

FAMILY BREAKDOWN – THE REMEDY – WEEK THIRTY.

It is the opinion of this author that as the coming of HaMoshiach draws nearer we will be faced with more and more delusions, distorting the truth and drawing people away from the protective wings of HaShem. This was also the message Sha'ul gave his readers in the following quote:

2 Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, concerning the coming of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah and our gathering together to Him, ² not to get shaken out of your mind or disturbed—either by a spirit or a word or a letter as if through us—as though the Day of the Lord has come. ³ Let no one deceive you in any way, for the Day will not come unless the rebellion comes first and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the one destined to be destroyed. ⁴ He opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he sits in the Temple of God, proclaiming himself that he is God.

⁵ Don't you remember that when I was still with you I was telling you these things? ⁶ And you know what now holds back, for him to be revealed in his own time. ⁷ For the mystery of lawlessness is already operating; only there is one who holds back just now, until he is taken out of the way. ⁸ Then the lawless one will be revealed. The Lord Yeshua will slay him with the breath of His mouth and wipe him out with the appearance of His coming. ⁹ The coming of the lawless one is connected to the activity of satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, ¹⁰ and with every kind of wicked deception toward those who are perishing. They perish because they did not accept the love of the truth so as to be saved. ¹¹ For this reason God sends them a delusional force, to lead them to believe what is false, ¹² so that they may be judged—all those who did not believe the truth but delighted in wickedness. ¹³ But we should always give thanks to God for you, brothers and sisters loved by the Lord, because God chose you as firstfruits for salvation through sanctification by the Ruach and belief in the truth. ¹⁴ He called you to this salvation through our proclaiming the Good News, for you to gain the glory of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah. ¹⁵ So then, brothers and sisters, stand firm and hold on to the traditions which you were taught, whether by word of mouth or by our letter. ¹⁶ Now may our Lord Yeshua the Messiah Himself and God our Father, who loved us and by grace gave us eternal comfort and good hope, ¹⁷ comfort and strengthen your hearts in every good deed and word. 2Thessalonians 2:1-17 [TLV]

Have there not been countless commentaries and opinions written on the above verses. Countless opinions regarding the man of lawlessness have been suggested. Differences on whom or what the “one who holds back” have provided many a robust discussion. These discussions and opinions will most

likely continue until the coming of Moshiach ben Dovid. None the less it is very important we pay attention to the circumstances surrounding HaShem sending a delusion upon the people. The delusion is sent because of a refusal for the love of the Truth. Within the context we are discussing this refusal is fuelled by our own pride and self interest. When Sha'ul wrote these words the "mystery of lawlessness" was already in operation. The Children of Israel have a history of rejecting truth, preferring to engage in wickedness, worshipping false gods and distorting the truth of HaShem. It didn't take long before the followers of Yeshua began to change the Halakah of the Master. This of course created an even bigger divide between the House of Judah [Jews] and the House of Ephraim. This is still the case today. Is it little wonder when you consider the following statements by Christian leaders.

Cyril of Jerusalem

"Fall not away either into the sect of the Samaritans or into Judaism, for Jesus Christ has henceforth ransomed you. Stand aloof from all observance of Sabbaths and from calling any indifferent meats common or unclean" (Catechetical Lectures 4:37 [A.D. 350]).

Council of Laodicea

Christians must not judaize by resting on the Sabbath, but must work on that day, rather honouring the Lord's Day; and, if they can, resting then as Christians. But if any shall be found to be judaizers, let them be anathema from Christ. (Canon 29 [A.D. 360]).

"They [the early saints of the Old Testament] did not care about circumcision of the body, neither do we [Christians]. They did not care about observing Sabbaths, nor do we. They did not avoid certain kinds of food, neither did they regard the other distinctions which Moses first delivered to their posterity to be observed as symbols; nor do Christians of the present day do such things" (Church History 1:4:8 [A.D. 312]).

"[T]he day of his [Christ's] light . . . was the day of his resurrection from the dead, which they say, as being the one and only truly holy day and the Lord's day, is better than any number of days as we ordinarily understand them, and better than the days set apart by the Mosaic law for feasts, new moons, and Sabbaths, which the apostle [Paul] teaches are the shadow of days and not days in reality" (Proof of the Gospel 4:16:186 [A.D. 319]).

Considering the above, which are but a few examples of the Christian Church straying well away from the instructions of HaShem, Yeshua and His Talmidim, is it any surprise that we still have Orthodox Rabbis writing against Yeshua and Sha'ul.

“After the end of the Babylonian exile, the return to the land and the building of the Second Temple, new challenges to the authority of the Torah arose, such as from those who denied the afterlife or the oral law, or denied the giving of the Torah at Sinai. Among the most notorious enemies of the Torah were those who hellenized in the Second Temple period, when it was "politically correct" to be Greek. The festival of Chanukah commemorates the miraculous saving of the authentic Torah pathway from the assault upon it by Greek culture.

Rabbi Moshe ben Maimon, the Rambam (Maimonides) wrote a letter known as IGERET TEIMAN encouraging the Jews of Yemen to remain faithful to the Torah and give their lives if necessary rather than submit to forced conversion by their Moslem rulers. In this letter, Maimonides explains the difference between the assault upon the Torah by Greek thought and the assault upon the Torah by Christianity and Islam.

The Greek philosophers denied the existence of G-d (Level 7) and the revelation at Sinai (Level 6) and accordingly provided justification for preventing Jews from practicing the Torah, e.g. Shabbos, circumcision, etc. (Level 5). leading to open violation and vilification of the Torah by the Hellenists. Greek philosophy was a direct assault upon the Torah, leaving the Jews of the time with a choice -- whether to go after the Torah or after the Greeks.

On the other hand, Christianity and Islam did not blatantly repudiate the entire Torah of Moses. What they did was to establish alternative Torah's that were more acceptable to non-Jews, leaving the Jews of their respective periods with a different kind of choice: whether to remain faithful to the traditional Torah of Moses or to follow an alternative "Torah".

Hatred of the sages of Israel is deeply entrenched in Christianity, because the claims of its founder and his followers about his divinity were a direct assault upon the authority of the sages and an attempt to steal the Torah from its true guardians, the House of David under Hillel (as later handed down in the Mishneh and Talmud). The adherents of the new religion wrote their own "Torah" openly mocking the Torah of Moses, as when their leader is displayed licensing the plucking of grain on the Sabbath for charitable reasons against the protests of the "Pharisees", who are depicted as being mean. In the writings of the new religion, the Pharisees (i.e. the rabbis of the Mishneh) are characterized as the evil face of institutionalized religion. The new religion drew all of its teachings from the Torah, but detached them from the accompanying stringencies of the Law, while attaching them instead to its own devotional system focussing on its own saints and heroes. Particularly after the conversion of Saul (Paul), who was a Pharisee, the new religion institutionalized the systematic vilification of the Torah tradition of the rabbis, turning the written Torah (Torah, Nevi'im & Kesuvim, TaNaCh) into a mere introduction to its own new "Torah" or "Testament", which was meant to replace the Sinaitic Covenant.

Denial of the pathway of the Torah of Sinai -- the written Torah and the oral Torah -- is thus deeply built into the very structure of Christianity, which became the dominant religion in the western and many other parts of the world and one of the main foundations of its culture, together with that of Greece and Rome. As Christianity gained strength, persecution of Torah-observant Jews together with burnings of Torah scrolls and Talmuds became a regular occurrence.”

The above was taken from Rabbi Avraham Greenbaums weekly Torah portion commentary on Bechukosai. The Israel Torah reading for Shabbat May 28 2016.

The question we should ask is: Could this delusion be the false belief that the eternal instructions of HaShem are no longer valid for His Children. It is certain that neither Yeshua nor His Talmidim rejected the Torah of Moshe. It is also certain that they were never guilty of encouraging anyone to disregard the Torah of Moshe. We must keep in mind the difficult task both Yeshua and His Talmidim had before them. They had to contend with a political, power hungry form of Judaism, whose leaders were trying their best to keep their positions of power, hence the bogus trial of Yeshua. They were also trying to take the Torah to a large section of people who knew very little about the God of Israel, His instructions and the traditions of Judaism. That is one reason Sha’ul wrote:

¹⁹ For although I am a free man, not bound to do anyone’s bidding, I have made myself a slave to all in order to win as many people as possible. ²⁰ That is, with Jews, what I did was put myself in the position of a Jew, in order to win Jews. With people in subjection to a legalistic perversion of the Torah, I put myself in the position of someone under such legalism, in order to win those under this legalism, even though I myself am not in subjection to a legalistic perversion of the Torah. ²¹ With those who live outside the framework of Torah, I put myself in the position of someone outside the Torah in order to win those outside the Torah — although I myself am not outside the framework of God’s Torah but within the framework of Torah as upheld by the Messiah. ²² With the “weak” I became “weak,” in order to win the “weak.” With all kinds of people I have become all kinds of things, so that in all kinds of circumstances I might save at least some of them.
1Corinthians 9:19-22 [CJB]

Sha’ul wasn’t [as some claim] being deceitful or trying to reject the Torah, or preaching one “gospel” to one group and another to a different group. Sha’ul was giving the same message in a format his audience could understand. Sha’ul was very upfront and forthright about embracing and following the Torah of Moshe, as upheld by HaMoshiach Himself. Sha’ul was not giving any credence to what the Christian Church is teaching today. He was desperately trying to bring people back to HaShem, through encouraging adherence to the Torah as upheld by Moshiach Yeshua. Sha’ul was also challenging the Jewish elite who were more

focused on their own rules and regulations than correct biblical application of Hashem's Torah. We must remember Sha'ul had vast experience in the religious Jewish world of the time. He was well aware of the difference between 'Biblical' Torah and what we could call "Rabbinical" Torah. He was sharing his own experiences and enlightenment so he could "save some".

I am persuaded both Houses have been given a dose of delusion from HaShem, in order to eventually set the stage for a momentous Teshuvah by all citizens of biblical Israel. Just imagine for a small moment the difference in the nation of Israel and the world if all Christians suddenly realised they were to keep the Torah that HaShem gave to His people. Imagine if all Christians became aware of the vital importance of Judah guarding the Torah in order for Ephraim to partake of their biblical heritage. Imagine all of Judah accepting returning Ephraim with open arms as they sought Judah for Torah guidance, with both Houses focused on HaShem and the coming Moshiach. What a different world we would be living in! Well the great news is that at some time in the future this will take place and what a blessing that will be.

¹ A Song of Ascents. Of David.

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity!² It is like the precious oil upon the head, coming down upon the beard—Aaron's beard— coming down on the collar of his robes.³ It is like the dew of Hermon, coming down upon the mountains of Zion. For there ADONAI commanded the blessing—life forevermore!
Psalm 133:1-3 [TLV]

Let us be very clear on an important fact. HaShem is not pleased with the present behaviour of His Children. He is far from pleased with the division between "Brethren". HaShem hates divorce, and the present condition in the House of Israel [whole House of Israel] is very similar to a nasty divorce. Each side blaming the other and refusing to look at their own behaviours that contributed to the split. How long will we allow our pride to rule us? How long before we not only realise but admit we are behaving similar to spoilt children? Until we remove our pride we will continue in a state of delusion. Somehow we must change our ways and seek HaShem with all our hearts. Our hearts must be circumcised. If we approach the Holy One of Israel in an uncircumcised state He will turn away from our prayers and petitions. HaShem has great patience and mercy for His Children, but there comes a time when He must act to save us from ourselves. Historically we have a bad record of saving ourselves. We have a great record of getting into trouble, of rejecting His instructions, of worshipping other gods, of playing the harlot. This has resulted in some severe punishment, forcing us back to HaShem. I ask, why would we expect the pattern to change when considering our current behaviours and lack of obedience to the Torah as upheld by Yeshua HaMoshiach?

To a large extent we have lost sight of the rewards our Father has for His Children as a united family. We have spent thousands of years in a state of disunity and we now see it as a normal condition. This is not to be, we are to be a nation of Light, showing a clear path to HaShem through our dedication and worship of HaShem and His Moshiach, therefore our Moshiach, and His Torah, therefore our Torah.

Let us pray for the time when all the Children of Israel seek a love for the Truth with circumcised contrite hearts. We need to step away from false promises, with no truth because they have been founded on lies and delusion. Why would we look outside the Father's House for Life, when it can only be found within His boundaries? Let us leave the darkness of delusion and embrace the Light of HaShem.

Truly there is no God like our God, the God of Israel and no nation like the Nation whom He elected.

Blessings to all citizens of biblical Israel,

Rabbi [Prof] Philip [Yochanan] Hammond. PhD.