and Word Must Always Agree **by Eddie Hyatt (Tulsa, Oklahoma)**

He was the perfect example of what happens when we neglect the Word of God in our pursuit of spiritual experiences. Without the ballast of God’s Word, we may well float away into a La-la land of false spirituality, and this was the case of this individual.

My two friends and I encountered this strange little man while going door-to-door, offering to pray with people, and inviting them to revival services we were conducting in Kiowa, OK in 1972. We knocked on his door and he invited us into his home.

We immediately noticed that his living room wall was papered with numerous pictures and letters from well-known preachers of that time such as Oral Roberts, T.L. Osborn, R.W. Schambach, W.V. Grant, Rev. Ike, and others.

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Almost immediately, he began telling us about his sensational, spiritual experiences, including visions and out-of-the-body experiences. He told us that he had been to both heaven and hell. He also said he saw Jesus in hell, whom he said was still there suffering for our sins.

This was so contradictory to what the New Testament says about Jesus ascending on high and sitting at the right hand of God that we immediately knew it was a lie. My friend, Ruel, interrupted him and said, “Jesus is not in hell; He is in heaven.” This individual angrily retorted, “Don’t you call me a liar; I will kill you. I was there. I saw him.”

We did not need any special revelation to know that this man was not of God. We were young but we knew enough of the Bible to know this man was totally deceived. His spiritual experiences did not line up with God’s Word, and the Spirit of God will always agree with the Word of God.

Martin Luther Learned this Lesson

Martin Luther was open to dynamic workings of the Holy Spirit and he testified to miraculous healings and personal spiritual experiences. However, he was adamant that all spiritual experiences must align with the testimony of God’s Word, and he lived this out in his own life.

One day, for example, while in intense prayer, he saw a shining vision on the wall of Jesus, with the wounds of His passion, looking down at him. Luther thought at first it was a heavenly vision but changed his mind when he noted that the person in the vision was not compatible with the Christ he knew from God’s Word. He said,

Therefore, I spoke to the vision thus: “Begone you, confounded devil. I know no other Christ than He who was crucified, and who in His Word is presented unto me.” Whereupon the image vanished, clearly demonstrating from whom it came (Hyatt, [*Prophets and Prophecy*](#), 53).

Luther also used God’s word in challenging false prophetic revelations. While hiding in the Castle of Wartburg after his excommunication and condemnation at the Diet of Worms, two men from Zwickau, known as the Zwickau Prophets, visited his hometown of Wittenberg.

These men claimed to have had divine visions, dreams, and visits from the angel Gabriel. They wowed the people with their prophetic revelations and began taking the reform movement in Wittenberg in a radical direction that was not compatible with God’s Word.

When Luther heard what was happening, he put his life at risk and returned to Wittenberg. He preached eight sermons on eight consecutive days, challenging with God’s Word the visions and dreams of the prophets from Zwickau. The noted historian, Philip Schaff, said, “In plain, clear, strong, scriptural language, he refuted the errors without naming the errorists.”

It soon became obvious to the people that the two men were in error because their revelations did not agree with God’s Word. The prophets, realizing they had lost their influence, left Wittenberg, and never returned. One of Luther’s colleagues wrote to the Elector of that region,

Oh, what joy has Dr. Martin’s return spread among us. His words, through divine mercy, are bringing back every day misguided people into the way of truth. It is as clear as the sun, that the Spirit of God is in him, and that he returned to Wittenberg by His special providence (Hyatt, [*Prophets and Prophecy*](#), 54).

The Leaders at the Azusa Street Revival Understood This

The Azusa Street Revival (1906-09) is well-known as the place from which the Pentecostal revival spread around the world. Gifts of the Spirit, including the gift of prophecy, were common occurrences and were encouraged. What is not so well known about the revival is that God’s Word was central, and every teaching and activity had to measure up to the standard of Biblical truth.

For example, the June-Sept. 1907 issue of *The Apostolic Faith*, the official paper of the revival, carried a statement that read,

We are measuring everything by the Word; every experience must measure up to the Bible. Some say that is going too far,

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but if we have lived too close to the Word, we will settle that with the Lord when we meet Him in the air (Hyatt, *Prophets and Prophecy*, 54).

William Seymour and the leaders at Azusa believed that the diligent study of Scripture was the only way that fanaticism and spiritual pride could be avoided. The January 1908 issue carried a page of questions and answers. One person had asked, “Do we need to study the Bible as much after receiving the Holy Ghost?” The response was:

Yes, if not we become fanatical or many times will be led by deceptive spirits and begin to have revelations and dreams contrary to the Word and begin to prophesy and think ourselves some great one, bigger than some other Christians. But by reading the Bible prayerfully, waiting before God, we become just humble little children, and we never feel that we have got more than the least of God’s children (Hyatt, *Prophets and Prophecy*, 55).

The Berean Approach

Those at Azusa remind us of the Bereans in Acts 17:11. Before arriving in Berea, Paul and Silas had escaped an angry mob in Thessalonica that opposed their gospel message. The Bereans, by contrast, were open to their message but first compared it to the revelation of Scripture. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, Luke says,

These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find whether those things were so.

In other words, the Bereans would not accept the message of Paul and Silas before evaluating it in the light of God’s Word. They were commended for this by the Holy Spirit and described as being “noble” in their attitude and actions.

The Bereans were open, but they were not naïve. They evaluated everything Paul and Silas said in the light of the revelation of Scripture. They believed that the Word and Spirit would always agree.

Final Thought

In this post-modern era when personal, mystical experiences are valued over reason and common sense, we as Spirit-filled followers of Christ have an important role to play. We value spiritual experiences, but we recognize that there is a fleshly and demonic realm, and that the validity of our experiences must be measured by the truth of Scripture. We must demonstrate to the church and the world our firm belief that the Spirit and Word will always agree.

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ⁱ M. A. Dandamayev. “ACHAEMENES,” <http://www.iranica.com/newsite/articles/v1f4/v1f4a108.html>

ⁱⁱ Bienkowski, Millard, Dictionary of the Ancient Near East, p. 1

ⁱⁱⁱ Tavernier, Iranica in the Achaemenid Period (ca. 550-330 B.C.), p. 17-18

^{iv} Herzog, Hauck, Realencyklopadie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche, p. 390

^v Nabarz, The Mysteries of Mithras, p. 149

^{vi} Nanavutty, The Parsis, p. 177/ Culican, The Medes and Persians, p. 49

^{vii} Burton, Camoens: His life and His Lusiads, p. 656

^{viii} Wiesehöfer, Ancient Persian, p. 239

^{ix} Hackmann, Buddhism as a Religion: Its Historical Development and its pre-sent conditions, p. 49

^x Narain, Later Indo-Scythians, p. 121-122

^{xi} Davidy, Lost Israelite Identity, p. 56, 288

^{xii} Davidy, Lost Israelite Identity, p. 153-154/ Davidy, The Tribes, p. 147, 389, 404, 425, 350