

A Brand New Culture

We're going to talk about the rise and fall of the early church. It's good to say *church* instead of *edah* when you're talking to the outside. This is a book. I don't think a book has been written called "The Rise and Fall of the Early Church." There's the rise and fall of other things, but putting that to the first church, it might be provocative. We don't have to mention its restoration in the title, but we can speak of restoration in the book itself.

Kharash — Unlike most books we can have an answer. Many books will dissect the problem, but very few can say, "This is what is being done. There's a way out."

I know that we need to cry out to our Father for all that we need, that our Master could be here in our midst, and wisdom, knowledge, and understanding would be upon us to write articles and papers — whether we write any thing or use what we've already written. I've got boxes of freepapers here with marvelous articles, and nobody has read them but us.

Let's pray that we won't remain silent, that His Spirit would be upon us that we could speak. We're not going to get everything from one person. That's out, at least as we go along and develop and grow, and the nation is born. We're sitting at the feet of the apostles (plural). Our Father is going to raise up apostles and prophets.

Why are we going to Washington? What kind of event is it? What is it supposed to tell people?

Sho'er — The Folk Life Festival is all about showing different cultures and so we thought it would be excellent to be on the Mall at the same time to show our culture.

Kharash — We really have only one thing to say, which is the Gospel, but at the same time, because of Christianity, it's really important that our culture come out so that people can understand what our words mean. For 2000 years the essence of Christianity has been not to have a distinct culture that is connected to our Father's words, but whatever happens to be the flavor at the time. So that's why there has to be a cultural display, not to show off the wonderful life, a utopian existence, please come and have a great time cutting vegetables with us. There has to be both aspects — the message and the life, the light and the life.

Is it the life and the light, or the light and the life? What does Jn 1:4 say? "The life was the light of men." It's the *life* that brings *light*. There's no light that comes except from the life.

I think that we ought to, if we could, understand that this is a *brand new* culture. And we have to be careful how we communicate. Are we going to use our Father's name? Are we going to say *Yahweh* or *God*? A lot of times we say *God*, as in the Word of God. When we communicate with the world we have to use terms they understand. Even though "God" is an erroneous term, we have to use it in speaking with people so they can understand what we're talking about.

David Yonah — Otherwise you alienate people right off the bat and they can't even hear what you have to say. Right. But as far as we are concerned, instead of addressing Him as *God*, we address Him as *Father*. We used to say "our God" but we want to say "our Father."

So, about a *brand new culture*. The Israelites multiplied to around six million in 400 years, right.

Kharash — From the official census figures that are listed there in Numbers we can extrapolate. When it says so many fighting men, there must have been this many more women and children.

So you can see that when they crossed the Red Sea and then the Jordan, our Father eliminated most of them because He didn't want to bring into the Promised Land the culture of Egypt. He wanted a *brand new culture*.

This is what we want to convey or portray — a brand new culture — if we can possibly do it. I don't know if we're so brand new right now. I don't know how many of us have to be eliminated before we begin the race.

We have to understand the word culture to even know what a culture actually is. I've got it marked in my big dictionary.

David Yonah — (reading) "Act of improving or developing by education, discipline, etc.; the training, disciplining, or refining of the moral and intellectual nature; the state of being cultivated, especially the enlightenment and discipline acquired by mental and moral training; civilization; refinement in manners and taste..."

You can see that there's a lot of training and education, passing things on from one generation to another. That's what culture is. Only man can have culture. Animals do the same thing from year to year, but man develops into different cultures. When you try to mix those cultures you've got a mess.

We have to have culture; we are a separate people who have a distinct culture. People come into our culture through baptism, through giving up their life, through death to their old life, in order to come into this *brand new culture* that is being developed now through education, training, passing on to our children from one generation to the next.

I'm just going to share a few things that are very simple, but you have to take it and develop it if we're going to talk about a brand new culture. We want people to know the brand new culture. So we need to try to say things in the right way that won't unnecessarily offend people.

When Châm came over they had a culture, and now they're fitting into the culture of the United States. But they still have a certain culture of their own. But the world has never seen a brand new culture like they're going to be seeing the next fifty years.

So what does *culture* mean? We're going to wear shoes that we make? Is that part of our distinctiveness? We get our clothes at the Salvation Army, but we're actually different — people notice that we're different.

Kharash — Even though we might get our clothes at the Salvation Army, we don't *wear* them the same way as other people.

It's also the kind of clothes we select, things that are appropriate to what we wear.

The Word of God gives His people a concrete expression of how our (their) Father wants His people to live. If we really get into the Word, we know how He wants us to live. Anyway, those who have the Holy Spirit *know*. That's the difference between us and Christianity, even as Mal 3:18 says. There will be a distinction someday between those who *know* God and those who don't know Him, who serve Him and those who don't serve Him. That's what we're here for. Israel was born to be a *distinct* people. (Our life is the light of the world.) Every part of their lives expresses and reflects His nature. Man was created to express His nature, but man has fallen away from that. So there has to be a coming back to a people who will perfectly represent Him.

That has to happen on the earth. We can't just live a mundane, hum-drum existence. There's got to be a distinct culture coming forth from a people that God lives in, by His Spirit. If His Spirit lives in us we're going to have to represent His nature. Our Master said, "If you've seen Me, you've seen the Father." He's no different from us, corporately. The Spirit dwelled in Him, so therefore He perfectly represented our Father in everything He did. We should be able to say the same thing: "If you look at our lives you see the Father."

Old Israel came out of Egypt, crossed the Red Sea, etc. The first church had the day of Pentecost, a new nation being born. Mt 21:43 — "I'm going to take the kingdom away from you and give it to *nation* producing the fruit of it" — the fruit of the *kingdom*, the king's rule, his reign. That is pretty conclusive right there, that the Jews aren't His people because the kingdom has been taken away from them. We're not saying that He took it away from natural Israel indefinitely, but for a *definite* period of time. I don't want to align myself with people who say that Israel is no longer. But we're the *servant*. We're bring it back to natural Israel, to Abraham, what our Father walked between the split animals to accomplish.

Is it conditional or unconditional? Christianity says it's unconditional. You can see it both ways. Our Father hasn't changed His mind. But you have to see *why* it is unconditional. It is because He knew He would have a people who would do what old Israel didn't do — fulfill Gen 18:19, to keep the way of Yahweh. How do we keep that way? Command your children and your households. Rule your households.

David Zerubbabel — That really ties into what you said before, that one of the key things about a culture is that they pass it on to successive generation. So really without Gen 18:19 there is no nation, there is no culture.

That's right. That's the key to that scripture verse, which brings about Gen 17:8, which goes back to Gen 15:18.

Our Father walked through those split animals, and Jer 34:18 says if you walk through those split animals and you don't keep your covenant, that is what's going to happen to you. That's what happened to Israel. They were cursed; they were divided.

But who are we? Acts 26:7 says that we are doing something for them, which they can't do themselves, to bring about what our Father promised Abraham. So here we are in this age. He had to take the kingdom away from natural Israel and give it to spiritual Israel in order for them do for Abraham what his natural descendents couldn't do. It would take spiritual descendents to do it. Our Master was that seed, and whoever belongs to Him are the seed of Abraham.

Hakam — That's why there has to be a brand new culture. It can't come from them because they were cut off as a nation. So that means that their culture, the way they were being educated and trained and disciplined and what they were passing on to their children did not represent our Father.

So you can see the first church, that nation that "took the ball", before long they dropped it. So who are we? Can we use Rom 9:29 to say, "This is who we are"? Are we that bold or confident to say we're that preserved seed? If it weren't for that seed we would all become like Sodom and Gomorrah. It produces that remnant in verse 27. You have to read it backwards. I think the *remnant* is talking about us. It might be talking about old Israel, but I think it's talking about us. What is a remnant? Is it a part of something else, just cut off?

Kharash — It's the last bit that has the essence. From the point of view of our Father and the prophetic word the remnant is the hope, because from that remnant the nation will be regathered, rekindled.

David Yonah — When I think of a remnant I think of whatever is left. Which begs the question, "What happened to the bulk of it?" The bulk of it became Sodom and Gomorrah.

Kharash — Which, by the way, is very much how the Old Testament Jews were described right before they were dispersed. The prophets called them Sodom and Gomorrah.

Eze 16:49-50 — People like to quote verse 49 and not go on to verse 50 for fear of the sodomites. But let's get back to the subject...

Every part of our lives reflects His nature. On the day of Pentecost 3000 people received the good news of salvation and through the apostles' teaching and fellowship they prepared to establish a brand new culture. Acts 2:42 — We have to have apostles, and I'm not talking about myself only. It says they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching *and* fellowship. The word *fellowship* is talking about fellowship *with the apostles*. If you don't have fellowship with the apostles, then something's wrong.

Kharash — You'll have the teaching in error.

That's right, exactly. So that's where the culture comes from. Certainly we all went to the same schools and the same clothing stores, and we all at the same kind of stuff, so therefore we didn't learn our culture in the world. It has to be something that the Holy Spirit reveals to us. That's what we call the *anointing*. We have traditions that are passed on through the anointing, things that are not explicit in the Bible. Paul said that if a person doesn't adhere to the *traditions*, don't even greet him (2 Ths 3:6).

Kharash — Those traditions define, promote, and protect our culture.

That's excellent. Write that down.

The good news of salvation reached 3000 people, and that was the beginning of that new culture, the new nation. They were devoted to the apostles' teaching and fellowship — whatever *devoted* means. They prepared to establish a brand new culture, like no other people or nation. Like old Israel, before they went across the Jordan River they prepared to start a brand new culture. They heard all the commands about how they were not going to give themselves to the Canaanites, etc., but have their own culture, not imitating the nations around them, and not marrying their women either.

That is how it was at Pentecost. They wanted to establish a brand new culture like no other people, no other nation before had ever known. It would be good if we could say this. This is what we have to establish. "The kingdom was taken away from them and given to another *nation*..." But that nation became defunct and Christianity began.

Jms 1:27 — Is every other religion besides ours evil? Is every other religion besides the true Israel evil? Yes. It has to be, because they deceive. What is more evil than causing a person to think he has eternal life when he doesn't? What is more terrible than Billy Graham calling everyone down to the altar and convincing them that they have eternal life? Does what Billy Graham preaches keep you unspotted by the world? Of course not. Does it teach you to care for orphans and widows? The word translated *visit* means to care for.

The primary focus of this new culture would be on the living God who now made His home in them. There are so many places where it says He is going to come and live in us. “He dwells **with** you and will be **in** you” (Jn 14:17). That’s the incarnation. He was *with* them for three and a half years, but now He would be *in* the m. In the Old Testament the Holy Spirit was *with them*, but it was temporarily, not permanently. *The Holy Spirit was not sealed in any person until our Master Yahshua ascended into heaven and poured out His Holy Spirit, and then whoever believed was sealed with the Spirit (Eph 1:13; 1 Cor 6:17; Jn 7:37-39). He is called the Holy Spirit of promise (Acts 2:33; Gal 3:14; Eph 1:13).*

People have been convinced that they received the promised Holy Spirit but they don’t have any culture. They do not have a culture that releases and expresses the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of the God who is holy — the separate distinct spirit of a separate distinct people. They would be the very representatives of Him in human flesh.

The Word of God (our Master) gave commandments and all His people would obey them (Jn 14:15,21; Acts 5:32; Heb 5:9; 1 Jn 2:4). His people would obey Him, establishing this new way of life. By keeping His word these new people of God, the nation that took the place of old Israel, would now demonstrate their commitment to Him.

I’ve fallen in love again with another scripture verse, Jn 18:37 — whoever is of the truth will hear His voice.

“For this reason I was born (as a human being), for this reason I (the divine Word of God) came into the world...” This shows the two aspects of the incarnation — the human and the divine. The “Word of God” was never born, but came to dwell in human flesh, in this man who was born.

Our Father would then *continue* to reveal Himself to them. This is where the first church fell away. He would continue to reveal Himself *because* they were obeying His commandments. But they stopped obeying His commandments.

Kharash — Christianity exists in a culture. You say, “Obey God,” but a person’s conscience has been distorted and perverted by the false preachers, so he comes to understand “obeying God” in a culture. So you say “obey God” and you mean it in absolute terms by the anointing. That means everything — your money, your family, etc.

But the liars have stepped in and created a culture of “obedience” — because you wept and went down to the altar and threw your whiskey bottle away or you quit watching these dirty videos or whatever. They mistake this for obeying God, even though they know, if they are really honest, that they live empty lives. It’s a trap. When you say, “You don’t know what it means to obey God,” they respond “You’re trying to put me under the law” because the law defines and explains God’s culture.

David Zerubbabel — What they think is obeying God is the subjectivity of hearing that “little voice” that tells them to do this or to do that, as if they were hearing from Him. I remember that. “What does the Lord want me to do today?” or “What car does He want me to buy?” or “What person does He want me to witness to?” You live in this subjective realm and you compliment yourself because you “obey God” because you responded to this subjective “voice.”

You’ve got to “unconvince” these people.

Kharash — If there was a way of challenging the cultural assumptions of Christianity. Of course you’re going to get a job when you’re a Christian, and you’re going to do well at that job. Of course you’re going to excel in school. That’s who Billy Graham puts on the platform — athletes, media stars, successful businessmen. This is what it means to “know God”. If we could challenge that and ask, “What about the Apostle Paul? Would he have been on that stage?” He was a desperate cult leader, in jail more often than not, in trouble. He wasn’t a missionary supported by all these comfortable businessmen. He was someone who lived an outlandish life and he recognized as his brothers only those who did the same. He had harsh words for those who were content to live at something less than that.

You have to go issue by issue, because Christians feel different aspects to this but they’re numb to the overwhelming reality of it. They don’t face the emptiness at the core of it. They have an empty life, and if they ever sense that, that’s when something really deep starts stirring in them. We have to raise that question.

Hakam — I was thinking about some of the things that we used to read in the Vine House days. The exposé came through people like Francis Schaefer who started identifying the fact that Christianity had no culture. He started talking about the need to create a Christian culture. What did this “Christian Culture” produce? How is it

distinct from the world? If His disciples were obedient to him, obeyed His commands, and He continued to reveal Himself to them day by day, and they continued to come more and more away from the world, more and more holy, set apart as a culture, how did they arrive at where they are now? But really the fruit of whatever Francis Schaefer was talking about has locked Christianity into society. They are more of an integral part now than they ever were. They've become a movement within the popular culture to take over that culture. Kharash — He produced that movie before he died, "How shall we then live?" It was all about a Christian culture. And after that film was over, a woman stood up and said, "Mr. Schaefer, how then shall we live?"

What is the Alternative?

I looked up the word *alternative* and then I asked, "What is the alternative to the modern church?" Is there a choice between two exclusive possibilities? That's what the word *alternative* means. Once there was no choice of any other possibilities except what we all have become thoroughly disgusted with.

Jn 12:26 says, "Whoever serves Me must follow Me, and wherever I am, there My servant will be also." We have to serve Him where He *is*. There has to be a place to belong. It says, "in every *place*" which means a locality.

"Is there any place on earth where I can serve the One who suffered in death in my place?" ...where one can follow Him, where one is honored by His Father? Does such a place exist outside the conventional church? Is there a true alternative lifestyle other than a lifestyle we've all grown to hate? It says, "Unless you *hate* your life in this world..." you can't be saved (Jn 12:25).

"I hate my life in this world, but what can I do with it? How can I get rid of it? Where can I go? Who will come to me and bring me home?" (Zep 3:20, NIV)

Jn 12:26 pictures a place or locality where He lives in a people who no longer live for themselves but for Him who died for them. "Where is this place where I can serve Him?"

Being Spotted by the World

There is conclusive evidence right here on how the first church fell away, obviously, according to Jn 14:21. They had His commandments, but they didn't keep them, obviously, therefore they didn't love our Master. "He who has My commandments and *keeps* them, he is the one who loves me... I will reveal Myself to him." That's continual revelation, not just a one-time thing. It's a day-by-day continual revelation of our Master Yahshua if we love Him. Therefore the church fell away because they didn't continue to obey His commandments.

Kharash — That's really a description of how the Ephesian community fell away — they lost their first love. That's the loss of the lampstand — the prophetic word.

Of course there's no better description than in Jms 1:27 about being *spotted* by the world. If you're *spotted* by the world you're not a *true religion*. Rom 5:5 says the love of God has been poured out in your hearts, and 1 Jn 2:15 says if you love the world, the love of the Father is not in you. Then 1 Jn 3:17 talks about community life: "Whoever has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, and he closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?" So if you see your brother continually wearing the same shirt over and over every time you see him, maybe that's the only shirt he's got. This true religion that Jms 1:27 speaks of would be carried out by the twelve tribes (Jms 1:1), which would be raised up to reflect His loving and compassionate nature by caring for one another, especially orphans and widows, and not in any way be spotted by the world. What does "spotted by the world" mean?

Spotted (#784) — without spot; absence from blemish (1 Tim 6:14; 2 Pet 3:14); related words are blameless, un-indictable. Rev 3:4 says most were *spotted*. Now if most were spotted back then, what makes Christians think they're not spotted altogether? Look at the way they were living just before the end of the first century, gathering every day, loving one another, caring for each other. If they left their first love back then, how much more today?

1 Jn 1:7 is the provision for getting stains out before they become indelible. *Fellowship* in this verse is fellowship with God. The light exposes the stains so we can judge it and confess it quickly before it *sets*

So *true* religion is unspotted by the world. This *spotted* is not so much individual as corporate, such as being connected to the government, taking government aid, embracing the popular culture. Rev 3:12 is talking about individuals, but *true religion* is talking about the organization.

Hakam — Rom 12:2 says do not be conformed to this world. I think that's talking about the pattern of this world.

The Amplified says, "fashioned after and adapted to the structure and customs..." 1 Pet 2:14-15 — There are people in the culture of the world who obey their conscience don't like that culture. There is something in them to resist it because they see that it is going in a direction, it's headed for destruction because it's corrupt, it's ruler is the Evil One. People who are going over the waterfall, who are violating the Everlasting Covenant, are the ones who are driving the culture of the world. We are the only ones who have the power to establish a separate culture. The people of the nations can't do that. They have to live within the world's culture. The only thing they can do with their conscience is resist it, but they can't come out and be separate and establish a culture that demonstrates what God is like. So the more corrupt a society gets, the less those in authority want to praise those who do good. You're only going to have individual servants who do good. That's the stage that we're at now in the world. We don't have a governmental system praising you for doing good because the whole system is corrupt. The courts and the laws reflect the culture, and that's why the laws are so messed up. For example, custody and child support laws allow people like Lori Johnson to have custody of children.

Jn 12:25 — You have to hate your life in this world in order to be a disciple. You've got to come out of the world and into a new culture.

Kharash — If we don't sense that someone really hates his life, we tell them they're not ready yet. Otherwise, if you don't hate your life in this world, and then move into the community, you're going to go back to it.

Sho'er — This professor we've known for a while said on his last visit, "You know, I'm standing on the shore and looking at the ship [the Community], and because of these different things [doctrines he doesn't agree with] I feel like there's holes in the ship, so I don't really want to get on the ship." And Qatan said, "The difference between you and me is that you're still on the shore, but I was drowning."

That's right!

David Yonah — He got his feet on something solid, or something he thinks is solid.

Kharash — Cultural assumptions! He thinks it's solid, he thinks his children are going to a good place, he thinks he can please God while he lives his life out in the fantasy of Christianity.

So anyone who loves his life loses it, but anyone who hates his life in this world will keep it to eternal life...

Hakam — Jn 15:16 — "...keep on bearing fruit, that your fruit may be lasting..." I was applying that to what you were teaching about those who obey His commandments, He continues to reveal Himself to them, and they keep on bearing fruit. The Christian mentality is that after I got saved I quit drinking and I quit going to movies, so I bore fruit, I'm saved, etc. But he still lives in the world.

David Yonah — When the church began, did they obey His word and continue to bear fruit all down through the centuries, and so what we see right now is the culmination of continuing to bear fruit and obey His word.

There's got to be a way for people to come to the conclusion that whatever began in the beginning stopped. If you can alienate people in their thinking from the church being a live entity that has its roots all the way back to the day of Pentecost, that's half the battle. Then you can start on a good premise.

Hakam — What President Bush is doing right now, giving tax money to faith-based programs, is a prime example of how people look to religion to fix the world's problems. The government comes to the rationale that since Christians pay taxes like everyone else, and really the issue is *results*, so who can better fix the world's problems than the Christians, or any religious group.

It doesn't deceive us, but the day will come when they will have something so clever that even the *very* elect would be almost taken in.

Hakam — President Bush was so smooth, his feet were obscuring the line that separates church and state.

Someone asked who I would vote for, Gore or Bush. I said, well, if I'm going to err, I'd better err on the side of Mr. Bush, but I know what that tendency is going to bring in some day.

Kharash — Shall we choose the Harlot riding the Beast or Sodom and Gomorrah? It was a clear choice in the election.

As soon as we would take money from the state, there would be no more persecution.

In Every Place

In every place there is no dissension, no division whatsoever in every locality. The Body of Messiah is without division. It is one. All the elders are a fraternity. No matter how many clusters there might be in that township they are all one. That's what "in every place" means. Today when you say "the local church" what people think is the church in the immediate neighborhood — the local Baptist church, the local Presbyterian church, etc. So maybe the Baptist church is in unity, and the Presbyterian church is in unity, but the two are not in unity with each other. (But they're not in unity within the Baptist church either.)

Now I'm going to get back to the teaching...

By following their new King, Yahshua... Can we say *Yahshua*?

In the New American Standard Bible, a prominent Christian Bible, there's a page entitled, "Titles of Christ" — "The two most popular titles or names Christians use in speaking of our Lord are *Jesus*, a transliteration of the Hebrew word *Joshua*, which means "Yahweh is Salvation", and *Christ*, a transliteration of the Greek term *Christos*, meaning "Anointed One"...

So they're using Joshua, which is good. But Jesus is not a transliteration of any Hebrew word, but rather a transliteration of the Greek Iesous. If we could just get it across to Christians that Jesus is not a holy name. It couldn't be because back then they didn't have a J sound. Even in the Tyndale English New Testament in 1525 the form Iesu was generally used. The form Jesus didn't come in to common use until the 1600s. So what makes Jesus a sacred name?

Acts 26:14-15 — He heard a voice speaking to him in the Hebrew language, and he asked, "Who are you?" And so He said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting." Did He say Jesus or Yahshua? It says He spoke Hebrew. So are we going to have a great big explanation of His name in our paper? They may not notice if we just explain it in a little bitty box.

David Zerubbabel — If we could take things like this and put it down really simply without all the academic scholarly stuff, but just communicate the transient nature of that name, because their confidence is based on it. It's just another way to undermine that foundation that they're on, that they don't know is sand.

Kharash — We could spread it in several places throughout the paper...

David Yonah — Like boxes that say, "Did you know..." We can tell them about how *Jesus* and *Joshua* are the same name (*Iesous*) in the Greek (Heb 4:8; Acts 7:45).

Jn 5:43 shows why His name has to be *YAHshua*. My daddy's name was *Spriggs*, so I came in his name, so my name is... *Harvey Coxwell*? No, my name is Elbert *Spriggs*.

David Zerubbabel — Names people are familiar with are *Johnson*, which came from "John's son". The father's name is in the son's name.

Sho'er — "I have come in My Father's name and you do not accept Me, but if someone else comes in his own name, you will accept him."

So He comes in His Father's name. Name indicates ownership. If you come in your father's name, that shows that he *owns* you. A slave is owned by his master; he took on his master's name.

Yochanan — Slaves really took pride in taking identity with their master's name.

They gave their slaves so much responsibility and freedom. Slave owners are depicted as stupid people who beat their slaves all the time. But the only time they would ever get beaten is because they were disobedient, and then the other slaves would join in and say, "He deserved it because he's lazy and I had to do his work for him." We've got to teach it right to Châm, just like we've got to teach Jews about their curse so they can be saved.

Ok, let's get back to the teaching...

By following their new King, Yahshua, and serving Him night and day (Acts 26:7) where He lives (Jn 12:26)...

Sho'er — If you knew where He lived, wouldn't you want to live there?

this new Israel would establish their new society on the just words of the living God in a whole new way of relating to one another. This new Israelite culture... When we say *Israel* people always think about Palestine. We need to explain what *Israel* means.

Kharash — If we can get them to see that it's a way of life as opposed to a political entity that would really be something, because that's what it means to us — it's a culture. It is not based on bombs and missiles and holy places and soaking money off the Christian tourists.

Yes, write that down!

This new Israelite culture was distinct from all other religions (Mal 3:18). This outward distinctiveness was a sign that this new culture was set apart for God's eternal purpose in creation. Jn 13:35 speaks of the *only ones* who belong to this new society (social order) of love...

(When we talk about this we better be true to our words. Our Master said if we love one another the *whole world* will know we are His disciples. Now is that going to be true or not?)

Love was the distinctive sign of their belonging to Him (like one belongs to a master) who had redeemed them... (Maybe we need to have a little box that says what *redeemed* means.)

... from the perverse generation (Acts 2:40).

The word *perverse* generation isn't meant in a general sense there, but goes back to Acts 2:36 — those who crucified Messiah. We can still apply it to today's society, which would have crucified Him also, and will want to crucify us.

The twelve-tribed nation was (is) a brand new society, a new social order, including economically, with its economic structure (Acts 2:44-45; 4:32-35), and family life, ethic, etc., which reflected their allegiance to Him, while the nations in which they lived, who worshipped other (strange) deities (like *Jesus*) with their numerous shrines located on every corner (Eze 16:24-25)...

David Yonah — At that point we should have a footnote leading them to the article, "What is a Cult?"

(We could put draw a little box there and put the shrines on every corner and quote Eze 16:24-25.)

True Israel worshipped the one God in one way in every place where He had caused His name to dwell...

Mal 1:11; Dt 12:5,11,14 — We have to apply these verses in Deuteronomy in the context of the prophesy of Malachi. In old Israel there was only the physical temple, but in the new Israel that Mal 1:11 looks forward to there are *places* (1 Tim 2:8) where He causes His name to dwell. But it can't be any place you choose.

The goal is Isa 49:6,8 (Acts 26:6-8; Heb 10:13; Acts 3:21; Rom 11:12-15; Rev 11:15; 20:1-2). This could not be talking about old Israel at all, because it is speaking of taking salvation to the ends of the earth (Mt 24:14).

The God of Abraham expected this new nation in their new culture to live responsibly in a culture unlike any that had ever existed before or would thereafter. This would bring about the end of the age (Mt 24:14, bear witness of the truth; Jn 18:37).

This is very important, talking about the very end of this age. You can see it right in Rev 5:9 — the culture. This is getting to the point of multiculturalism and how it can only happen *in Messiah* where the barriers are broken down in a new culture.

Rev 5:9 — We're going to bring that same culture that we've experienced in the Body of Messiah into the next age. We're bringing in a foretaste of the age to come; we're harbingers of the next age. We've come from every nation into a royal priesthood, no longer the multiculturalism of the perverse society (Acts 2:40) that we have been called out of — division, animosity, bitterness, rivalry, jealousy, envy, strife, murder, and every sin in the world.

Kharash — People learn who they are from their families, who draw from their tribes, who draw from their nation

You strip that away from them in the name of ending conflict and you strip away their *identity*. They no longer know who they are, so of course they're going to be immoral, violent, worthless, and obese, sitting behind their computer screens because they have no culture. It's not rich; it's robbery.

We have to make sure we're not still multicultural. We've denied our culture we picked up in the world and we all have one brand new culture. We're together now.

In this new culture we have a distinctive look with distinctive composure, distinctive countenance. What would a person look like, and what would his community look like where God lives? In what ways ought we to be distinctive? Our houses, our yards, how we keep the Sabbath, how we eat and don't eat, how we relate to one another, our clothing. We touch no unclean thing (2 Cor 6:17-18). Our life is marked by practicality and functionality.

When I was in Island Pond and saw what people were doing in giving up their houses, farms, businesses, etc., I understood Mk 10:29-30. Gene Sage was going to get 100 farms for the farm he gave up. And those who gave up houses would get 100 houses. And all the people who gave their parents up to be a disciple, their relatives and friends, they're going to live in those houses. I saw that a nation was being developed. What else could our Master have been saying? He was talking about a brand new culture.

What does a culture consist of? Behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, thoughts, the work of our hands, activities that express our life and works developed through training and education, enlightenment (revelation), excellence of taste acquired by training our children, integrating our culture into them from birth.

Can we say that we want to create a cultural shock? Can we present a cultural shock to the people who we live in the midst of? We've got to be Messiah here on earth. If we knew who we were, we *are* Messiah (1 Cor 12:12). Where is the "Messiah" this verse is talking about? In heaven somewhere? NO! He's here on earth, embodied in us.

So if we really are who we say we are, and we pass it on to our children, then we can know it (we really don't know it yet). Then it's going to be just like Him being here on earth, and it will present a cultural shock (Isa 52:15, it's *startle*, not *sprinkle*). It will cause kings to shut their mouths. In Sus, France, when they came in there and talked to our children, it shut their mouths.

Yochanan — They came to do something, and they went out weeping.

We have to present a cultural shock to all of our neighbors who observe our life (1 Pet 2:12). They see us obeying the government, the laws that don't violate our conscience or the Scriptures. Dt 12:5-7 is the culture of old Israel as it carries over into the new Israel (Mt 21:43).

Ps 122 — Where is Jerusalem? All our lives we were told to pray for the peace of Jerusalem, and they're fighting over there, killing each other, murdering the Palestinians. We need to pay for *our* peace. This psalm applies to us in every place, the morning and evening minchot, the festivals in the designated places.

Everywhere we have our festivals don't think there won't be a household there taking care of that festival grounds and that will be a place where our Father lives, not just a desolate piece of property that we go to every once in a while. Dt 12:5,11,14 applies to the new dwelling place in His people, in every place where His name dwells. A name implies ownership (1 Pet 2:10). If they seize our property (Heb 10:34) we're taught to joyfully receive it. If our Father isn't keeping us there, then we don't want to be there, and we know He has something better for us.

Dt 12:7,18 — Eat and rejoice like it says in Acts 2:46, in every place. Dt 15:4,11 — There shall be no poor (needy) among you (Act 4:34), *because* you shall freely open your hand to your brother (1 Jn 3:17).

This happens in a designated place, not your little "four and no more" household. This negates the privacy of your own home, as the Jews (and Christians) of today in their apostate religion. The keeping of the feasts is a national, community celebration, not in the privacy of your own home.

Dt 14:2 — For you are a holy people to the Yahweh your God, and the Yahweh has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth." That's amazing, isn't it? It really shows us who we are as His special people (1 Pet 2:4-10). Then it goes on into their (our) culture: "You shall not eat any detestable thing..." He dwells in us, so He wants us to be careful what we put into our bodies.

Right now Gen 18:19 is being fulfilled by the new Israel of Mt 21:43 in order to bring about Gen 12:1-3. Jn 8:39 — Did old Israel fulfill Gen 18:19? Did they do what Abraham did? No, so they're not the seed of Abraham. Even though that nation of Mt 21:43 declined, there has to be a restoration; that's what Mk 9:12 means. It is being restored at this present time. The fire of Lk 12:49 is being rekindled. The preparation has ended; the task has begun, the nation is about to be born and the race will begin.

Isa 49:6 is the restoration of Mt 21:43. What time of history will this happen? In the days of Dan 2:28 — in the latter days, the days of the ten kings of Dan 2:44 and 7:24 and Rev 17:12.

The purpose of Israel is given to another people, but Dan 2:44 says it will not be given to another people. Put those two together: Mt 21:43 and Dan 2:44. So if we're that people, and it won't be given to another people, then even though we have hardship, trouble, financial problems, persecution, and everything else, we're going

to endure to the end, right? If we have faith.

We are to express His life in us to the world in order for the blessing or the curse to come upon them (Gen 12:3).

(This gives us rest when we're intimidated to walk up to someone and talk to him. I've got to know that if he receives me, he'll be blessed.) Israel is set apart from the world, chosen to carry out Isa 53:10-11. (His suffering will be equaled by His pleasure.)

Holy means separate, distinct, having a distinct culture. If we don't have a distinct culture, we're not the Holy.

Only one nation on earth is called *the chosen people*. God promised Abraham that he would be the father of a great nation that would bless all people. It will depend on how they view this holy nation, what angel they listen to. Our presence will separate people according to Lk 12:51-53.

Israel is dedicated to *only* God's purpose. (We're not dedicated to making the world a better place to live.) Mt 5:13-16 — You are a distinct culture, a city on a hill. Our Master was saying it's unavoidable that they will see us. They will not be *able* not to see us. That's why it will be just for Him to judge the world.

Do we obey Mt 5:11-12?