



Houses of Ill Repute

Joseph Herrin (5-20-2000)

I have a growing and terrifying witness in my spirit that God is very soon to bring judgment upon the structure that most people recognize as “Church” and “Christianity” today. I am aware that most believers are not aware of the depths of God’s displeasure with this system. It is all they have known and it feels comfortable and few have been able to gain enough distance from it to see it objectively and to ask the probing questions that need to be answered.

Is this system something that God has patterned, or is it of the pattern of fleshly man? Are our myriad “houses of worship” the fulfillment of the mind of Christ, or are they the result of centuries of creeping deception? Has Christianity strayed from the model of discipleship and the purity of mankind relating directly to God, with no intermediary? Have we adopted patterns that fulfill the lust for glory, recognition, and esteem of a portion of the body we call ministers, encouraged and egged on by a lukewarm mass of Christians who found discipleship to be too demanding, so they opted to join the false classification called “laity?”

Is our current building and sanctuary focus the result of God’s desire, or is it the result of covetousness, competition, and corruption? Are the forms we have adopted producing passionate believers who discern the voice of God for themselves and who live crucified lives, being conformed to the image of Christ, or does our structure hobble and place impediments in the way of those

who would seek to advance to maturity and intimacy with Christ?

These and many other questions need to be asked and answered. Few, however, even discern the need or relevance of asking such questions. They may sense that there are a few problems in the Church, but they believe it can be patched up and made acceptable to God. They don't realize that God is about to vomit the whole stinking mess out of His mouth. They will wake up one day and say, "Why God? I didn't even know you were upset."

It is said that history repeats itself. This has certainly been true of the people that God has chosen to bear His name. Israel repeatedly strayed from God, invoking His displeasure, wrath, and judgment. They would straighten up for a period of time only to go through the same cycle again. They were once again at low ebb when Yahshua the Messiah appeared on Earth as a man. They had no idea that their religious structure was in any way abnormal or offensive to God. They assumed it was God's pattern. But the leaders and disciples of this false structure were so deluded that they did not even recognize the day of their visitation.

Yahshua came to them as prophesied and they did not recognize Him. Instead, they accused Him of being a son of Belial and they rejected Him and sought to kill Him. We say that we would have acted differently and we would never make the same mistakes, but the day of our visitation is upon us and we have a religious system and structure that looks awfully familiar to the one that rejected Yahshua at His first coming. Our focus is once again upon buildings of wood and stone and services conducted in sanctuaries where the people are once again divided into clergy and laity. We once more have no clue that there

is anything wrong with our structure and, unless the body of Christ wakes up, we will not recognize Yahshua at His second coming. History is ripe to repeat itself.

In the scriptures Jerusalem is used as a type of the people of God. I fear that we are about to witness the re-enactment of the following words.

Luke 19:41-44

And when He approached, He saw the city and wept over it, saying, "If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes. "For the days shall come upon you when your enemies will throw up a bank before you, and surround you, and hem you in on every side, and will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation."

(NAS)

Answer this question with all discernment and honesty, "Do you believe that those in the church age are not as prone to commit the errors as those in the Jewish Religious System preceding the time of Christ?" Think about this. Why did Yahshua threaten to remove the candlesticks of certain churches mentioned in the book of Revelation, unless perhaps they were straying from His design and purpose? Why did Paul have to confront Peter for his hypocrisy, unless perhaps he was already being influenced by the spirit of religion while the church was but newborn? Why did Paul ask the Corinthian church,

II Corinthians 11:3-4

But I am afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds should be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ. For if one comes and preaches another [Yahshua] whom we have not preached, or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you bear this beautifully.

(NAS)

Answer again with all discernment and honesty, “Do you believe that there might be the tiniest bit of a chance that in the last 2000 years that the church has deviated from what Yahshua had in mind, being led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ, and that an abomination might have been created, an abomination of idolatry involving buildings of wood and stone, and the worship of men in their gilded houses of worship with their vaulted ceilings?”

We need to apologize to the people of Judah, Jerusalem, and Israel for we have judged that we would never commit their errors, yet we have followed their same pattern. What was written in the Old Testament was for our instruction that we should not repeat the same sins as the people of old. Look, however, at the following passage from Ezekiel and shudder as you see the offenses we have repeated.

(Portions are from the NAS and The Amplified Bible, with author’s notes and divine names corrected in brackets [])

Ezekiel 16

Then the word of [Yahweh] came to me saying, "Son of man, make known to

Jerusalem her abominations, and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD to Jerusalem, "Your origin and your birth are from the land of the Canaanite, your father was an Amorite and your mother a Hittite." [This equally applies to the church which originated in the land of the Canaanite and which has gentile members.]

"As for your birth, on the day you were born your navel cord was not cut, nor were you washed with water for cleansing; you were not rubbed with salt or even wrapped in cloths. "No eye looked with pity on you to do any of these things for you, to have compassion on you. Rather you were thrown out into the open field, for you were abhorred on the day you were born." [The Jewish Religious System abhorred the new Christians from their inception and sought to put them to death.]

"When I passed by you and saw you squirming in your blood, I said to you while you were in your blood, 'Live!' Yes, I said to you while you were in your blood, 'Live!'" [The church was birthed through the blood of Christ and continued in the blood of the martyrs, but God caused it to live and thrive.]

"I made you numerous like plants of the field. Then you grew up, became tall, and reached the age for fine ornaments; your breasts were formed and your hair had grown. Yet you were naked and bare."Then I passed by you and saw you, and behold, you were at the time for love; so I spread My skirt over you and covered your nakedness. I also swore to you and entered into a covenant with you so that you became Mine," declares [Yahweh] GOD." [The church is described as the Bride of Christ and many allusions are made in this passage to this relationship, and to her preparation.]

"Then I bathed you with water, washed off your blood from you, and anointed you with oil. "I also clothed you with embroidered cloth, and put sandals of porpoise skin on your feet; and I wrapped you with fine linen and covered you with silk. "And I adorned you with ornaments, put bracelets on your hands, and a necklace around your neck. "I also put a ring in your nostril, earrings in your ears, and a beautiful crown on your head. "Thus you were adorned with gold and silver, and your dress was of fine linen, silk, and embroidered cloth. You ate fine flour, honey, and oil; so you were exceedingly beautiful and advanced to royalty." [Compare to Revelation 18:6 and 3:18 to make the connection to this description with the church. Rev 18:16 'Woe, woe, the great city, she who was clothed in fine linen and purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls... Revelation 3:18 I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire, that you may become rich, and white garments, that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed...]

"Then your fame went forth among the nations on account of your beauty, for it was perfect through My majesty and splendor which I had put upon you, says [Yahweh] God. But you trusted in and relied on your own beauty and were unfaithful to God and played the harlot (in idolatry) because of your renown, and you poured out your fornications upon anyone who passed by (as you worshiped the idols of every nation which prevailed over you) and your beauty was his." [Are not the idols of this nation; materialism, comfort, ease, prosperity, fame, entertainment, etc., found in what we call "church" today?]

And you took some of your garments and made for yourself gaily decorated high places or shrines and played the harlot on them - things which should not come and should not take place." [What have gaily decorated buildings to do

with Yahshua' design for the body of Christ? The Jewish Religious System of Yahshua' day was full of factions, sects, and splinter groups, each in competition with one another. They all built their own buildings to have a name for themselves and to attract the people. The buildings became more ornate and elaborate as competition matured and the people came to expect such structures. Have we not repeated this same pattern?]

"You did also take your fair jewels and beautiful vessels of My gold and My silver which I had given you and made for yourself images of men, and you played the harlot with them..." [This describes the ministers of the body. Note that the verse says, "the vessels... I had given you." Ephesians 4:11 states, "And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers..." These were given to the body of Christ. Also note that in II Timothy 2:21, Paul instructs Timothy in this way, "Therefore, if a man cleanses himself from these things he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work." Paul describes Timothy's ministry to being a vessel of honor. So we see that God "gave" "vessels" to the body of Christ, but the body has made images of men out of them to play the harlot with them. To see a further description of how she has played the harlot with them read the article "The Phallic Church" which was posted on May 14th.]

"Moreover, you have taken your sons and your daughters whom you have borne to Me, and you have sacrificed them to your idols to be destroyed. Were your harlotries too little..." [This speaks of disciples being made and being led to slavery to the same idols that the spiritual parents worship.]

"And after all your wickedness - Woe, woe to you! Says [Yahweh] God - You have built also for yourself a vaulted chamber (brothel) and have made a high place (of idol worship) in every street. At every crossway you built your high place (for idol worship) and have made your beauty an abomination (abhorrent, loathsome, extremely disgusting, and detestable); and you have made your body available to every passerby and multiplied your idolatry and spiritual harlotry..." [Does this description of "vaulted chambers" not describe the prevailing architectural style of the buildings which the church constructs in such profusion today "in every street" and "at every crossway?" Has the body of Christ discerned that this infatuation with buildings and the idolatry that is practiced inside of them, and the harlotry between ministers and congregations, is "an abomination" to God?]

"Behold therefore, I have stretched out My hand against you, diminished your ordinary allowance of food..." [The word of God is the food of the body of Christ. A famine for the true word has occurred because the body does not want to hear the truth.]

"Moreover, you multiplied your harlotry with the land of trade, with Chaldea, and yet even with this you were not satisfied." [Someone has described Christianity in this way, "What began as a movement in Jerusalem, became a philosophy in Greece, an institution in Rome, a culture in Europe, and a big, wealthy enterprise in America, but God is coming back for a movement."]

"How weak and spent with longing and lust is your heart and mind, says [Yahweh] God, seeing you do all of these things, the work of a bold, domineering harlot..." [The church is weak and spent today. Where is the

power and glory of God? Where is healing? Where are miracles? Where are those who boldly entrust their lives and their care to an almighty God? The church has no strength because she does not know the almighty One. She has spent her longing and lust on other pursuits.]

"In that you build your vaulted place (brothel) at the head of every street and make your high place at every crossing..." [Again, this describes the buildings that have become the focus of Christendom today. Vaulted ceilings and steeples match the description God gave of these "high places."]

"Therefore behold, I will gather all your lovers with whom you have taken pleasure, and all those whom you have loved with all those whom you have hated; I will even gather them (the allies you have courted) against you on every side and will uncover your nakedness to them, that they may see all your nakedness, making you [spiritual] Israel, an object of loathing and mockery, a spectacle among the nations." [Judgment is the portion of the Christian Religious System of this day. The Jewish Religious System and all of Jerusalem was destroyed in a similar judgment in AD 70. Her buildings were torn down so that "not one stone remained upon another." Even so, God will judge the abomination that the Christian Religious System has become. Heed and tremble at the words of Romans 11:17,18, 21. "But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree, do not be arrogant toward the branches... for if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will He spare you."]

"And I will judge you as women who break wedlock and shed blood are judged,

and I will bring upon you the blood of your divine Husband's wrath and jealousy." [There should be no doubt that this description is pertinent to the Bride of Christ who is betrothed to her "divine Husband." Paul even uses the word "jealousy" in the following verse. II Corinthians 11:22 "For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin."]

"And I will also give you into the hand of those your enemies, and they will throw down your vaulted place (brothel) and shall demolish your high places of idolatry; they shall strip you of your clothes and strip you of your splendid jewels and leave you naked and bare... And they shall burn your houses with fire and execute judgments upon you before the eyes of many women spectators (the nations)... So I will make My wrath toward you to rest and My jealousy shall depart from you (My adulterous wife) and I will be quiet and will be angry no more."

These, and many more things are in this one chapter of Ezekiel 16. I would encourage you to read it and take it to heart. Prophecies are abounding about the terrible day of the Lord which is coming. "For it is time for judgment to begin with the household of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God? And if it is with difficulty that the righteous is saved, what will become of the godless man and the sinner?" (1 Peter 4:17-18).

Jerusalem is a clear type of the church and she is often compared to Sodom. It is time to flee Sodom. God is calling to His children to come out of her. Some must be dragged from the city as Lot was because he had grown comfortable

there. Is not the same true for many in spiritual Sodom today? Consider.

When Yahshua came the first time, He did not attempt to patch up or repair the existing religious structure. He began anew. At His second coming He will do the same. Many are looking for Yahshua to come and validate the structures they have adopted and their place in that structure. The Jews were expecting no less when Yahshua came the first time. Yahshua's pattern was to raise up a new structure according to His divine pattern. He called His chosen ones out of the old system and then He judged the old. This pattern is being repeated even now.

For 40 years the new existed alongside the old and war was waged as the old tried to exterminate the new. However, the new was preserved by God and the old was judged and destroyed completely. Today God is calling His children out of the old structure. A civil war in the church has been prophesied by many. The old will try to destroy the new divine pattern God is raising up. God will preserve the new. It will prevail, and woe to those who are caught at the moment of judgment in the old system.

Don't wait! Get before God now and begin to ask questions you haven't asked before. Ask God to reveal His pattern for the body of Christ. Don't delay. I am not sure of God's timetable. I don't know how long the war has already been raging, but it is surely raging at this moment. I don't know how long until the judgment falls. Heed the following words and apply them in a new light.

Luke 17:28-32

"It was the same as happened in the days of Lot: they were eating, they were

drinking, they were buying, they were selling, they were planting, they were building; but on the day that Lot went out from Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all.”

“It will be just the same on the day that the Son of Man is revealed.”

“On that day, let not the one who is on the housetop and whose goods are in the house go down to take them away; and likewise let not the one who is in the field turn back.”

“Remember Lot's wife.”

(NAS)

Flee from Sodom. What is the house that you should not return to? Could it be the vaulted houses, brothels, that Ezekiel describes? Don't take anything with you when you leave there... and don't look back.