

Circe - Church - Harlot
Joseph Herrin (12-02-2010)



Circe with Golden Cup in Hand

A brother in Christ (Lorin Smith) recently shared some thoughts with me regarding the origin of the word church. The *online Catholic Encyclopedia* begins their entry on “The Church” with the following:

The term church (Anglo-Saxon, cirice, circe; Modern German, Kirche; Swedish, Kyrka) is the name employed in the Teutonic languages to render the Greek ekklesia (ecclesia), the term by which the New Testament writers denote the society founded by Our Lord Jesus Christ.

[Source: <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/03744a.htm>]

I have written previously of the more accurate and revelatory meaning of the Greek word Ekklesia, and will not repeat that information here. For those who wish to read about it, you can find the post titled “*The Called Out*” here:

<http://parablesblog.blogspot.com/2009/03/called-out.html>

If you are unfamiliar with the word Circe, which is the Anglo Saxon form of our English word Church, it was also the name attributed to a goddess skilled in sorcery whose story can be found in Homer’s *The Odyssey*. *The Odyssey* tells the story of the hero named Odysseus (Ulysses) who sailed his ship on a remarkable ten year voyage as he returned from the Trojan War. Along the way he and his crewmen encountered many perils and adventures, the majority perishing while a remnant obtained great glory.

Homer recounts an experience where Odysseus and his men land on the island of Aiaia. They draw lots to see who will explore the island, and who will remain with the ship. Odysseus remains with the ship while others go exploring. The men come to a clearing in the midst of a forest in which is a castle, the home of the sorceress Circe. As they approach they are met with lions, wolves and other wild creatures that are unusually docile, fawning on the men as if they wish to be friends. These are men who have been turned into animals by the sorcery of Circe.

Circe, invites the famished men into her home for a feast. The men do not suspect her treachery. She has poisoned the food, and they fall asleep as they eat. She then turns Odysseus' men into a herd of swine. Only one man had the caution to remain hidden in the woods, and observing the fate of his mates, he returns to the ship in great grief and recounts the matter to Odysseus who then sets out to rescue his men, aided by the counsel of Hermes.

When Circe finds that she cannot transform Odysseus into a swine, she invites him to her bed, plying the wiles of a harlot upon him, but he has been forewarned of this as well, and escapes her treachery there.

This story taken from Greek Mythology contains profound parallels to the story of the church (Anglo Saxon Circe). In the book of Revelation, the church is depicted as a Harlot and a Sorceress with a cup of abominations in her hand.

Revelation 17:3-6

So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting... The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Yahshua. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement.

This woman is no friend of the saints of God, though she will gladly invite them to drink of her intoxicating potions and revel in the bed of her sensuality and fornication. She delights in turning those who are called to be sons of God into bestial men. She casts many into a slumber from which only a remnant

escape.

On another website I found the following description of Circe.

KIRKE (or Circe) was a goddess pharmakeia (witch or sorceress) who lived with her nymph attendants on the mythical island of Aiaia. She was skilled in the magic of metamorphosis, the power of illusion, and the dark art of necromancy. When Odysseus landed on her island she transformed his men into animals, but with the help of the god Hermes, he overcame the goddess and forced her to release his men from her spell.

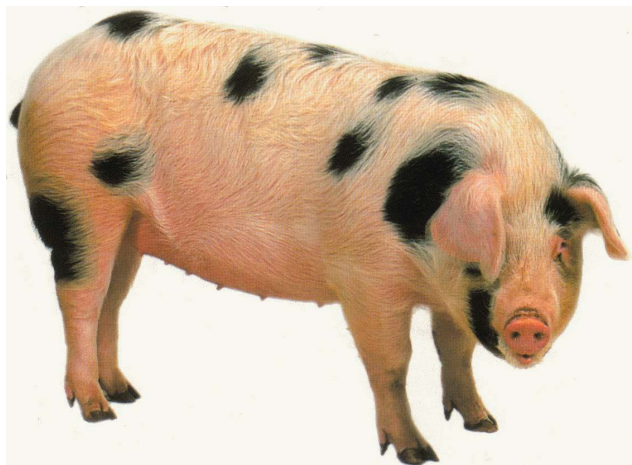
[Source: <http://www.theoi.com/Titan/Kirke.html>]

Perhaps you are already aware that the English word *sorcery* is used to translate the Greek word *pharmakeia* in this same book of Revelation. It is employed in a passage describing the Great Harlot who is also called Babylon.

Revelation 18:23-24

“Because all the nations were deceived by your sorcery (pharmakeia). And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints and of all who have been slain on the earth.”

There are such tremendous parallels between the Harlot of Revelation and Circe of Greek Mythology, that comparison comes naturally. In the presentation titled *Parables* I have written of the symbolism of swine. Yahweh employs many natural things in His creation as types and shadows to present spiritual truth to those who have eyes to see. I will include a portion here from aforementioned presentation that speaks of the symbolism of swine. This will bring understanding to the story of Circe turning Odysseus' men into swine.



The Parable of the Pig

Comparing men to swine is a type of parable. In the old Testament Yahweh gave criteria for clean and unclean animals. For an animal to be considered clean it had to meet two criteria. It had to have a split hoof, and it had to chew the cud.

Both of these things stand for something spiritually. The split hoof is a picture of being able to divide between truth and error, between right and wrong. Chewing the cud is a picture of meditating on truth.

Another term for chewing the cud is ruminant, and we often use this word to speak of a person chewing on a thought or idea. Chewing the cud spiritually stands for someone who loves the truth and who will therefore chew on what they have learned, seeking to derive all the benefit from it.

The pig meets one criteria for a clean animal, but fails in the other. The pig has a split hoof, but he does not chew the cud. This is a picture of the worst type of person, for it speaks of a person who has the ability to discern truth from error, but they do not love the truth, so they do not derive the benefit from the truth they have received.

For this reason Yahshua told His disciples to not cast their pearls of truth before people who fell into this category.

[End Excerpt]

Further insight into this symbolism is found in the same article as it describes Christ's miracle of casting the unclean spirits out of the Gadarene demoniac.

The demons entreated Yahshua to send them out into a nearby herd of swine, and Yahshua permitted them. The entire herd then ran down the hill into the sea and perished...

The swine are a picture of the kingdom of God during the church age. Remember that swine are a picture of men who are given truth, having a split hoof, but they do not love the truth, they do not chew the cud.

God is telling us that the church age will be a period when many whom He has given truth to will not love the truth. The church age has been a period when doctrines of demons have entered the church, and it has been a period

marked by sin. Yahshua gave several other overt parables to reveal that this would be the nature of the church age. He gave the parable of the mustard seed where He said the kingdom of God was like this smallest of seeds, but it would grow up to be the largest tree in the garden until the birds of the air would nest in its branches. Today Christianity is the largest religion in the world, and it is also filled with much error and false doctrine. The birds of the air are a picture of Satanic influences resting among the various branches of the church.

Mark 4:4, 15

As he was sowing, some seed fell beside the road, and the birds came and ate it up... These are the ones who are beside the road where the word is sown; and when they hear, immediately Satan comes and takes away the word which has been sown in them.

Yahshua gave another parable where He compared the kingdom of God in the church age to leavened dough.

Luke 13:20-21

And again He said, "To what shall I compare the kingdom of God? It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three pecks of flour until it was all leavened."

Leaven is a symbol of sin, and Christ is saying that the church age would be a time when sin was rampant among those whom He had called to be His children. For this reason we read that "Many are the called, but few are chosen."

The majority of people who comprise the masses of Christianity do not love the truth. They do not submit to God's purifying work in their lives, and they are pictured in the swine that rush down the hill and drown in the sea. This is a picture of the judgment that awaits those who fall into this category. It is the remnant who will be saved.

I have taken time to explain the condition of the church in this present age for I know some will be offended at the depiction of the church as a herd of swine, but you must remember that even in the book of Revelation which was recorded less than a hundred years after the resurrection of Christ, seven different churches were written to, and only two of them were not warned

about judgment to come to them if they did not repent of the evil that was already present within them. Some of their evil was so reprehensible to God that He warned them that their candlestick might be removed.

[End Excerpt]

I want to bring understanding to the types and shadows relating to the Harlot in Revelation. It is evident that Christ was revealing to John important matters that had great bearing upon the people of God. We should not suppose that these spiritual types that are portrayed through such clear natural examples will be evident to the majority in the church today. Christ spoke in parables to seal the judgment of those who do not love truth, “that seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand...” (Mark 4:12). The book of Revelation remains a sealed book to the majority of Christians today.

The Great Harlot, like Circe (Church), is depicted with a cup of intoxicating drink in her hand. Food and drink in the Bible are types and shadows for doctrines. We see this plainly in the following passage:

Hebrews 13:9

Do not be carried away by varied and strange *teachings*; for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by *foods*, through which those who were thus occupied were not benefitted.

The soul of man feeds upon ideas as the flesh of man feeds upon foods. Not all teachings in the church today bring spiritual benefit. Indeed, a vast amount of that which is served up by the church (Circe) today will keep men perpetually carnal and condemn them to slumber and a beastly nature. Those who were called to walk as men created in the image and likeness of God will instead become swine. Having the ability to divide between truth and error, they loved not the truth and will reap the consequences of their actions.

There are many areas in which the people of God today have imbibed intoxicating drinks and eaten foods that have not benefitted them spiritually. I would mention just one area, as it is timely, and I wrote of it in the previous blog.

At this season you will find in the Church (Circe) a great amount of teaching on the birth and nativity of Christ. Most of this teaching is filled with error, for

Christ was not born on December 25th. There were no wise men present at his birth. And there is a very good reason to believe he was not born in a stable, nor laid in a manger used by cattle.

I studied a teaching some years back that espoused the view that Christ was born at the Feast of Tabernacles, a view that has much support Scripturally, and in type and shadow. The life of Christ was very much in synch with the Feast Days of Yahweh. Yahshua was slain on Passover. He sent forth the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. It fits very reasonably that He was born on Tabernacles.

The Feast of Tabernacles occurs in the fall, in our months of September or October. During the Feast the Israelites were commanded to build booths (sukkahs) outside their homes, and to dwell in them during that time. It was to remind them of their fathers who wandered in the wilderness for forty years and dwelt in booths or tents.

On another level it is a symbol of Yahweh tabernacling with men in fulness. One of the names ascribed to the Son of God is Immanuel, meaning "God with us." In the person of Messiah mankind observed the fulfillment of Tabernacles. God was dwelling in the tent of flesh, which we see as man's body. Christ said, "If you have seen Me, you have seen the Father." The apostles spoke of the human body as being a sukkah, a tent, or temporary dwelling.

II Corinthians 5:1-4

For we know that if the earthly tent which is our house is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For indeed in this house we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven; inasmuch as we, having put it on, shall not be found naked. For indeed while we are in this tent, we groan, being burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed, but to be clothed, in order that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.

During the Feast of Tabernacles the Jews would build these booths all throughout the cities in which they lived. In these booths they would live and eat. Consequently they had certain pieces of furniture in them. One of these pieces of furniture was to hold the food they ate while in the Sukkah. The word we have translated in our English Bibles as *manger* is derived from the following Greek word.

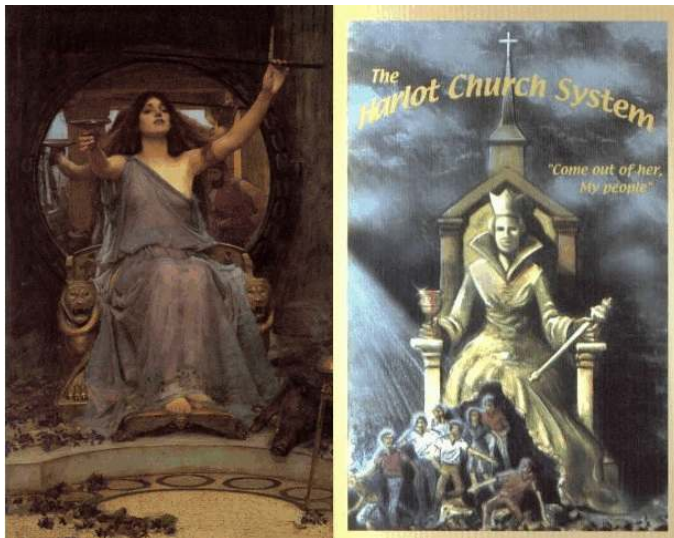
phatne (fat'-nay); from pateomai (*to eat*)
(Strong's' Concordance)

Christ testified that He was the Bread of Heaven, that His blood is true drink, and His body is true meat. He stated that those who drank His blood and ate His flesh would have true life in them. How appropriate that He should be born in a sukkah at the Feast of Tabernacles and laid in a piece of furniture used to hold the food to feed those dwelling there!

Is it not a great indictment that the church today presents Christ as laying in a manger surrounded by animals? The Christ that the church (Circe) has fashioned is fit only for food to sustain the beast nature of man. Indeed, Christmas does not induce men and women to bear the cross by which they might be transformed into Yahweh's image. It leads them to excesses of commercial greed and fills their hearts with dreams of material possessions. Christmas fills the mind with thoughts of a God who wants to bless men materially, setting their minds on earthly things. This is not the work of Christ whom Yahweh sent to earth.

Yes, Circe (the Church) is still casting men and women into slumber today and transforming those called to bear the image of God into beasts.

Below are images of Circe and the Great Harlot of Revelation. Can you not see the resemblance?



Is not the Spirit of Christ declaring that the Great Harlot has a name, and it is *Church*?

Addendum:

Quote from *Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe: Studies in Culture and Belief* by Jonathan Barry, Marianne Hester, and Gareth Roberts.

A metaphoric extension of the idea that witchcraft is seductive, pleasurable and unmanning is the use of the nexus of ideas for purposes of Protestant propaganda in sixteenth and seventeenth century England. Like Spenser's Duessa, the Roman Catholic Church was often seen as explicitly Circean. The English translation of Bullinger's sermons on the apocalypse call her "that great witch Circes" and William Fulke saw the Roman Church as "a Babylonicall Circe." The Roman Church was seductive, glamorous, magical, bestially transforming, poisonous, enfeebling, effeminating. Here, as Spenser's Duessa, Bullinger and Fulke show, part of the Circean configuration included an analogue from the Apocalypse, the Great Whore of Babylon of Revelation XXVII, with her magical and enfeebling cup.
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