

Paradigm Shift, Part 1

We use the term *paradigm shift* as if everyone knows what we're talking about, but they don't. It has to do with 1 Ths 2:14 (*quoted below*). A *paradigm* is an example or a model that you pattern something after. Paul knew how the communities were in Judea because he had been persecuting them, so he saw how they lived. He saw their togetherness. And every time he saw that, he had to kick against the goad of his conscience to keep on persecuting them. But he still carried out what he was sent to do by the council. So he saw the pattern or example of the original communities.

We're to bring that pattern back. Since the first church existed there has been a paradigm shift. There is no longer the example of the first Edah, the witness of the Kingdom. It shifted to Christianity, and that is the pattern that people model churches after. There was a *paradigm shift*, a shift to another foundation. That first pattern had vanished from the face of the earth — the reality of a people having partaken of divine nature (2 Pet 2:1). Together we're partakers of the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. Therefore we can now be that example.

For you, brothers, became imitators of the churches of God in Messiah Yahshua that are in Judea. For you suffered the same things from your own countrymen, as they did from the Jews, who killed both the Sovereign Yahshua and the prophets, and drove us out, and displease God and oppose all mankind by hindering us from speaking to the Gentiles that they might be saved... (1 Ths 2:14-16a)

That same thing almost happened to us in Chattanooga thirty years ago. Christianity now takes the place of first-century Judaism in a lot of ways.

The Thessalonians were *imitators* of the model or example set by the churches of Judea. So, who did Paul model his churches after? The ones in Judea; he knew how they lived because he had persecuted them. We have to understand that. We need to write about that paradigm shift for Christians. Should we model our churches after Christianity or Catholicism? Shall we build a big cathedral?

David Zerubbabel — That’s what the churches of the Reformation did. They patterned themselves after the Roman Catholic churches.

They didn’t go back to the original pattern.

Chazaq — 2 Ths 2:14 seems to go along with 1 Ths 2:14 —

To this he called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Sovereign Yahshua ha Meshiyach. So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by our spoken word or by our letter. (2 Ths 2:14-15)

Soreph Gamaliel — That’s how we avoid the rest of the problems.

Mevaser Malak — I’m so thankful that our Father has brought us back to the original pattern, the paradigm of how the Edah is supposed to be. Once you have the pattern, then you can make many things the same way. Our Father has really been working on us to get the foundation built.

We talk about some of these big mega-churches in Christianity. They’re following the pattern or paradigm of stadium sports events. It’s something that men have always liked to do. So now they take the same paradigm and model the church after that. Maybe that appeals more to the men, because the way it was before, they would say, “There’s nothing to do. I’m saved for eternal life, but I’m bored to death sitting here.”

But in the Body of Messiah, there’s something for all of us to do. If we were in Christianity, there’d be nothing to do. Most of us would have nothing to do with that, but here, in the Body of Messiah, everyone has something to do. We can’t take it for granted that our Father has given us that pattern in 1 Ths 2:14. It’s amazing.

We work in the café twelve hours a day, sometimes more, as we did in the beginning. It’s amazing. What else can we do? At home we’re with our brothers and sisters continually, and in the café we’re with our brothers and sisters, so it doesn’t matter where we are or how long we stay there, just as long as we get a little sleep. We’re with our brothers and sisters all day long. That’s *life!* What else would you want to do except be with your brothers and sisters, work beside them, and love one another?

It’s a wonderful life we have, wherever we are, whatever we’re doing. You might think, “Well, I just work here in the kitchen, all day long.” But, what else are you going to do, go on a vacation? That’s what we live for — being together serving our Master.

ha-êmeq — There was a man who came into the Deli quite late, and he was obviously going to study upstairs. He said his major course was comparative religion. I asked him, “Would you consider yourself a believer in the Christian faith?”

And he said, “Oh, yes, I am. But I’m just trying to decide what I’m going to do my thesis on.”

I said, “I have an idea for you!”

“Really?”

“Yes, you could do your thesis on comparing the way the church was in the beginning to what it became afterwards through the course of history.”

He said, “That is really interesting; I have wondered about that.”

I said, “Yes, if you can look in history, and do it without offending your pastors and all those people around you, you’ll find out something so incredible. How did it switch from being the way it was, the church that Peter and the apostles established, to being something else entirely? In the beginning they were together all the time; they were a community.”

He said, “Yes, I’ve considered that.” He was a young, really smart-looking person with all those books. You could see something coming over him. He said, “I’ve got to get busy now,” and he ran upstairs!

It’s just planting seeds to get people to think about those verses that people don’t usually consider, like Acts 2:44, comparing it to Jn 3:16. It’s so amazing when a thinking person discovers the paradigm shift. It could be an amazing paper he’s going to write. We’ll see.

All Christians know Jn 3:16; it’s their favorite verse in the Bible. But then you have to compare it with Acts 2:44. All who *believe* have eternal life, and all who *believe* live together and have all things in common. They shared everything they had. They were obedient to the gospel. They were disciples. Unless you give up all your own possessions, you’re not His disciple (Lk 14:33). It is *all your possessions* that *all who believe* share, not just *some*. It reaches all the way through history down to us — *all who now believe*. If we truly believe and we’ve been baptized by the Holy Spirit into the Body of Messiah, then the Body now follows the same paradigm as in the first century.

Soreph Gamaliel — What that young man will find, if he’s sincere, is that underneath the paradigm shift was a shift in the underlying view of reality.

A paradigm is a theory of how things work. When that changes, anyone who speaks up for the old paradigm is socially ostracized, ridiculed, or ignored. In fact, they're laughed at because the old paradigm is dead.

But Christianity found it inadequate to simply laugh at those who yearned for the old paradigm. They actually physically persecuted them because they could not allow anyone alive to say, "Brothers, this must not be. Your view of reality is not from God." Christians were saying that just going to church, building cathedrals, supporting the emperor, and going to war were all things God wanted them to do. There was a shift so profound and complete that now people can hardly see it.

The shift was from community life to doctrine. Acts 11:26 says they were first called *Christians* in Antioch. It would seem that after awhile they started to call themselves by the same name that the world called them — *Christians*. It was a term of ridicule, making fun of them. After awhile, people started coming in to the church and brought that name in because that was what they were *called*. So they started calling themselves *Christians*.

It was never supposed to be that a disciple would call himself a Christian. Disciples called themselves *followers of the Way*, not Christians. We were chosen to keep *the Way of Yahweh*, doing righteousness and justice. Then our Father could bring about what He promised Abraham. That's why they were called *the Way* — the way our Father would fulfill the promise to Abraham, to give him an enemy-free land. The descendants of Abraham would be like the dust of the earth. He's got to fulfill that promise. The dust of the earth is finer than sand. We're going to be multiplied. We have to be.

David Zerubbabel — That's another way of defining the word *paradigm*. A paradigm is a *way to be*. Acts 2:44 was *the Way*. That was the paradigm. They got off the way and went a different way.

When they left their first love, that's when it started happening. Then the lampstand was taken out of every place.

Let's pray that we can write a paper that will speak to many Christians and start an underground.