

Syncretism

(02-09-2010)

Syncretism: *the attempt to reconcile disparate or contrary beliefs, often while melding practices of various schools of thought. This may involve attempts to merge... several originally discrete traditions, especially in the theology and mythology of religion, and thus assert an underlying unity allowing for an inclusive approach to other faiths.*

[Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Syncretism>]



Yesterday's post on SuperBowl 44 provoked a couple of comments from people defending Roman Catholicism. One anonymous writer accused me of "Catholic bashing." The post stated, "*These smear tactics have no place in these unique times... For you to engage in senseless mudslinging is a waste of time when all Christians will soon be challenged for their convictions.*"

Another poster who did provide his name, shared the following:

Million's of Catholics pray to and worship Jesus Christ by name every day. Tradition may have adopted symbols over time but I think that you would agree that symbols do not have mutually exclusive meanings. Many symbols have different meanings to different societies. The symbol of a cross was used before Christ gave it meaning to us now and I am sure that it challenged the meaning it may have had for pagans in the first centuries AD. But do pagan cultures now worship Christ because their form of cross is now largely considered His symbol? No, I don't think they do. Nor do I think that the use of Fleur-de-lis gives Satan a hold on anyone. (However, I would agree that it may make Satan's deception easier.)

If a Fleur-de-lis were to be an obvious sign of Satan, it would be dropped in a nanosecond by any and all Catholics. Such as the pentagram or upside-down crosses are. The test, I think, will be when Satan uses doctrines and forms (including symbols) to deceive and those who cannot discern the false message may be lost. If Christ essentially throws entire communities

away simply by dint of the form of the worship, then salvation becomes technical and not holistic and meaningful; which goes against the concept of Christ's Grace or Forgiveness. (IMHO)

I very much appreciate your insight but I would like you to think about how Jesus would look upon faithful members of the Catholic or any other "faith tradition." I think His mercy will be shown to all who believe in Him. To the extent that they have been lied to and deceived in the form of their faith, then I also believe that He knows their hearts and will save those who He has written into the Book of Life. I pray that all with simple faith in Him shall see salvation in His Grace, no matter the form of their faith.

However, having said all that, I do agree that those who believe that the form of faith is the path of salvation may be in for an unhappy revelation.
[Name Withheld]

I would like to assure all my readers that I am not offended, nor angered, when an opinion, or belief contrary to my own is shared. The Scriptures clearly reveal what the mature spiritual response of a minister of Christ should be.

II Timothy 2:24-26

And the Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.

I do want to answer the statements of this second man, for they express a mindset that is growing greatly among professing Christians today. Truth has been replaced by tolerance. I find this trend cause for great concern among the body of Christ. This concern has led to this present series of writings on the practice of Syncretism.

If you are still a little unclear as to what syncretism is, I will further define it. In the realm of this current discussion, syncretism is the merging of Christian belief and practice as defined by Christ and His apostles, with extra-Biblical beliefs and practices which often derive from pagan religions. For example, the adoption of the observance of Easter among professing Christians is a manifestation of syncretism. The very name Easter is the English form of the

goddess of fertility whose name in other cultures was known as Eostre, Ishtar, Astarte and Ashtoreth.

Understanding this, one can discern that the practice of syncretism was in existence long before the Christian era. The Israelites of the Old Testament were prone to merge the worship of Yahweh with the worship of the gods and goddesses from the nations around them. Astarte and Ashtoreth are both named in the Old Testament, and they are the same as the goddess known by the English name Easter today.

I Kings 11:4-5

For it came about when Solomon was old, his wives turned his heart away after other gods; and his heart was not wholly devoted to Yahweh his God, as the heart of David his father had been. For Solomon went after **Ashtoreth** the goddess of the Sidonians and after Milcom the detestable idol of the Ammonites.

What was Yahweh's attitude toward this mixing of the holy and the profane? He was very clear.

Deuteronomy 31:16-18

Yahweh said to Moses..., "this people will arise and play the harlot with the strange gods of the land, into the midst of which they are going, and will forsake Me and break My covenant which I have made with them. Then My anger will be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them and hide My face from them, and they will be consumed, and many evils and troubles will come upon them; so that they will say in that day, 'Is it not because our God is not among us that these evils have come upon us?' But I will surely hide My face in that day because of all the evil which they will do, for they will turn to other gods."

Yahweh laid upon the shoulders of His ministers the responsibility to teach His people the difference between the holy and the profane. He commanded those who served as teachers to advise the population concerning those things that would bring His wrath upon them.

Ezekiel 44:23

"Moreover, they shall teach My people the difference between the holy and the profane, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean."

Yahweh has not changed today. In this present church age, God has not made any treaty with error. Yahweh has not made peace with idolatrous practices and doctrines of demons. Many Christians have adopted a delusion that God is all mercy, forbearance and tolerance. They have foolishly abandoned the fact that Yahweh is Holy, and His name is Jealous. He will still not abide any admixture of the holy and the profane.

II Corinthians 6:14-17

Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, "I will dwell in them and walk among them; And I will be their God, and they shall be My people." "Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate," says the Lord. "And do not touch what is unclean; And I will welcome you."

It has escaped the notice of a great many today that the above words were written by an apostle of Christ to a Christian church. God commands His people today to be separate from darkness, and from the things of Belial (Satan) even as He did in the Old Testament. The above passage is just one of many that speak of God's abhorrence of mixing together the holy and the profane. Following is another New Testament Scripture relating to this subject.

Revelation 2:20

"But I have this against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and she teaches and leads My bond-servants astray, so that they commit acts of immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols."

In the verse above, we have Christ speaking to His saints in the church of Thyatira. Yahshua declares that Jezebel, a self-professed prophetess, is leading His bond-servants astray. She is inducing them to commit acts of immorality and to eat things sacrificed to idols.

Keep in mind that Revelation is a book where truth is conveyed in the form of a parable. It was not an actual woman named Jezebel of which the Lord was speaking, nor was He referring to the literal act of eating foods sacrificed to idols. Jezebel stands as a symbol of the soulish (feminine) nature of man. The soul of man prophesies many things, and those who are not careful to divide

between soul and spirit are easily deceived.

Foods sacrificed to idols are a parable of doctrines of demons. Food is something that people feed upon, and the church feeds upon doctrines. Things sacrificed to idols are impure doctrines that are devilish in nature. We can discern this parable more clearly in the following words.

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.

Observe how these terms *teachings* and *foods* are used interchangeably with one another. Consider then the meaning of Christ's words to the church of Thyatira. There were those present among them that were inducing the saints to partake of "strange teachings" (foods) and actions (immorality) that did not come from Him. Satan was the originator of these things, and Christ's warning against continuing to practice this immorality (idolatry is pictured as fornication throughout the Bible), and to imbibe these impure foods is clear.

Revelation 2:21-23

And I gave her time to repent; and she does not want to repent of her immorality. Behold, I will cast her upon a bed of sickness, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds. And I will kill her children with pestilence; and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds.

This judgment of the Lord was brought about due to the practice of syncretism. The people of God were failing to divide between the holy and the profane. The saints were partaking of unclean food. As I mentioned previously, adopting the pagan celebration of Easter is one manifestation of syncretism. Easter's origin is as obvious as its name. It has nothing to do with the crucifixion and resurrection of the Son of God. Christ was crucified on Passover and resurrected three days later. These dates do not coincide, and neither do their practices and symbols.



Easter Bunny and Easter Eggs



Easter Chick



Easter Ham

People of God, what do these things have to do with the death, burial and resurrection of Christ? Christ was the Passover Lamb, not the Ishtar Ham. Rabbits and eggs are symbols of fertility. Easter is derived from the ancient Babylonian fertility religion that centered around Nimrod, Semiramis and Tammuz.

I have written of the origin of these practices elsewhere. If you have not carefully studied these matters and asked God to direct you in knowing whether you should participate in pagan practices which are characterized as food sacrificed to idols, then you should not hesitate any longer in doing so. I recommend to you the following teachings:

Removing the High Places

http://www.heart4god.ws/index_html_files/Removing%20the%20High%20Places%20article.pdf

Fat Tuesday (Mardi Gras), Ash Wednesday, Lent and Easter

<http://parablesblog.blogspot.com/2009/02/fat-tuesday-mardi-gras-ash-wednesday.html>

I would also recommend to you the article on Valentine's Day. Please note, however, that it is necessarily sexually explicit.

Valentine's Day - Babylon's Romantic Deception

http://www.heart4god.ws/index_html_files/Valentines%20Day.pdf

Consider for a moment one of the comments of the man who wrote to me. He stated, "*If a Fleur-de-lis were to be an obvious sign of Satan, it would be dropped in a nanosecond by any and all Catholics.*"

People of God, this is simply not true. I have watched Christian men who were inordinately devoted to God endure tremendous wrestling of soul and spirit when they began to look at the origins of many of the practices of the PROTESTANT church today. Many of these men in the end chose to maintain what they knew to be Babylonian practices due to the grief it would cause if they were to separate themselves from that which is profane and impure. Many a Christian man will place a desire to please wife, children, parents, brothers, sisters or friends, above a desire to please God.

Even when it becomes obvious that the cause of their wrestling is a pagan rite that was immoral and idolatrous in its origin, a great many will place a desire to avoid suffering above obedience to God. Consider how contrary this is to the pattern of those who will be included among the overcomers in Christ.

Luke 14:26-27

"If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife

and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.”

Hebrews 11:24-27

By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God, than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin; considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward. ***By faith he left Egypt...***

The test always comes to the people of God when the Spirit begins to perform a work of separating them from the works of darkness. By faith Moses ***left*** Egypt. By faith we must also leave Babylon.

Revelation 18:4

And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, "Come out of her [Babylon], my people, that you may not participate in her sins and that you may not receive of her plagues..."

As long as you or I conform to the pattern of this world, and as long as the church embraces the practices of Babylon, there will be no persecution, and no cost to following Christ. It is only the righteous who suffer persecution, and the righteous are those who follow the Spirit wherever He leads, no matter the cost.

II Timothy 3:12

Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Yahshua will suffer persecution.

As long as we remain in Babylon we will avoid the censure of the world, and the attack of Satan. One thing we will not avoid, however, is the judgment of God. He says “Come out of Babylon My people, that you may not participate in her sins and that you may not receive of her plagues.” If you remain in Babylon (which means “confusion, mixture”) you will fall under the judgment of Yahweh.

I have shared previously that I am persuaded that those in Babylon are already partaking of her plagues. I believe one of Babylon's plagues is a plague of darkness. Those who refuse to leave Babylon will lose their spiritual sight. They will lose all ability to discern between the holy and the profane; that

which is truth and that which is error and deception.

One of the principles upon which God's kingdom operates is found in the following words of Christ.

Luke 19:26-27

"I tell you, that to everyone who has shall more be given, but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away."

Those who are faithful with the little Christ gives to them will be given more. Those who are unfaithful will have even that which was given to them taken away. This pertains to the revelations and truth Christ entrusts to His servants.

If you will not obey Christ when He makes known to you the unclean practices that are defiling His church; if you prefer to remain at ease and to not "rock the boat"; if you console yourself with the thought that so many other Christians are practicing pagan rites and adopting unclean doctrine and they are unconcerned, then why should Christ give you further revelation? Do you not stand to risk even the truth you have received?

I am seeing many losing the truth they once held as inviolable. Some are even coming to reject the truth that there is no other way to God other than through Christ. As the man wrote to me above, *"I very much appreciate your insight but I would like you to think about how Jesus would look upon faithful members of the Catholic or any other faith tradition."*

There is great deception abroad in this hour. Some time back I wrote concerning the deception in the book *The Shack*. This book has been wildly popular among Christians, yet it espouses a message that there is more than one path to God. It says only that Christ is "the best way." It denies that He is "the only way."

See the article *Divorced From Truth - Part Two*

<http://parablesblog.blogspot.com/2008/11/divorced-from-truth-part-2.html>

People of God, do not be deceived! There is a cost to discipleship. Following Christ will require you to lose EVERYTHING. You cannot walk righteously and avoid persecution.

If you are not encountering opposition in your life from the world, and an apostate church; if you are not in conflict with family and friends who are not fully devoted to Christ; is it not possible that you have failed to obey the witness of the Holy Spirit in your life?

Syncretism is nothing other than compromise. Are you a syncretist? You are either a syncretist or a saint (a set-apart one).

This topic will be continued in the next post.

Note: The following graphic is provided to understand the symbols from the COEXIST image at the beginning of this post.



Syncretism - Part Two - ROME

Joseph Herrin (02-11-2010)



Map of Roman Empire Circa 300 A.D.

Let me begin by sharing the working definition of *Syncretism* for this series.

Syncretism is the merging of Christian belief and practice as defined by Christ and His apostles, with extra-Biblical beliefs and practices which often derive from pagan religions.

There have arisen continued charges that I am engaging in “Catholic bashing” in this teaching. My interest as a minister, called by God to teach The Way of truth to His people, is to divide between truth and error. I am no more anti-Catholic than I am anti-Protestant. There is great error in both camps. My earnest desire is to proclaim The Way of Christ accurately for all who are seekers of truth.

Yesterday I shared the following correspondence with a brother in Christ who, upon sharing a link to my blog site on his own, found that it elicited the disapproval of many of his Catholic readers.

Dear Art,

I just went and read the comments, and your responses, to your blog post. You are certainly taking a lot of heat from those who are defenders of Catholicism.

I can understand their viewpoint, for they have been taught to equate Catholicism with Christianity. The reason they make this connection is that they have been taught of man to do so. They have not been taught of the Spirit.

The first comment from one of your readers that leapt out at me as a critical error is the following.

The problem with rejecting the authority of the church to guide is that every man becomes pope unto himself, which is a dangerous position.

The Scriptures never tell Christians to be led by the Pope. Their testimony is everywhere that the Christian is to be led of the Spirit of Christ who indwells them.

Romans 8:14

For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

I John 2:27

And as for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him.

What the Catholic Church has done is to usurp the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the church. They have placed a man as the Vicar of Christ. The word *Vicar* is the root of the word "vicarious," which means "taking the place of another person or thing; acting or serving as a substitute." The Catholic Church has substituted a man for the role that belongs to Christ. Consider a further testimony of the apostles.

I Corinthians 11:3

But I want you to understand that ***Christ is the head of every man***, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ.

The Roman Catholic Church, and those who are defending her, would suggest that the Pope is the head of the Christian. This is an act of usurpation. It is also a fulfillment of the prophecy of the one called Anti-Christ. If you study the word Antichrist in the New Testament, you will find that the preposition "anti" is not exclusively translated as "opposite," or "against." It is very often understood to mean "instead of," or "in the room of." Following is Strong's

definition taken from one of the two roots that make up the word antichrist.

NT:473 anti (an-tee'); a primary particle; opposite, I.e. **instead** or because of (rarely in addition to):

KJV - for, **in the room of**. Often used in composition to denote contrast, requital, **substitution**, correspondence, etc.

The Pope has taken his seat as Antichrist, usurping the role of Christ through the indwelling Holy Spirit.

It is not my desire to unnecessarily offend any man. The truth itself offends many. I cannot proclaim the truth that all Christians are to be led of the Spirit in all things; they are to be hearing from Christ Himself who said, "My sheep hear MY voice"; without coming into contradiction with the teachings of Roman Catholicism. We either believe the testimony of the Spirit, and of Christ and His apostles, or we believe the testimony of the Vatican, whose testimony is very self-serving by turning all men to a spiritual dependence upon itself...

[End Excerpt]

I share this point about the usurpation that has been performed by the Roman Catholic Church as it has great bearing upon this subject of syncretism.

Let me approach this matter in this way: In seeing the name *Roman Catholic Church*, it should be obvious that there is something appended to the name Church. There has been an addition made to that which Yahweh instituted. It is called the *Roman Catholic Church*, as the word *Catholic* is derived from the Latin *catholicus* meaning *universal*. As such, the Roman Catholic Church is testifying that it is the universal church, encompassing all true believers in Christ.

It also has the word *Roman* appended to it. The alert Christian should be led to inquire as to why an institution claiming to be the one true church that originated in Jerusalem among the Jews, and then spread to "Judea, Samaria and even to the remotest part of the earth" (Acts 1:8) should be identified with Rome.

Jesus Christ, Yahshua the Messiah, was born a Jew during the time of the Roman Empire. The apostles lived during this time as well. All things pertaining to Roman society and culture were spread throughout the Empire.

This included the official language (Latin), as well as the common language of the Empire (Greek). The worship of Greek and Roman deities was pervasive, as is testified in *The Acts of the Apostles*.

The Roman Empire was vast, embracing many peoples. Rome permitted its vassal states to continue their individual religious practices while they submitted themselves to the rule of Rome. Thus, we see even in Jerusalem during the time of Christ and His apostles that the Jews freely practiced their religion. The Roman appointed governor, Herod the Great, built for the Jews a magnificent temple which they were given to use for the worship of the God of their forefathers.

Luke, the traveling companion of the apostle Paul, writes in the book of Acts of the profusion of deities worshiped across the Roman Empire. This embrace of a multitude of gods and goddesses was especially pronounced when they arrived in Athens, Greece.

Acts 17:16, 22-23

Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was being provoked within him as he was beholding the city full of idols... And Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, "Men of Athens, I observe that you are very religious in all respects. For while I was passing through and examining the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, 'TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.'"

That these Roman citizens constructed an altar "to an unknown god," reveals their wide embrace of all deities. Not wanting to offend any god, they even built an altar to one that they might not yet know.

The Greek Empire was the predecessor of the Roman Empire. Rome encompassed and expanded upon all that Greece had begun. The pantheon of gods which the Greek people worshiped was adopted by the Romans, simply acquiring new names. As Rome conquered many neighboring lands, it also brought into its embrace the worship of all the deities of those lands.

By allowing the people to continue the worship of their gods, and by expanding commerce and enriching all corners of its empire, Rome was able to assert its rule over a vast region with a large degree of compliance among the peoples conquered.

The gods and goddesses of all of the lands that were brought into the Roman Empire were related to one another. Though they had different names, and differences in teaching, they had many things in common. The religions of the individual peoples, languages and nations are all traceable back to Babel when the world was unified and all men had one tongue. There are many excellent sources on the topic of the Babylonian mystery religion and its spread throughout the world. One resource I highly recommend is Alexander Hislop's book, *The Two Babylons*. It can be read online in its entirety. Following is one source:

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/11477264/The-Two-Babylons>

Alexander Hislop writes:

The Babylonians in their popular religion supremely worshiped a goddess mother and a son who was represented in pictures and images as an infant or a child in his mother's arms. From Babylon this worship of mother and child spread to the ends of the earth. In Egypt, the mother and child were worshiped under the names Isis and Osiris. In India, even to this day, as Isi and Iswara; in Asia as Cybele and Deoious; in pagan Rome as Fortuna and Jupiter-puer "Jupiter the boy"; in Greece as Ceres, the Great Mother, with the babe at her breast, or as Irene, the goddess of Peace, with the boy Plutus in her arms, and even in Thibet, in China and Japan...



Semiramis and Tammuz/Nimrod

The Roman Empire encompassed many lands and peoples who had carried down from ancient times this Babylonian religion. What started with Nimrod, Semiramis and Tammuz was spread across the earth when Yahweh scattered the people at the tower of Babel, giving mankind diverse tongues and languages. Nimrod is named in the book of Genesis as the founder of Babylon.

Genesis 10:8-12

Now Cush became the father of **Nimrod**; he became a mighty one on the earth. He was a tyrannical hunter before Yahweh; therefore it is said, "Like Nimrod a tyrannical hunter before Yahweh." And ***the beginning of his kingdom was Babel*** and Erech and Accad and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. From that land he went forth into Assyria, and built Nineveh and Rehoboth-Ir and Calah, and Resen between Nineveh and Calah; that is the great city.

I encourage you to read Hislop's book to trace the history of the Babylonian mystery religion down to the present day. From ancient times this fertility cult has included an unholy trinity as Satan has sought to pervert the gospel of Christ that has been testified from ancient times through prophets and the creation itself. Each of the members of the Babylonian trinity was also represented in a heavenly body. Nimrod was the Sun and Semiramis the Moon. We see the continuance of the association of these false deities to heavenly bodies at this present time as the planets and many of the constellations bear names traceable back to Babylon.

A tragic occurrence in the early church is that she quickly began to depart from the truth of the gospel of Christ. False doctrines and practices entered quickly as Satan sowed tares among the wheat, and hid leaven among the meal that signifies the kingdom of God. The apostle John, writing approximately fifty years after the resurrection of Christ, set forth the book of Revelation. Its first chapters are devoted to a description of Christ addressing seven churches in Asia Minor, which were all part of the Roman Empire.



Seven Churches of Asia Minor (Present Day Turkey)

Of these seven churches, there were only two that Christ did not reprove for departing from truth. By the time of Emperor Constantine's rule of the Roman Empire from 306-324 A.D., the church had become greatly leavened with error. It had adopted many of the practices of the Roman society and pagan religions that surrounded it.

It should not surprise the Christian that in a period of three centuries the once pure and vibrant church should experience such a great fall into corruption and apostasy. Christ prophesied that the church age would be one greatly leavened with sin.

The pollution and mixture of the church age is brought out in the parables of Christ. In Mark chapter 13 we find three parables of the church age. Christ said the kingdom of God would be like leaven that was mixed into three pecks of meal until it was thoroughly leavened. Leaven symbolizes sin, and the affect of the leaven increases over time until it reaches its zenith at the end of the age.

Christ compared the kingdom of God to a mustard tree that grows up into the largest bush in the garden and in which the birds come and nest in its branches. The birds of the air are symbolic of Satan and his demons and emissaries.

Christ compared the kingdom age to a field of wheat in which an enemy sowed

tares. The tares represent false Christians and false disciples, and Christ declared that it was an enemy (Satan) who sowed the tares there.

Note that all of these parables can easily serve as descriptions of the practice of syncretism. In each case God establishes something and the enemy of Christ adds something unclean to it.

The words of Christ to the seven churches of Asia Minor reveal that before the first century of the church had passed, Satan had already introduced his leaven, birds, and tares into the kingdom of God. Let me share once more the words of Christ to the church in Thyatira.

Revelation 2:20-24

I have this against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and she teaches and leads My bond-servants astray, so that they commit acts of immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. And I gave her time to repent; and she does not want to repent of her immorality. Behold, I will cast her upon a bed of sickness, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds. And I will kill her children with pestilence; and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds. But I say to you, the rest who are in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not known the deep things of Satan, as they call them - I place no other burden on you.

This testimony was typical, rather than atypical, of the churches before one century had passed. When a further two centuries had passed with the influence of Gnosticism, Paganism, and Materialism, the church was ripe for a very great fall into apostasy (a divorcement from truth).

Much of the writings of the apostles are focused on refuting errors that had begun to enter the church from her very earliest days. John wrote:

I John 2:18

Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have arisen; from this we know that it is the last hour.

Titus 1:10-11

For there are many rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers, especially

those of the circumcision, who must be silenced because they are upsetting whole families, teaching things they should not teach...

Satan has found that syncretism is an effective tool as he seeks to deceive the entire world. It took him only three centuries to bring the church to such a confused and fallen state that she would fulfill the prophecy of Revelation chapter 17. The Great Harlot, Mystery Babylon, would ride upon a Scarlet Beast.

This will be explored in the next post.

Syncretism - Part Three - The Harlot and the Scarlet Beast

Joseph Herrin (02-12-2010)



It is only possible to accept that the picture above is an image of what Christ intended His church to be if one has become divorced from the truth. To be divorced from the truth is the definition of the word *apostasy*.

II Thessalonians 2:1-3

Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Yahshua Christ, and our gathering together to Him, that you may not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the ***apostasy*** comes first...

The apostles testified that the church would become divorced from the truth BEFORE the coming of our Lord Yahshua the Messiah, and our gathering together to Him. How did a group of humble Jewish fishermen, and the early church that first gathered in Jerusalem, become so transformed as to no longer be recognized as humble men and women despised and rejected of men? How did the church come to adorn themselves with all the rich and proud trappings of pagan religion? The answer is found in the practice of syncretism.

If one studies the Bible with the greatest diligence, they will find no mention of the apostles or disciples of The Way ever putting on rich garments. They

will find no mention of the church building cathedrals, proud monuments of opulence and ease. They will not find any mention of monks, nuns, or a clergy/laity separation. You will not find in the Scriptures any connection between the church of Christ and miters, prayer beads, monasteries, rich necklaces and jewels, purple and scarlet robes, or chalices. However, you will find these very things mentioned in the apostle John's description of an apostate church that is figured as a Great Harlot riding upon a Scarlet Beast.

Revelation 17:1-6

And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying, "Come here, I shall show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, with whom the kings of the earth committed acts of immorality, and those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her immorality." And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a gold cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her immorality, and upon her forehead a name was written, a mystery, "BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. And when I saw her, I wondered greatly.



Pope Benedict and Cardinals “Adorned in Scarlet and Purple”



“Having in Her Hand a Gold Cup of Abominations...”

I have written elsewhere of the origin of many Catholic and “Christian” practices. I will include a passage here from the writing *Deconstructing Babylon*.

The Catholic Church practiced syncretism. This is the practice of seeking to merge, or reconcile, various conflicting beliefs. When Constantine declared Rome to be a Christian Empire, there was a huge number of pagan practitioners throughout the empire. Constantine was himself a Sun worshiper, and the highest holy days of Sun worship were at the end of December when the Sun had passed through the shortest day of the year and was beginning to assert its ascendancy once more. This was where Christmas originated. Rome merged the worship of Deus Sol Invictus (unconquered Sun god) with Christianity, and it became a perverse mixture of pagan and Christian teachings.

It was through the merger of Sun worship and Christianity that the day of worship was moved to Sun-day. Every day of the week in our Roman calendar is devoted to a different pagan deity:

Sun-day: the Sun

Mon-day: the Moon

Tues-day: Tiews (The Nordic equivalent of Mars)

Wednes-day: Woden (equivalent to Mercury)

Thurs-day: Thor (Equivalent to Jupiter)

Fri-day: Freya (Equivalent to Venus and Aphrodite)

Satur-day: Saturn

Because Constantine was a Sun worshiper, he moved all worship to Sunday, forbidding Christians and Jews to worship on the Sabbath. Today the church has been so indoctrinated into this practice that they refer to Sunday as the Sabbath day. This is but one more example of the corruptions of Babylon.

The corruptions of Christianity due to its merger with Sun worship are many, and few realize the extent of them. Many Christians speak of “Sun-day worship” and “Sun-day school,” not realizing the origin and meaning of what it is they are saying. Even depictions of the Christ bear the marks of Sun worship.



This picture is easily mistaken as a painting of Christ. It is actually a painting of Apollo. The “solar halo,” also called a *nimbus*, was very common in depictions of deities that were related to the Sun and Sun worship. Due to Catholicism’s deep ties to Sun worship, symbols of the Sun are found in profusion.



This is a picture of the Pope carrying what is very obviously an image of the Sun. The sacrament of the Mass observed by Catholics is rife with Sun images. Even the wafer that is supposed to represent the body of Christ is in the shape of a solar disk. It is this which is held in the center of the image above.



These solar wafers were used in the observance of pagan rites. In contrast, at the Passover supper the Lord took unleavened bread and BROKE it. He did not carve it into neat little circles that resemble the Sun and pass it out to His disciples and say "This is My body broken for you. Eat this in remembrance of Me." Nor did they mark this observance on Sun-day. (I am not advocating that Christians should return to a legal observance of the Sabbath which begins at sundown on Friday and runs until sundown on Saturday. The book of Acts reveals that the believers were meeting every day of the week. I share this to point out the influence upon pagan Sun worship in both the Catholic and Protestant churches today.)



The tonsure haircut worn by monks is also related to Sun worship. The haircut marks the circuit of the Sun in the heavens. Did you ever read about monks in the Scriptures? Monks and monasteries were also borrowed from pagan religion.

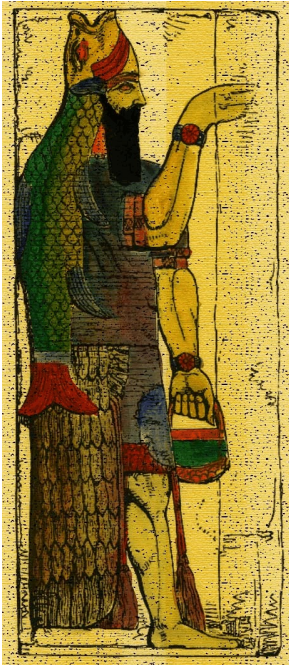


It is not hard to understand that numerous other corruptions were arrived at through the Catholic practice of syncretism. The fish symbol had long been employed in pagan religions. It was a symbol of Venus as well as Bacchus. In *The Two Babylons*, Alexander Hislop writes, "*Icthus, or the Fish, was one of the names of Bacchus.*" Bacchus was another name for Tammuz, the Sun-deity.

The worship of the fish deity is found in Scripture as we read of Dagon, the fish god of the Philistines.



The priests of Dagon wore fish shaped hats.



It is from this that the Catholics obtained the Mitre. Note that this priest of Dagon is sprinkling water, just like the Catholics do in their rituals.



Pope Benedict XVI with fish god Mitre on his head.



Bust of John Paul II

Did you ever stop to question where the Catholic Church gets all of its costumes and symbols? The Catholics say they trace the lineage of the popes back to Peter. Did you ever read of Peter dressing up in such garb? I tell you the answer is NO! Peter would not have dressed in the clothes of a pagan

priest in order to declare the gospel of Christ.

These things are abominations. God clearly told His people to not form images to represent Him.

Deuteronomy 4:15-18

So watch yourselves carefully, since you did not see any form on the day Yahweh spoke to you at Horeb from the midst of the fire, so that you do not act corruptly and make a graven image for yourselves in the form of any figure, the likeness of male or female, the likeness of any animal that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged bird that flies in the sky, the likeness of anything that creeps on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the water below the earth.



Regarding the appearance of the Ichthus symbol in Christianity, Alexander Hyslop writes:

About the very time that the Bishop of Rome was invested with the pagan title of Pontifex, the Savior began to be called Ichthys, or “the Fish,” thereby identifying Him with Dagon, or the fish-god; and that, ever since, advancing step by step, as circumstances would permit, what has gone under the name of the worship of Christ, has just been the worship of that same Babylonian divinity, with all its rites and pomp and ceremonies, precisely as in ancient Babylon.

[Source: *The Two Babylons*, page 370]

Is it not remarkable that the Catholic church eats fish every Friday? Where did this custom come from? It is not hard to discover. The Romans worshiped Aphrodite Salacia. As we observed already, Freya was the Scandinavian equivalent of Aphrodite. Aphrodite Salacia was a fertility goddess. The worshipers of Aphrodite ate fish on Fridays and engaged in orgies. Fish is considered an “aphrodisiac.” Also from the name of Aphrodite Salacia we get the word “salacious,” which is defined as “intended to arouse people sexually.”

The Catholics, with their practice of syncretism, have simply absorbed all of the practices of pagan religions. They often seek to give the pagan practices some “Christian” justification, but God is appalled at the mixing of the holy and the profane together. His Spirit cries out, “Come out of her My people, lest you participate in her sins and partake of her plagues.”
[End Excerpt]

Recently, as I had the blessing of spending some time with some Christian brothers in jail, one of these men told me of his conversion from Islam. This man related that while he was a Muslim that material was frequently handed around by the Muslims that pointed to Christianity’s pagan roots. The Muslims clearly recognized that many symbols, rites and doctrines from numerous pagan religions (all traceable back to Babylon) had been incorporated into Christianity. This information was used by the Muslims to denigrate Christianity, depicting it as merely an amalgamation of many pagan practices.

Tragically, what the Muslims have testified is true as one looks at what is purported to be Christianity today. This Christian brother had been raised as a Christian, but had converted to Islam while in prison because of the protection it afforded him. He mentioned how it disturbed him to hear the Muslim’s speak of the origin of such things as Christmas and Easter, of Sunday worship, and the multitude of things that have been merged into that original faith practiced by Christ and His apostles.

I mentioned that the SuperBowl 44 served as a testimony of the Sun Worshipers who are depicted as Saints achieving a victory over God’s people. The SuperBowl was held in SUN Life Stadium in the SUNshine State and was held on a SUNday. The New Orleans Saints come from one of the most densely Catholic areas of the country, and Catholicism has embraced a myriad of images and practices that go back to Babylonian Sun worship.



Catholic Sacrament in India.



Sacramental Wafer (Solar Disk of Tammuz) With Crown and Tau Symbol at Top Representing Tammuz, King of Heaven



The photo above was taken by me at the oldest Roman Catholic church in Macon, Georgia, St. Joseph's Catholic Church. This shrine outside the church contains the Pyramid and All Seeing Eye of Freemasonry (note the sunburst behind the cross.) It includes the cross, which is a symbol of Tammuz, who is Nimrod reborn, the god of the Sun. This is signified also by the solar burst behind the Tau-cross. It has an image of Mary, who is modeled after Semiramis, the Queen of Heaven, the mother of Tammuz and wife of Nimrod.

Macon is the French word for Mason. Both Freemasonry and Roman Catholicism trace their roots back to Babylon. The city of Macon was laid out by its Masonic founders after the street design of ancient Babylon, a fact attested on the local Chamber of Commerce website.

When one has their eyes opened to see, the incredible influence of Babylon, brought into the church through the cunning of the great deceiver Satan, is found everywhere. It is for this reason that the Spirit is calling out to the people of God today to come out of Babylon.

Revelation 18:4

And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, "Come out of her, my people, that you may not participate in her sins and that you may not receive of her plagues..."

Syncretism - Part Four - Apostles of the Sun

Joseph Herrin (02-15-2010)



Egyptian Obelisk in St. Peter's Square from St. Peter's Basilica

An obelisk is an object of pagan Sun worship. The word obelisk means “shaft of Bel” (Baal). Nimrod, was known as Baal in various nations and tongues, and he was pictured as the Sun. The Sun was worshiped in ancient Egypt where the above obelisk was originally constructed and set-up. The website Wikipedia provides the following information.

The elliptical center of the piazza... encloses the visitor with "the maternal arms of Mother Church" in Bernini's expression...

At the center of the ellipse stands an Egyptian obelisk of red granite, 25.5 meters tall, supported on bronze lions and surmounted by the Chigi arms in bronze, in all 41 meters to the cross on its top. It was originally erected at Heliopolis by an unknown pharaoh of the Fifth dynasty of Egypt. The Emperor Augustus had it moved to the Julian Forum of Alexandria, where it stood until year 37 A.D., when Caligula ordered the forum demolished and the obelisk transferred to Rome. He placed it in the center of the Circus, where it would preside over Nero's countless brutal games and Christian

executions. It was moved to its current site in 1586 by the engineer-architect Domenico Fontana under the direction of Pope Sixtus V... Though Bernini had no influence in the erection of the obelisk, he did use it as the centerpiece of his magnificent piazza.

The paving is varied by radiating lines in travertine, to relieve what might otherwise be a sea of cobblestones. In 1817 circular stones were set to mark the tip of the obelisk's shadow at noon as the sun entered each of the signs of the zodiac, making the obelisk a gigantic sundial's gnomon.

[Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St_Peter%27s_Square]

At the very heart of Roman Catholicism we see the worship of the Sun. St. Peter's Square is a colossal Sun dial. Its massive centerpiece is an Obelisk taken from the Egyptian city of Heliopolis. The name Heliopolis literally means "Sun City." (In Greek, "Helio" means *Sun*, and "polis" means *city*.) Heliopolis served as the center for Sun worship in ancient Egypt.

Quite literally, Roman Catholicism is a "heliocentric" religion. It is centered entirely around images and rituals that are derived from pagan Sun worship that originated in Babylon and spread throughout the ancient world. These images of Sun worship are found everywhere in Roman Catholicism.

I believe it is significant that this obelisk in St. Peter's Square was formerly located at the Circus where Christians were brutally put to death. We read of the Mother of Harlots in Revelation that she has become drunk on the blood of the saints. The Roman Catholic Church has put myriads of faithful followers of Christ to death during her inquisitions and sundry persecutions. It seems appropriate to place this monument that has witnessed the spilled blood of so many saints on the doorstep of the Roman Catholic Church.

This obelisk, taken directly from a pagan center of Sun worship, is hardly an exception. The Roman Catholic Church has an even larger obelisk. It is located on the grounds of the Papal Archbasilica of St. John Lateran in Rome. This one was also removed from Egypt. It was commissioned by Pharaoh Thutmose III and finished by his grandson Thutmose IV. It was erected in the temple complex of Karnak, a center for the worship of the Sun god Amun-Ra, but later moved to its location next to the Mother Church of Roman Catholicism.



Lateran Obelisk

It should be obvious to an unbiased observer that if a religion that has adopted the symbols, images and rites of ancient Sun worship, it is a religion of Sun worship. The ancient Babylonian worship of Nimrod as the Sun god has been preserved under a thin cloak of Christianity. Being a mixture of the holy and the profane, the Roman Catholic Church has become an abomination in Yahweh's sight.

I do not want to belabor this issue. It would be an exhaustive task to detail all the images, rites and symbols of Sun worship in the Roman Catholic Church. My intent in this writing is not to expose every symbol of Sun worship, but rather to share enough information that the saint who has been unaware of the pollution of Christianity through the practice of syncretism might be awakened to this fact. It is also that those who have been troubled by the admixture of extra-Biblical rites, symbols and doctrines, might receive affirmation in their spirit that something is terribly amiss in what is presented as Christianity today.

If you desire to read more on this topic, you can find many symbols of Roman Catholic Sun worship on the Internet.

The Roman Catholic Church has been able to introduce Sun worship into the worship of Christ by denying the authority of Scriptures and the role of the Holy Spirit. It has usurped the position of ultimate authority that was placed in Christ and carried out by His Spirit, having vested it in the office of the Pope. The authority of the Roman Catholic Pope is founded upon a spurious claim of "apostolic succession." It is claimed by the Church of Rome that Peter was the first Pope, fulfilling the following words of Christ.

Matthew 16:18-20

"And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

There are numerous difficulties with this interpretation of the words of Christ. First, we never see the apostle Peter ruling over the early church. When the early church met in Jerusalem to decide issues of doctrine, we find that Peter is mentioned AFTER James, and it was James who gave the official ruling to the saints.

Second, we never find any mention in the Scriptures of Peter visiting Rome, unless Babylon is a reference to Rome (I Peter 5:13).

Third, the Scriptures declare that Peter's apostleship was to the Jews, in contrast to Paul, whose apostleship was to the Gentiles. It was Paul who wrote the epistle to the Romans, not Peter.

Consider the revelation of the following Scripture:

Galatians 2:7-9

But on the contrary, seeing that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been to the circumcised (for He who effectually worked for Peter in his apostleship to the circumcised effectually worked for me also to the Gentiles), and recognizing the grace that had been given to me, James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we might go to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcised.

Cephas is the Hebrew rendering of Peter, whose Hebrew name at birth was

Simeon, which was Hellenized as Simon. Thus, he is often called Simon Peter. Both the Aramaic *Cephas* and the Greek *Peter* mean “rock.” The diligent student of the Scriptures will discover that Christ used two different words when He declared “You are **Peter**..., and upon this **rock** I will build my church.”

These are Strong's numbers 4074 and 4073. The latter word rendered “rock” is feminine, and was not intended as a reference to Peter, who was most definitely not feminine.

petra

NT:4073; **feminine** of the same as NT:4074; a (mass of) rock (literally or figuratively):

The rock upon which Christ declared He would build His church was not Peter, but rather the confession Peter had just made when Christ asked His disciples who men said He was.

Matthew 16:15-18

He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" And Simon Peter answered and said, "**Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.**" And Yahshua answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church..."

Christ was literally declaring that upon this rock of revelation that Peter had received from God the Father, He would build His church. This revelation is that Yahshua is the Christ, the Son of the Living God. That this is what Christ intended with these words is revealed everywhere in the teaching of the apostles.

I John 4:2-3

By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Yahshua Christ has come in the flesh is from God; and every spirit that does not confess Yahshua is not from God...

The apostle John is declaring the same thing. The foundation of the church is the knowledge of the identity of Yahshua as the Son of God. This is the foundation upon which all the apostles built.

I Corinthians 12:3

Therefore I make known to you, that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Yahshua is accursed"; and no one can say, "Yahshua is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.

I John 5:1

Whoever believes that Yahshua is the Christ is born of God...

Observe how foundational a matter this is among the teaching of the apostles. Salvation is founded upon one's belief in the identity of Christ and confession of the same.

Romans 10:8-9

But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" - that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, that ***if you confess with your mouth Yahshua as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved...***

Truly, this confession that Peter professed to Christ is the foundation upon which Yahshua has built His church. The church is not built upon an apostle. The apostles were merely laborers who worked to lay the foundation. The solid Rock that is the foundation of the church is faith in Yahshua as the Son of God and the Savior of the world.

That the foundation upon which the church is built is faith in Christ, rather than the Roman Catholic belief in the absolute authority of Peter and a succession of Popes, is made abundantly clear in the following words of the apostle Paul.

I Corinthians 3:10-11

According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building upon it. But let each man be careful how he builds upon it. ***For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Yahshua Christ.***

There is no other foundation upon which the church may be built. Those who profess that the church is built upon Peter, and a succession of Popes, have laid another foundation and the building they have constructed is NOT the Church of Jesus Christ, Yahshua the Messiah. The Roman Catholic Church is

led by apostles of the Sun, rather than apostles of the Son of God. The high holy days of Christmas and Easter are testimonies to this fact. (See the article - *Removing the High Places.*)

This last fact leads us to consider that it is not merely the Mother Church of Rome that has become infected with pagan ideology, departing from the truth and falling into apostasy, but the Protestant churches have done the same. Christmas and Easter, Sunday worship, and various images, doctrines and practices derived from idolatrous cults have been merged into the Protestant churches, as well.

Rome may have its obelisks, monuments to the Sun, but so too do the Protestant churches.



People of God, perhaps you will forgive the average Roman Catholic for never questioning why there is a monument to Baal in the center of St. Peter's Square when you realize that most Protestants have never ventured to ask why there is an obelisk mounted upon the roof of their church. If you protest and say, "But there is a cross atop our steeple," the Catholics can say the same. Look again at the pictures of the obelisks I have included here. The "t" which we recognize as the cross was also the Tau sign which represented Tammuz, who was Nimrod reborn as the god of the Sun. Placing the cross upon the top

of an obelisk clearly identifies it as a symbol of Sun worship, rather than a symbol of the Son of God.

Do you read anywhere in Scripture that the saints were using the sign of the cross to denote their faith in Christ? Did the apostles place obelisks upon the tops of the buildings they used for their assembly with the saints? Where then did the steeple arise?

Satan is the great deceiver who deceives the entire world. He has put forth explanations to satisfy the marginally inquisitive. He would suggest that churches had steeples to allow them to be seen from a far distance so that all who desired to worship could find them.

In this blog, it has been noted that in the past year many steeples have been toppled by acts of God. It is there that judgment must begin.



Steeple - Central Lutheran Church, Minneapolis



Salina Kansas, First Baptist Church Storm Damage

Please understand my intent in sharing these things. I do not believe the church will be purified by focusing upon the removal of all the symbols of Babylonian origin that they have embraced. I share these things to suggest to you that the church has adopted much that has arisen from impure sources, and this includes the doctrines of the church. The apostles prophesied that this would be the condition of the last days church before the return of Christ.

II Timothy 4:3-4

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths.

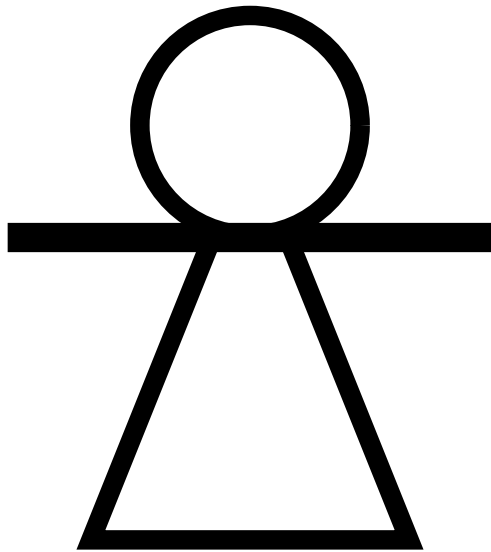
Many teachings in the church are considered “othodox” belief today, but they are not sound doctrine. The teaching of Christ and His apostles has been corrupted through the admixture of many pagan elements. The church is riddled with false teachings, yet most of this teaching is as unnoticed by the majority of believers as the obelisk to the Sun sitting atop the roof of their meeting house.

Christ is coming back for a purified church. How will the saints be cleansed unless they return to a pure devotion to Christ, and begin to test all things by the Spirit and the Word of God?

To be continued...

Syncretism - Part 5 - The Persistent Fallacy

Joseph Herrin (02-17-2010)



Symbol of Tanit - Fertility Goddess

The symbol above is found at many ancient ruins where the Lunar goddess Tanit, also known as Ashtoreth, Astarte and Ishtar, was worshiped. It is the symbol of “the queen of heaven,” whose original was the Babylonian Semiramis, wife of Nimrod and mother of Tammuz.

*Tanit was a Phoenician **lunar** goddess, worshiped as the patron goddess at Carthage. **Tanit and Baal** Hammon were worshiped in Punic contexts in the Western Mediterranean, from Malta to Gades into Hellenistic times. In North Africa, where the inscriptions and material remains are more plentiful, she was also a heavenly goddess of war, **a virginal mother goddess** and nurse, a consort of Baal Hammon and, less specifically, a symbol of fertility. Several of the major Greek goddesses were identified with Tanit by the syncretic interpretatio graeca, which recognized as Greek deities in foreign guise the gods of most of the surrounding non-Hellene cultures.*

*Her shrine excavated at Sarepta in southern Phoenicia revealed an inscription that identified her for the first time in her homeland and related her securely to the Phoenician goddess **Astarte (Ishtar)**...*

[Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tanit>]

The Israelites were warned by Yahweh not to embrace the idols of the nations whose lands they were to possess. They were warned not to adopt any images of deity to be incorporated into their worship of Yahweh, and to refrain from worshipping the sun and moon and other heavenly bodies.

Deuteronomy 4:15-19

Watch yourselves carefully, since you did not see any form on the day Yahweh spoke to you at Horeb from the midst of the fire, lest you act corruptly and make a graven image for yourselves in the form of any figure, the likeness of male or female, the likeness of any animal that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged bird that flies in the sky, the likeness of anything that creeps on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the water below the earth. And beware, lest you lift up your eyes to heaven and see the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of heaven, and be drawn away and worship them and serve them, those which Yahweh your God has allotted to all the peoples under the whole heaven.

The Israelites transgressed terribly in all of these things. They adopted the worship of Tanit (Astoreth) as the Scriptures testify. We read of the Israelites worshipping the queen of heaven and her son Tammuz.

Jeremiah 7:18

"The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead dough to make cakes for ***the queen of heaven...***"

Ezekiel 8:14

Then He brought me to the entrance of the gate of the Lord's house which was toward the north; and behold, women were sitting there weeping for ***Tammuz***.

This Babylonian religion has been persistently carried forth from one age to another by the nations of mankind. It is at times dressed in different garb and given various names, but it has remained clearly identifiable. Yesterday I showed the symbol of Baal, the Sun god, erected in St. Peter's Square in Vatican City, the seat of Roman Catholicism. Today, I would show you the worship of the queen of heaven, whose symbols are clearly identifiable in the same location.

The ancient symbol for Tanit, queen of heaven, has been found on many ancient markers and monuments. Following is a stele erected to honor Tanit

and Baal Hammon. This stele is housed in the Bardo museum in Tunis.



Wikipedia describes the symbol for Tanit in the following manner:

Her symbol, found on many ancient stone carvings, appears as a trapezoid/trapezium closed by a horizontal line at the top and surmounted in the middle by a circle...

[Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tanit>]

In 1656, Gian Lorenzo Bernini redesigned St. Peter's Square. The name is somewhat misleading, for there is no square found at the location. St. Peter's Square has the shape of an ellipse set atop a trapezoid.

The colossal Tuscan colonnades, four columns deep, frame the trapezoidal entrance to the basilica and the massive elliptical area which precedes it. The ellipse's long axis, parallel to the basilica's façade, creates a pause in the sequence of forward movements that is characteristic of a Baroque monumental approach. The colonnades define the piazza. The elliptical center of the piazza, which contrasts with the trapezoidal entrance, encloses the visitor with "the maternal arms of Mother Church" in Bernini's expression.

[Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St. Peter%27s Square](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Peter%27s_Square)]

One does not have to look hard to see the thinly disguised symbol of Tanit, the queen of heaven, in the layout of this monument to the worship of the

heavenly hosts.



Aerial View of St. Peter's Square

And just as in the stele from the Bardo museum, the **obelisk** symbol of Baal is set in the center of the ellipse that forms the top part of Tanit's emblem.

Note also what is at the bottom of the Tanit symbol. The cross shaped building with the sunburst image in the center of it is St. Peter's Cathedral.



St. Peter's Cathedral - A Solar Cross

Thus, we see in the layout of Vatican City the ancient symbols for all three members of the Babylonian trinity. The solar cross has from ancient times

been the symbol for Tammuz, who in the Babylonian fertility cult was Nimrod reborn as the Sun god. Semiramis came to be associated with the Moon. Thus, the worship of the Sun and Moon were a central part of this religion that spread throughout all nations of the world.



Celtic - Solar Cross (Note Freemasonry symbol in the center)

These symbols have been equally adopted by Protestant churches, for as we saw in the last post, the obelisk stands atop the majority of Protestant churches in the form of a steeple. Mounted upon many of these steeples are various symbols of Tammuz, from basic crosses, to ones that are clearly solar images.



Detail of cross atop church in Missouri

Yahweh's instructions to His holy people Israel, were that they were to completely destroy all the images and pillars they found in the land that had been used in the worship of the host of heaven.

Deuteronomy 7:5-7

But thus you shall do to them: you shall tear down their altars, and smash their sacred ***pillars***, and hew down their Asherim, and burn their graven images with fire. For you are a holy people to Yahweh your God; Yahweh your God has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.

In the book of II Kings we read of Jehu, whom Elijah anointed to remove all Baal worship from Israel. Jehu was very zealous in doing so, and we read the following:

II Kings 10:27

They also broke down the sacred ***pillar*** of Baal and broke down the house of Baal, and made it a latrine to this day.

The word rendered "pillar" is the Hebrew word *matstebah*. Strong's Concordance defines it in the following manner.

matstebah

OT:4676; something stationed, i.e. a column or (memorial stone); by analogy, an idol.

It is rarely considered today that embracing symbols of pagan Sun worship did not strike the majority of Israelites as a particularly grievous thing. Especially when a generation arose whose parents and grandparents before them had adopted these symbols, such things would hardly have been cause for much consideration. We see a similar situation in the church today. For many generations symbols, rites and doctrines derived from Babylonian religion have been adopted by the church, and few consider them, or seem to even notice their presence.

How many Christians today sit down and consider that the day most venerated by the church today bears the name of a pagan goddess of fertility? How many consider where the traditions surrounding Easter and Christmas come from? How many wonder why all the churches in their town have steeples sitting on top of them?

We have been for so long immersed in a church whose practice of syncretism has leavened all areas of religious life that there is no longer any discernment between that which is holy and that which is profane.

Christ, however, is coming back for a bride that has been purified. The Holy Spirit is calling the people of God to come out of Babylon. This involves much more than identifying what practices, symbols and doctrines have arisen from impure sources. It requires that one be willing to walk an afflicted path, to stand alone, and to be labeled as a religious extremist. It entails adopting a Spirit led life, where one is no longer lead by their own soul. One must embrace the cross that is appointed to all Christ's disciples.

To be continued...

Note: I have been receiving some excellent feedback from brothers and sisters in Christ. Following is a short, two and a half minute, video that shows the end result of syncretism.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=keiU9WiyPJE>

A sister in Christ also sent me the following meditation:

Joseph:

Very timely article. The lead-in photo really caught my eye because just last week I read an article on line (can't find it now) regarding Pope Benedict XVI and the pallium he chose (being wider than other palliums).

*In searching wikipedia I learned the pallium (which only the Pope and Archbishops wear) is the scarf-like item with three crosses they wear as an outer garment and is made of **wool**.*

Immediately brought to mind "beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves." Also Ezekiel 44:17 "At it shall be, whenever they enter the gates of the inner court, that they shall put on linen garments; no wool shall come upon them while they minister within the gates of the inner court or within the house."

I looked up pallium in my big green 1828 dictionary. That word is not there. I almost closed the dictionary when my eyes landed on the word palliate. This is the definition:

PALLIATE: [French, pallier; Spanish, paliare; Italian, palliare; Low Latin, pallio, from pallium, a cloke or robe.]

*definition 1. **To clothe.***

*definition 2. **To cover with excuse; to conceal the enormity of offenses by excuses and apologies;** hence to extenuate; to lessen; to soften by favorable representations; as to palliate faults, offenses, crimes or vices.*

The Lord is obviously telling us something in very plain language. Just had to pass this on to you.

Regards,

Barbara

Syncretism - Part Six - The Great Substitution

Joseph Herrin (02-19-2010)

The practice of syncretism, of mixing the abominable practices, symbols and doctrines of idolatrous religions with the teaching of Christ and His apostles is clearly observable to all who care to examine the matter. One need only look at any of a multitude of things in the Roman Catholic Church to see that there is no Biblical precedence for them. The Catholic church has monks who reside in monasteries, but the Scriptures nowhere testify of any such practice among Christ or His apostles, nor among the early disciples. Where then did such a concept arise?



Buddhist Monks at Prayer

(Note the nimbus - solar halo - around the heads of their idols, similar to the way Roman Catholics represent images of deity and the saints.)

Many of the people groups at the time of the early church practiced religions that included monks, monasteries, prayer beads, candle lighting, and other rites that are nowhere found in the Bible, but which have been adopted by the Roman Catholic Church.

The early church began to adopt the practices of the pagan religions around them, freely merging together the holy and the profane. The lighting of candles is a very common Catholic practice that is also observed among early pagan religions.



Buddhist Monks Lighting Candles



Buddhist Monk with Prayer Beads

There is no apostolic pattern for such practices as these. They were all borrowed from pagan religions as the church began to be leavened with false doctrine, and many false disciples (tares among the wheat) began to infiltrate the church. Very quickly, the thing that the apostle Paul feared greatly occurred.

Acts 20:28-30

Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men

will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.

II Corinthians 11:2-4

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. 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.

Already, in his day, the apostle Paul was finding that various unclean spirits were entering into the church. This same church in Corinth to whom Paul was speaking had members who were going to the local pagan temples and engaging in ritualistic sex with temple prostitutes (I Corinthians 6:15-16). There was no distinguishing between the things of Satan and the things of Christ, and because of this Paul said that many in the church at Corinth had become sick, and some had died (I Corinthians 11:30).

There were many Baals worshiped throughout the world. *Baal* is a generic term given to the gods worshiped by various people groups. The Scriptures refer to these aggregated deities as “the Baals,” or “Baalim.”

Judges 2:11

Then the sons of Israel did evil in the sight of Yahweh, and served ***the Baals...***

In order to prepare the way for the adoption of pagan gods into the worship of Yahweh, Satan found it to be extremely beneficial to hide the name of Yahweh. He led men through various deceits to remove the name of Yahweh from the Scriptures, and to replace it with titular substitutes that are very generic, such as *Lord* and *God*. The Holy Spirit inspired holy men of old to record the name Yahweh 6,828 times in the Old Testament, and the shortened version of His name, Yah, another 49 times.

The name Yahweh, sometimes rendered as Jehovah, is found recorded thousands of times in the Scriptures, and is referred to as the Tetragrammaton. *Tetragrammaton* literally means “a word having four letters.” The name Yahweh is recorded in the Old Testament with the writing of the four Hebrew letters Yodh He Waw He (Anglicized as YHWH). In the

ancient Paleo-Hebrew, old Aramaic, and modern Hebrew, this would have looked similar to the following image:



The image displays three variations of the Hebrew word 'יהוה' (Yahweh). The top row shows the word in Paleo-Hebrew script, consisting of four distinct, angular characters. The middle row shows the word in Old Aramaic script, which is more cursive and rounded than the Paleo-Hebrew version. The bottom row shows the word in Modern Hebrew script, which is the most recognizable form, featuring a mix of straight and curved lines.

Note that Hebrew is read right to left.

About ten years ago I wrote an article explaining the use of the Divine names in the writings of this author. I highly recommend that you take the time to read it, if you have not yet done so. It is titled *“The Usage of Divine Names.”*

The article explains the various deceptions that Satan has employed to have the name of Yahweh removed from the Scriptures today. I have found that a great many, probably a majority of professing Christians today, do not even know the name of the God they profess to follow. Many know Him only by generic titles such as God, Lord, and Father. I am not suggesting that it is inappropriate to use these generic titles, for they do have their proper usage, but Christians should know the memorial name of the God they profess to follow, for it was recorded nearly 7,000 times in the Old Testament, though it has now been completely removed in the most popular English translations.

What I want to point out is that the most common substitute for the name of Yahweh is the word “Lord.” The Hebrew word Baal literally means “Lord,” or “Master.” To the ancient Hebrews the word Baal was not a specific name, it was a generic title. They employed it the same way we use the word “Lord” today. There are many lords, as there were many Baals, and this title was often used in reference to pagan deities that were worshiped. To the ancient Israelite, saying “Let’s go worship Baal” would be the same as a modern English speaking Christian saying “Let’s go worship the Lord.” These pagan deities known as Baals were quite often solar deities, represented by the Sun.

What Satan has accomplished in this hour is to raise up a massive religion that

began as the worship of Yahweh and His Son Yahshua, and he has transformed it into a caricature of the worship of Baal ("the Lord"). He has additionally brought into this worship a myriad of the symbols, rites and doctrines that belonged to the worship of the Baals.

If Christians do not name the *Lord* (Hebrew *Baal*) they claim to worship, having forgotten His name, having removed it from their Scriptures; and if they embrace the symbols, rites and doctrines of the solar deities that were called Baalim, then how does one know who is truly being worshiped? Consider the following:

Churchgoers, both Catholic and Protestant, celebrate the resurrection of the Son of God on Easter, the day Tammuz the son of Ishtar (the Babylonian Semiramis) was said to be resurrected after he had been slain by a wild boar.



Image of Tammuz - Greek Adonis - Dying
(Note gash on leg from tusk of wild boar.)

These worshipers eat the traditional Easter ham (a symbol of the boar who slew Tammuz). They spend forty days of mourning leading up to the date of Tammuz's rebirth on Ishtar SUNDAY. This mourning for Tammuz was present even in the days of the prophet Ezekiel.

Ezekiel 8:14-15

Then He brought me to the entrance of the gate of the Lord's house which was toward the north; and behold, women were sitting there ***weeping for Tammuz***. And He said to me, "Do you see this, son of man? Yet you will see still greater abominations than these."

This mourning among Christians begins on Ash Wednesday, when ashes were applied to the foreheads of Sun worshipers to mark the beginning of their mourning for Tammuz.



Minister applying ashes to forehead of a young (Christian?) worshiper on Ash Wednesday

These ashes are applied in the form of the Tau symbol, which from antiquity was used to represent Tammuz. This Tau (cross) symbol on the form of a solar wafer, is what the Roman Catholic Church requires to be served to its millions of followers during the Eucharistic service.



Solar Disk - Communion Wafer

It is from the symbol of Tammuz, the Tau, that we also get “hot crossed buns.”



Hot Crossed Tammuz Buns

The pagan traditions of the mystery religions have even been passed down to our children as they sing the little song that speaks of hot cross buns.

Hot cross buns
Hot cross buns
One a penny
Two a penny
Hot cross buns

If you have no daughters
Give them to your sons
One a penny
Two a penny
Hot cross buns

What does this mean “if you have no daughters, give them to your sons?” Remember, this was the celebration of the goddess of fertility and her son. By offering oblations of liquid and foods to Semiramis and Tammuz the people were asking for the gift of fertility. This fertility was petitioned from the goddess by offering drinks and cakes in order that their crops, livestock, and their own families might be blessed with abundance. Many a tradition that seems innocent today has found its origin in practices that are detestable to Yahweh.

Many of these same Easter celebrants arise early to attend a **SUN**rise service, which was also derived from pagan rituals as the idolatrous Sun worshipers awaited the appearing of the Sun to mark the re-birth of Tammuz. Easter NEVER falls on the same date as Passover, which was the date upon which

Yahshua, the Son of Yawheh, was crucified. Indeed, the Christian leaders assembled by Constantine in 325 A.D. mandated that if the dates should ever coincide that the date of Easter must be moved. Constantine was a Sun worshiper. (We wouldn't want to accidentally commemorate the death, burial and resurrection of Yahshua on the actual date of its occurrence. Some might mistake Christians for worshipers of Yahweh, rather than worshipers of the Sun.)

Seeing all of these things, what god would an impartial, yet knowledgeable, observer conclude that these worshipers were serving? Since the very day they are observing is named Easter, after the goddess of fertility, and it is marked by images and rites derived from the worship of the queen of heaven and her son, would it not be fair to conclude that these are pagan Sun worshipers?

What then, if the worshipers protest that they are celebrating the resurrection of the Christ of the Bible? Should we not at the very least conclude that these worshipers of Yahweh and His Son have been grossly led astray into adopting the rites, symbols and doctrines of pagan Sun worship? It should come as no surprise that the Spirit is calling His people to come out of Babylon, for His people have clearly taken up residence in the very heart of Mystery Babylon, the Mother of Harlots.

Revelation 18:4

And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, "Come out of [Babylon], my people, that you may not participate in her sins and that you may not receive of her plagues..."

Perhaps you are beginning to see how pervasive this Babylonian Sun worship is among what passes for Christianity today. From the steeples atop the churches, to the holy days she celebrates, the church of Christ has been thoroughly leavened with pagan symbols, rites and doctrines. (And I have not even begun to address the doctrines yet!)

Satan is truly "the great deceiver who deceives the whole world." If possible, He will deceive even the elect of God. What Satan has done is to replace the worship of Yahweh with the worship of the Baalim. Satan has done a thorough work, even as He did in removing the name of Yahweh from the Scriptures. This has set up the entire Christian world to receive the lies that are being poured out in these last days; namely, that all religions lead to God, and all faiths are equally honorable.

How can Christians stand against such powerful deception when they have already embraced the religious practices of Mystery Babylon? Where is the discerning man, or woman? Where is the one who will separate the holy from the vile?

II Corinthians 6:17-18

"Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate," says Yahweh. "And do not touch what is unclean; And I will welcome you. And I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to Me," says Yahweh Almighty.

Can it be said that you are not touching that which is unclean if you are embracing these practices derived from Sun worship? Have you truly come out from the midst of the unclean practices of idolatry and separated yourself unto Yahweh? The Spirit is calling to the people of God in this hour, urging them to come out of Babylon, for the plagues of Yahweh will shortly be released in great fury upon her.

To be continued...

Syncretism - Part Seven - Parting of **The Ways**

Joseph Herrin (02-22-2010)



This is the most important post of this series, for in it I will address the motive behind the practice of syncretism. Without any doubt in my mind, understanding this matter will be a key issue for all who would walk as overcomers in these last days.

As I have meditated upon this subject, asking the Spirit of Christ to guide me, I have pondered what the root cause of this practice of syncretism, this leavening of the church could be. The conclusion I have arrived touches the very foundation of Christianity.

Those who fail to accept the cost of discipleship; those who reject The Way of the cross, are susceptible to the unclean practices of syncretism. A Christian who has not given his or her life wholly to Christ to live as He chooses, have already adopted a spirit of compromise. This compromise opens the door to further compromise in all areas of life.

The Way of Christ and His disciples is a very narrow way. It is an afflicted way. The way of Mystery Babylon, the Great Harlot, is a way of ease and self-indulgence.

Consider for a moment the contrast between Christ and His disciples, and Mystery Babylon, the Great Harlot described in Revelation.

Of Christ and His disciples we read:

Isaiah 53:2-4

For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of parched ground; He has no stately form or majesty that we should look upon Him, nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him. He was despised and forsaken of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and like one from whom men hide their face, He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely our griefs He Himself bore, and our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

I Corinthians 4:9-13

For, I think, God has exhibited us apostles last of all, as men condemned to death; because we have become a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are prudent in Christ; we are weak, but you are strong; you are distinguished, but we are without honor. To this present hour we are both hungry and thirsty, and are poorly clothed, and are roughly treated, and are homeless; and we toil, working with our own hands; when we are reviled, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure; when we are slandered, we try to conciliate; we have become as the scum of the world, the dregs of all things, even until now.

Of Babylon, the Great Harlot, we read:

Revelation 17:3-6

And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast... And the woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a gold cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her immorality, and upon her forehead a name was written, a mystery, "BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."

Revelation 18:7-16

She glorified herself and lived sensuously... for she says in her heart, 'I sit as a queen and I am not a widow, and will never see mourning...' And the kings of the earth... committed acts of immorality and lived sensuously with her... And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her, because no one buys their cargoes any more; cargoes of gold and silver and precious stones and pearls and fine linen and purple and silk and scarlet, and every kind of citron wood and every article of ivory and every article made from very costly wood and bronze and iron and marble, and cinnamon and spice and incense

and perfume and frankincense and wine and olive oil and fine flour and wheat and cattle and sheep, and cargoes of horses and chariots and slaves and human lives... and all things that were luxurious and splendid... she who was clothed in fine linen and purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls.

Can a greater contrast be found between Christ and His disciples and the description of the Great Harlot, Mystery Babylon? Christ and His disciples had an afflicted path to walk. As men viewed their lives, they were judged to be stricken and smitten by God. They were strangers in the earth, without homes, without possessions, in many hardships and distresses. Their pathway was the way of the cross.

The Great Harlot, in contrast, has all the world's goods. She says that she will never see mourning, for her heart is set to avoid all suffering. She is esteemed by the great people and merchants of the earth, where the true disciples were scorned. The harlot walks comfortably in the midst of this world system. Her path is broad, and multitudes join in her company, while the way of Christ is narrow, constricted and afflicted, and few are there who find it.

I will tell you what led to the compromises of the early church, and the corruption of the virgin Bride of Christ into a Great Harlot. It was a loathing of The Way, the narrow way, the way of the cross that all true disciples must follow.

Perhaps you have noticed that I have been capitalizing the words "The Way" throughout this series. This is the expression used to describe the early disciples of Christ. The early disciples were called "followers of **The Way**."

Acts 9:1-2

Now Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest, and asked for letters from him to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to **the Way**, both men and women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.

Acts 19:9

But when some were becoming hardened and disobedient, speaking evil of **the Way** before the multitude, he withdrew from them and took away the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus.

Acts 19:23

And about that time there arose no small disturbance concerning **the Way**.

Acts 24:14

"But this I admit to you, that according to **the Way** which they call a sect I do serve the God of our fathers..."

The early disciples were referred to as *The Way*, more often than they were called *Christians* in the New Testament. These verses above reveal that those who belonged to The Way were persecuted; they were "the disciples"; disturbances followed them; and they were viewed as a sect of Judaism.

Strong's Concordance defines the Greek word rendered as "Way" in the following manner:

hodos (hod-os'); apparently a primary word; a road; by implication a progress (the route, act or distance); figuratively, a mode or means:
KJV - journey, (high-) way.

We see that this Greek word can be used to signify both the route and road one takes, as well as the journey. The walk of those who were true disciples of Christ was very different from the path all other people around them were following. The disciples of The Way stood out in the society they found themselves in. Their priorities, values, and manner of living was altogether different from the pattern of the world.

Christ declared to those who gathered to hear Him that The Way to life was very different than the way of the world.

Matthew 7:13-14

Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide, and **the way (hodos)** is broad that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter by it. For the gate is small, and **the way (hodos)** is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it.

I want you to understand this post, if you do not understand anything else from this series. There is apparent today two bodies, both women, who are identified as the Bride of Christ. One body is small in number. It is described as "a pure virgin" that has been espoused to Christ (II Corinthians 11:2). There is another body comprised of vast multitudes. It too claims to be espoused to

Christ, but she is a harlot in her affections. She has eyes for the world, and the things in it.

Both of these bodies are walking very different roads. The pure virgin, few in number, is set upon an afflicted path, a narrow and constricted way. They aspire to be led of the Spirit in all they do. They have counted the cost of following Christ, even to hating their own lives, and have accepted the cost. These are following The Way that leads to life.

The other body is walking together with the world on a very broad path. It is the path of least resistance. They walk hand in hand with the merchants and money changers. They are focused on buying and selling, on eating and drinking, on building and planting and marrying. Their lives are focused on satisfying the desires of their flesh and the dreams and passions of their souls. Although a great many profess to be followers of God, these are walking the way that leads to destruction.

Among the early believers, the cost of following Christ was very clear. The early disciples, and all the 120 gathered in the upper room during that first Pentecost of the virgin church, knew very well the path that Yahshua had walked. Many had been witnesses of His crucifixion. All knew of His suffering and persecution and death. They were aware that He was an outcast from the Jewish religious system, hunted by the leaders of the Temple and synagogues.

The early church proclaimed the cost of following Christ. The first disciples knew that it would cost them everything. Christ made it clear that even as He was persecuted, so too would they. Even as He did not possess this world's goods, neither would they be promised the things of this world. They had to accept whatever provision their Father in Heaven chose for them, for Christ was their pattern, and they were to be conformed to His image.

When the rich young ruler approached Christ, we read the following:

Matthew 19:21-22

Yahshua said to him, "If you wish to be complete, go and sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." But when the young man heard this statement, he went away grieved; for he was one who owned much property.

When the Scribe approached Yahshua wanting to be His disciple, we read:

Matthew 8:20

And Yahshua said to him, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."

In these words we read that Christ did not require a permanent dwelling place on this earth. He never owned a home. He went wherever His Father directed Him, and was content with whatever provision God chose for Him.

When Christ addressed the multitudes, He declared:

Luke 14:33

"So therefore, no one of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions."

From a strictly material point of view, there is nothing in The Way of Christ that would attract followers. One must choose The Way for no other reason than that it is the only path that leads to life. It was for this reason that Christ's disciples continued to follow Him when the majority fell away.

John 6:66-68

Many of His disciples withdrew, and were not walking with Him anymore. Yahshua said therefore to the twelve, "You do not want to go away also, do you?" Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of age-abiding life."

Yes if you want to be a possessor of the life of the Son of God, there is only one Way to walk. It is The Way of the disciples. It is the narrow way that promises nothing in this world, but has laid up its treasure in heaven and in an inheritance imperishable and incorruptible. It was in recognizing the truth that the Christian's reward is not in this present life that the apostle Paul penned the following:

I Corinthians 15:19

If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied.

The Way to life is a costly way. It is a difficult way. It is a way that only those who embrace death to the natural life, to the desires and passions of the soul, alone can find.

Luke 14:26-27

"If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, **and even his own life**, he cannot be My disciple. Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple."

What Christ is describing is the complete opposite of the broad path that "seems right unto a man." Christ exhorted all who would be His disciples to count the cost first, to see if they could finish what they began. Were they willing to pay the full cost of what they began? Would they shrink back at anything?

People of God, the Spirit has instructed me in The Way during the past eleven years. In 1999 the Spirit of Christ challenged me to give all things I possessed over into His care, including my wife, my children, my home, my job, and even my own life. He asked me to commit to following Him wherever He would lead me, and to doing whatever He asked. I have written of this journey in the book *Evidence of Things Unseen*.

One thing I have fully discovered is that there truly are few who are willing to walk this narrow path. Many who are dear to me have fallen away, choosing a different course. Many trials, losses, suffering, and persecutions have been my lot over the past decade. These experience included the departure of my wife and son, of being rejected by fellow ministers, and having the doors to today's synagogues, the churches, closed to me. It has led to my living as a wanderer in this earth, and even experiencing homelessness, and living at a Rescue Mission for a year. I have lived out of a car, in a tent, in a camper/van, and in other people's homes. I have gone where the Father has led me, even when that included spending time in jail.

II Timothy 3:12

Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.

Let me share with you something I have discovered along The Way. When we count the cost of following Christ; when we accept the cost, setting our faces as flint to continue to the end; when we will bear every loss without seeking an easier path, then we will also find that our the compromises we once embraced in other areas of life will also fall away from us. These compromises include the doctrines and practices of an apostate church system who is walking on the way that is broad and leads to destruction.

The Way of Christ is an ever narrower Way. Yahweh is ever calling His people OUT of the world to be HOLY unto Him.

Revelation 18:4

And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, "**COME OUT** of her, my people, that you may not participate in her sins and that you may not receive of her plagues..."

The very word that is translated as "church" in our English Bibles speaks of this call of God upon those who would embrace The Way of Christ that leads to life. The Greek word "ekklesia" is translated into the English word "church." Ekklesia is more literally translated as "called out assembly." Those who would walk holy unto God are constantly being called OUT to a narrower place where there are fewer walking the path. This narrow place is a part of their journey. It is The Way, the narrow Way.

Consider now, what the inducement was among the early believers to look for another Way. The natural man despises the cross. The natural man does not desire to suffer, even if the suffering is necessary in order to fit sons and daughters to rule and reign with Christ. The natural man will seek a path of compromise where the way is not so difficult, and the most odious suffering can be avoided. Over time even the smaller acts of sacrifice and suffering will give way to a desire to be constantly at ease, endlessly entertained, and perpetually in a state of pleasure.

II Timothy 3:1-4

But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God...

These words describe the state of the visible church today. Today, ministers do not even mention that there is a cost to be counted before committing to becoming a disciple of Christ. People are told that Christ has done it all. They can get their "get out of hell free card" by making a confession and saying a prayer. Then they can continue to live for their own will and desires, and God will even help them to attain all that their soul lusts for.

Such ones will inevitably find themselves following a broad way upon which

the teeming multitudes throng. Having embraced a life of compromise, they will find themselves embracing mixture in all areas of life. In their religion they will see no difficulty in mixing the holy and the profane, for in their commitment to Christ they have mixed the will of God with their own Adamic will. They will obey God as long as it is pleasing to their soul, but if it does not please them, if the will of Yahweh leads to some sacrifice or suffering they do not wish to make, then they will choose the profane leadership of the fallen nature over the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

Have you heeded the command of Christ to count the cost of discipleship? Have you considered that following Christ means death to your own ways? Have you considered that you must let another lead you, and live for the pleasure of another, in order to be a disciple of Christ? Are you willing to go wherever He would lead, and do whatever He would ask you to do? Have you considered that your life is not your own, for you have been bought with a price? Are you willing to live as a bondservant of God, living daily to do His will?

If you have not yet made this commitment, then you are a candidate for Satan's deceit of syncretism. God requires everything. There can be nothing held back. Yahweh will ask you to lay that which is most precious to you on the altar as He directed Abraham to sacrifice Isaac.

If you will not pay the cost, then you have already compromised your faith, and you are an open target for Satan to bring in more and more compromise and error until all is thoroughly leavened. Satan's work is far advanced in the church today. The Spirit is calling His people to come out of Babylon, to come out of the world, to come out and be a people holy unto Him.

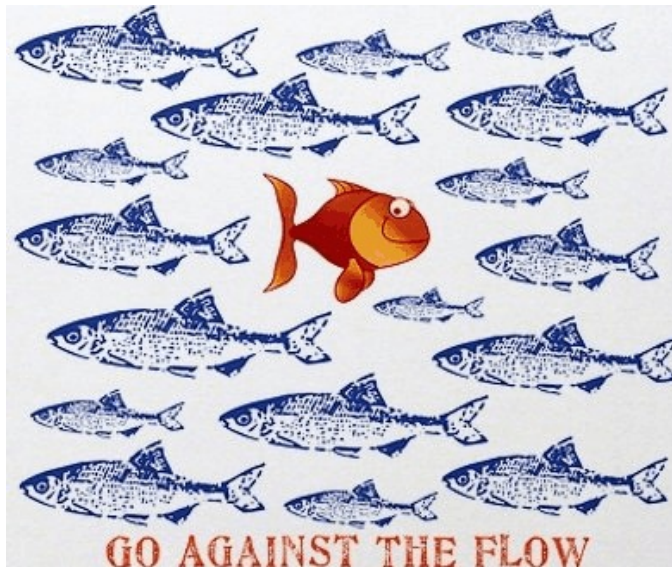
Syncretism is mixture. Syncretism is compromise.

Will you heed the call?

To be continued...

Syncretism - Part Eight - SYNC or SWIM

Joseph Herrin (10-23-2010)



Perhaps you have considered that the practice of Syncretism that has been revealed in this series is the opposite of the separation that God has always required of a people who will be holy unto Him. Syncretism is the mixing of the holy and profane. It is to travel in a path contrary to that of being separated unto a holy God.

James 4:4

You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

Observing the trend of the churches today as they strive to be “seeker friendly,” we see that the chief means by which the church seeks to accomplish this end is to embrace the world. Does the world love rock music? The church will give them rock music. Does the world love sports? The church will create Christian sports leagues and build ball fields and a sports complex. Does the world love entertainment? The church will install big screens, professional lighting and sound systems, and put on a show. Does the world love its celebrities? The church will build a personality of cult around its gifted speakers, singers and entertainers.

Of course, those Christians who embrace all the things of the world, declare they are doing so in a quest to be “relevant.” After all, they reason, how will they reach a lost world if they do not appeal to the desires of the world?

The problem with this way of thinking is that, having drawn worldly people into the church, the seekers find no significant difference inside the church. The church merely presents them with a “cleaned up” version of what they had outside. The church has all the same values of comfort, ease, pleasure, and entertainment; they are presenting a religion that satisfies the soul of man, instead of leading people to the radical change of focus that they need.

Mankind apart from Christ is by nature a consumer. He lives to satisfy his natural appetites. This became the state of all men when Adam transgressed in the Garden of Eden. Adam failed to subdue and rule over the beasts (and by extension the beast nature). Adam submitted to the rule of the serpent. Consequently, the curse on the serpent became mankind’s curse.

Genesis 3:14

And Yahweh God said to the serpent... "Cursed are you more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly shall you go, and dust shall you eat all the days of your life..."

This curse contains a great parable. To go on one’s belly, is a parable of living to satisfy the appetites of the flesh. Man’s flesh was formed of the dust of the earth, and this became the food of all those ruled by the nature of the serpent. The apostle Paul alludes to this fallen state of mankind, and those in the church who continued in it, in the following words:

Philippians 3:18-19

For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that ***they are the enemies of the cross*** of Christ: whose end is destruction, ***whose god is their belly***, and whose glory is in their shame - ***who set their mind on earthly things***.

If one sets their mind on earthly things, then they are an enemy of the cross that all disciples must bear. If a man or woman is ruled by their belly, by the desires of their flesh and soul, then they are not following the pattern of Christ who testified that He did not come to do His own will.

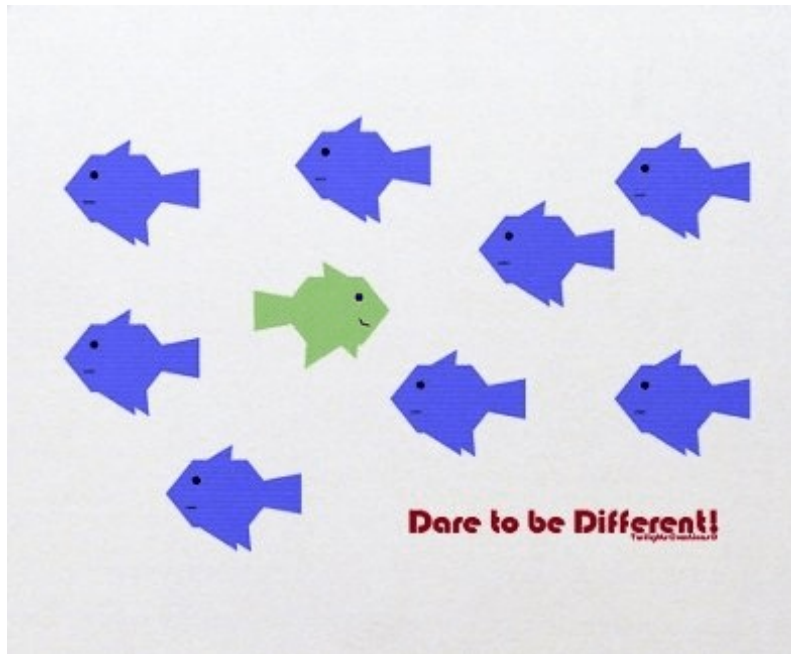
John 5:30-31

"I can do nothing on My own initiative... because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me."

The world knows nothing of living for the will of the Father. A worldly church

is following the pattern of the world. Christians are running over with personal initiative. They live their lives according to the desires of their own soul. They have merely adopted sanitized versions of the things the world pursues. The course of their life has not been altered. They are still living for self.

To be a disciple of Christ, one must make a complete about face. One must dare to be different.



To be a disciple, one must make an about face. They must no longer live to please themselves. They become the bond-servants of God, having been bought with a price.

I Corinthians 6:20

For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

As I shared in the previous post, the disciple must hate his own soul.

Luke 14:26-27

"If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate... even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple."

Both Christ and His apostles contrasted The Way of the cross with loving the world. If one loved the world, and the things in it, if they were ruled by their

belly, they were said to be enemies of the cross.

The church today has lost this distinctiveness. They have become as salt that has lost its savor.

Luke 14:33-35

"So therefore, no one of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions. Therefore, salt is good; but if even salt has become tasteless, with what will it be seasoned? It is useless either for the soil or for the manure pile; it is thrown out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

It is the cross that gives the church its intense flavor. I am speaking here of the cross each disciple is called to bear. The church today speaks only of the cross that Christ bore. In their own lives there is no cross. Most Christians are not denying themselves, but rather living for self.

Some have written to me after the last post asking if there must always be suffering in our lives. Must we continually be subjected to hardship, loss, difficulty and distresses? Both Christ and His apostles have answered this question for us.

Luke 9:23

And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, ***let him deny himself, and take up his cross DAILY***, and follow Me."

I Corinthians 15:31

"I protest, brethren, by the boasting in you, which I have in Christ Yahshua our Lord, ***I die DAILY***."

This does not mean that we must be miserable every moment. It does not mean that suffering is our daily portion. What it does mean is that every day we must live for the will and pleasure of God rather than for our own will and pleasure. The cross always is applied to the soul of man. Our desires, our will, our ways, must be set aside in order that we might do the will of Yahweh. Though all the world and a worldly church are pursuing their own will, those who would be disciples must go against the flow. As they do, all who observe them realize that they have a very distinct flavor. There is a pungency about them that is absent in the lives of others. Their lives are potent by virtue of their sacrificial obedience to the Father.

II Corinthians 2:15-16

For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life.

Let me clarify that which I shared yesterday. Some have wondered whether we must be always suffering. Must we embrace poverty, and never know any ease or comfort. In God's sight one condition is not superior to another. Whether we are well dressed, or ill-clothed; whether we are abundantly fed, or experiencing hunger; whether we are financially well-off, or experiencing great leanness, there is no moral benefit in one condition versus another.

Some do err by thinking they must always be abased, and suffering some austerity. These will not accept blessings of abundance when they come from Yahweh's hand. To have such a mind is equally as much in error as those who will only accept blessing and abundance, despising and rejecting any thought that they should ever be lacking in every good thing. The apostle Paul addresses this error in the following words:

Colossians 2:20-23

If you have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees, such as, "Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch!" (which all refer to things destined to perish with the using) - in accordance with the commandments and teachings of men? These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, but are of no value against fleshly indulgence.

Paul is addressing those who are asserting that "self-abasement and severe treatment of the body" are required for one to be walking in a pure religion. In other places the apostles and Christ address those who go to the other extreme, desiring always to be rich in the goods of this world.

I Timothy 6:9-10

But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith, and pierced themselves with many a pang.

Despite the marked difference in the outward appearance of those who are

pursuing a life of austerity, and those who are pursuing a life of material abundance, the error of their hearts is the same. They are both “**self**-directed.” Both groups are choosing for themselves what they will accept in this life. Paul has declared this when he speaks of “**self**-made religion” and “**self**-abasement.” It is obvious from these words that “self” is the origin of this lifestyle. In contrast, Christ never did anything that arose from self. He lived to do the will of the Father.

John 4:34

Yahshua said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to accomplish His work."

John 6:38

"For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me."

Romans 15:3

For even Christ did not please Himself...

Christ came into a world that was living for self. He swam against the current. His life was very distinctive. He was exceedingly salty.



I have often shared in this blog that a Christian need not choose for himself a cross to bear. No man needs to go and look for some way to suffer for Christ. All we must do is surrender to be led of the Spirit of Christ in all things. This is what Yahshua did. He always did the will of the Father. Such a life, moving as it does against the tide of humanity and the forces of this world, will include conflict and suffering. At times this suffering is the result of the world standing

in opposition to the course of our life, but oftentimes the suffering is internal as we wrestle with laying down some cherished thing that our soul loves.

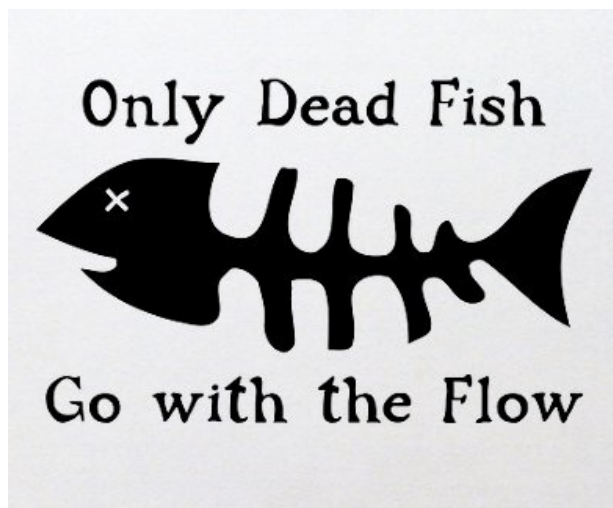
There are no vacations in a disciple's commitment to follow God, but our Father does give His sons and daughters seasons of refreshing. We are not always in distresses. We are not every day submitted to dangers, and fears, and reproaches. We do not meet with loss and heartache every day. There are periods of great fellowship, of relative abundance, and of calm. Our Father knows how to refine His children. He knows how long they can remain in the fire, and when to bring them out and allow them rest.

The message I would convey to you is that a great majority of those who profess to be Christians are not walking as His disciples. They are not walking in The Way that leads to life. Many are enemies of the cross. They will not accept the cost of discipleship. They have never surrendered to be led of the Spirit in all things. They are going in the same direction they were traveling before they began confessing Christ. They are self directed, and living for selfish pleasure.

I Timothy 5:6

Whereas she who lives in pleasure and **self**-gratification [giving herself up to luxury and **self**-indulgence] **is dead** even while she [still] lives.

[Amplified Bible]



What will you do? **SYNC or SWIM!**