

Miqra - The Church That Jesus Promised To Build

THE CHURCH THAT JESUS PROMISED TO BUILD

by Sidney Davis

"Upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Matthew 16:18

Do you know what "church" that is built upon the rock? It is the church "built upon the foundation of the apostles and the prophets... fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord... builded together .for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph.2:20-22). Do you belong to the church that Jesus is building or to the one that man has been building over the ages of church history? Has the church departed from the original intent of its founder, Jesus Christ? What was the original intent of Jesus for his church. These are interesting questions that must be answered. After having been exposed to Greek and Hebrew, I realized that it was very important to have the "correct" meaning for every word in the Bible. I pondered what the words of our Bible meant to the people who originally wrote or spoke them. Since I have always been an inquisitive person, I just had to look for the answers to the questions the Lord, through intensive study, led me to. I invite you to accompany me in my search for "truth" which will be ever unfolding until the "day of the Lord".

The concept of the "church" is one that has been continually developing over many centuries and has seen little agreement as to the above questions concerning Jesus' intent for the church. Today there are numerous conflicts over the true meaning of what the "church" should be. There are so many churches in the world today, how do we know what church it is today that Christ I building? To arrive at the true church as God would have it we must be bold in exposing myths to arrive at the truth. Teshuva - a returning unto God is what is needed among the people of God today. Repentance from the inherited error and falsehood of a decadent, lifeless and backslidden theology is the order of the day! The word "church" comes for the Old English word "kirke", meaning a "circle", especially a circle formed in pagan ritualistic worship! In almost every English translation of the Bible, the word "church" is used for the Greek word "ekklesia". "Ekklesia" is made up of two words: "ek" meaning "out of, and "klesis" meaning "a calling". Thus you can easily see that the church is to be understood as people "called out of something". What are we to be called out from? Paul the apostle to the Gentiles in I Thess. 1:9 teaches that the Gentiles, are "called out" of paganism in order to "turn to God from idols to serve the living and true God". Thus, in the English Bible, when we encounter the word "church", it should be translated "the called out" or "the called out ones". The word "church" does not just mean an "assembly" as it has come to mean in today's language and experience. When any of the New Testament writers used the word "church" they spoke of "The Ekklesia", a people called out of the world by God, to be holy unto Him in some specific way. God desired we be "holy" which means "sanctified, different, apart from the norm". If we are to gather as a group of people to just eat together, have meetings together, or have services together, are we manifesting the intent of Jesus when he called us out of our darkness into the light of God's will for our lives? Hardly not! If such a simple and important foundational concept can be lost due to mistranslation, how much other truths have we lost along the 1900 years of church tradition? The answer to this question will boggle your mind as truth continues to boggle the assumptions and misconceptions of many who have been indoctrinated into a heavily biased anti-Judaic theology. How easily can the identity of what Jesus desired to be built be transformed into a structure that Jesus can barely recognize today.

Once you realize that Yeshua (the Hebrew name for Jesus) never used the word "church" in the manner as you have come to understand, what did he intend it to both be and do? We must reexamine the tradition of the "church" as it relates to the true people of God. We must never forget that the Hebrew Scriptures were translated into the Greek for the Greek speaking Gentiles that were later to come to the faith in the One true God of Israel. The Septuagint is the "Tanakh", or the Jewish Old Testament, which was translated from the original Hebrew to the ancient Greek language by 70 rabbis before days of what many call the New Testament era.

By the time of Yeshua (Jesus), the Septuagint was widely available for study throughout the Hellenistic (Greek speaking and influenced) world. Correct understanding of the Septuagint is very important because it is more than just a translation. It is actually an interpretation of the Hebrew Scriptures and Hebrew concepts, into the Greek language and it serves as a linguistic bridge between the Old Testament, which was written in Hebrew, and the New Testament, much of which was originally written in Hebrew, and later translated into Greek for the Greek speaking Gentiles.

The form of the word "ekklesia" is found in the Septuagint. It is translated from the original Hebrew word "Miqra", which also means "called out". "Miqra" is used 22 times in the Old Testament. Surprisingly, in each case it refers to the holy convocation (gathering, assembly) of Israel, the people of God, as they hear and obey the call to attend a feast and festival celebration (Ex. 12:16). Understand, that before Jesus came, the Jewish mind (the mind of Christ is a Jewish mind) understood that the "Miqra" (called out to celebrate the Festivals of the Lord) and the "Ekklesia" (just called out) are one-in-the same concept. The Hebrew is specific, the Greek ambiguous. Remember, Jesus is a Jew, and to him it meant to be called out to celebrate the Festivals of the Lord. When we translate from the Hebrew into the Greek the concepts should not change. But it is impossible when translating from the Hebrew not to give an interpretation of what it is the Hebrew words themselves refer to. Laws of Hermeneutics (interpretation) demand that each word, when translated, refer to the same concept identically, and in this case, the ones being called out are called out for a specific purpose; to celebrate the Feasts and Festivals of Israel! That should astound you! Why? Because what we are doing here is identifying the "Church" that Jesus is building. This truth alone should in fact, while we are hearing it should by its coming into our consciousness, by its coming into our knowledge force us to seriously reevaluate our obedience before God. To celebrate the Festivals of the Lord is not just the experience of the church, but it is what the church by its very nature is to do, becoming the habitation of God through the Spirit. The church today is God's Tabernacle of the congregation (mo'ed) in which He calls us out to fellowship with Him on earth together with the redeemed who worship Him now in the heavens in the Sanctuary above. Do you know the intent and purpose, as taught by Jesus, to celebrate the Festivals of the Lord? When was the last time your church celebrated Passover, Unleavened Bread, First Fruits, Pentecost, Rosh HaShannah, Festival of Trumpets, Day of Atonement, Tabernacles, let alone all the minor feasts?

If this was the sole purpose for Jesus calling believers out from Paganism (to celebrate the Festivals of the Lord which speak of God's Messiah instead of pagan holidays which have become entrenched in our Christian churches of today), I wonder what Jesus feels about the church today that has so terribly disobeyed his command? Have you ever tried to build a "house" without following the architect's plans? What would the finished product look like? Would the architect (Jesus) even recognize the "house" when it was completed? What would the architect feel or say when confronted with His house that was a misrepresentation of what His heart had intended all along?

Would Jesus even recognize the intent behind all the hay, wood, and stubble that men have used during 1900 years of "church history" in building the houses of God we see .-today? Would Jesus recognize the "church today" as the "Miqra" of God? No he would not!

Can The Church Be The Israel Of God And Defy Its Maker?

One may reason that since church is from Ekklesia, and Ekklesia is from Miqra, and Miqra is the called out of Israel, that the church of today is the Israel of God. Sounds good, but where is the original intent of the builder? We are called out for the express purpose to celebrate the Festivals of the Lord, not just to meet together to eat, have meetings to establish programs, to worship. All this is important, but is wasted energy if we fail to understand the original intent of the architect (Jesus). Our purpose is to meet to celebrate the Festivals and Feasts of the Lord. Without obedience to the master builder, Jesus, our purpose is "man centered", and not "God centered". Will the church ever study and wake up to the reality that we find in God and His Word? Some have, and many more will as we come to the truth of the words of the Bible. Jesus said "I will build my assembly of called out ones (Ekklesia) and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matt. 16:18). For a real treat, look up the real word used for "hell" in this verse. You will be really surprised to find that "hades" does not mean "hell" as you have been told. Call me when you find out and lets discuss it. Now back to the matter at hand. The Lord called His people to attend His holy feasts. Those that attended the festivals and feasts are the true "Miqra" or "Ekklesia" of God. To do other-wise is to give your support to a poor copy of the original plans of God. This is the Hebraic and Jewish concept which Yeshua meant when He said, "I will build My Ekklesia." Yeshua was stating that He was going to build a gathering called out to celebrate His feasts. An assembly of people were to be formed who would celebrate the revelation of Him in the appointed feasts of Israel. But that is not news to you, or is it? What has prevented your church from teaching this 10 you before now? God never intended that His Ekklesia was to be a group of people divorced from the Hebraic and Jewish concepts of Miqra. The Miqra, or "called out one" who celebrate the Festivals in obedience to Yeshua, are always people who are to be linked to Israel, and not to the early Catholic Church, her Catholic Fathers, to Luther, Aquinas, Augustine, or to Calvin, or to the Charismatic movement of Today. We are grafted into Israel, and Israel is not grafted into the Protestant church of today!

Middle Wall Of Partition Removed Or Not?

God never intended to have a Gentile church separated from the Hebraic church. Remember the first church that Jesus said he would build was a Hebraic church and it existed for thirty years before any Gentile was admitted into the membership! Ask yourself why Jesus did not give the plans for his church to Gentiles and not Jews? Romans 9:4 tells us that it was Israel (Jews) who has been given "adoption, the glory, the covenants, the Torah (Law), and the service of God." The word for "service" is "avodah" in Hebrew. "Avodah" means worship; thus Israel was given the plans for worship of God; and this included worshipping God through the Festivals. That should tell you something. God never had two separate people. The middle wall of partition is destroyed today. God wants to make one holy people. This holy (separate) people resides in Israel. Rabbi Sha'ul (Paul) said, that the gentiles . who trust in Yeshua's message are grafted into the tree of Israel (Rom. 11:17). Once grafted in, they all. Jews and non-Jews, are called together to feast on the Lord as we participate in the Festivals of the Lord. Only when the Jewish people, together with spiritual Jews (Gentile believers), accept the call to become one Israel, will God's Ekklesia and Miqra be realized. Then, and

only then will the "gates of hell" not be able to prevail against it? Are you still wondering why our churches are lifeless and spiritless? Let me ask you, have you not wondered why you have not gotten more out of your church experience than you have? Let me say that we can begin by looking at the conspicuous absence in the church of the Feasts of the Lord that have been substituted by man made feasts and festivals of the Christian church. God never intended for Jews to convert into a Gentile "church", but the opposite; Gentiles convert into a Hebrew church! We have missed the mark 180 degrees! No wonder we go to church and leave asking "is that all there is"? No, there is lots more, but only when we restructure the church in the Hebraic fashion that God originally intended. Celebration of the festivals with Messiah Yeshua must be the focus of what the church is all about. It Time To Tell Others: This truth has been hidden for centuries. Yeshua full well understood what he was saying in Matt. 16:18; it is us who have misunderstood. His audience that day were Jews who understood His message. It is the Gentiles who have failed to understand. The original understanding has been lost to the Gentile church because of its non-Biblical traditions that make the Word of God of non effect. It is time for Gentile Christianity to regain the original intention of the Word of God concerning Ekklesia and Miqra. This will only happen when you decide to love the Word of God more than your Gentile theologies and traditions, especially when your tradition conflicts with the Word of God. Who is right, God or your anti-Judaic, anti-Semitic doctrinally inspired church commentaries or schools of theology? Who wrote the Bible; God or your church? I will accept God's opinion over the church every time. Let us never again claim we are the church of Jesus Christ if we do not accept Jesus' definition of what the church is to both do and be. It is not too late to let God build you as His Miqra. Shalom!

APPENDIX

04744 Miqra {niik-iaw' |

from 07121; TWOT - 2063d; n m

'• AV - convocation 19, assemblies 2. calling ! reading

1) convocation, convoking, reading, a calling together

1 a) convocation, sacred assembly

1 b) convoking

1 c) reading

Ex 12:16 And in the first <07223> day <03117> there shall be an holy <06944> convocation (miqra)<04744>, and in the seventh <07637> day <03117> there shall be an holy <06944> convocation (miqra)<04744> to you; no manner of work <04399> shall be done <06213> (8735) in them, save <0389> that which every man <05315> must eat <0398> (8735), that only may be done <06213> (8735) of you.

Le 23:2 Speak <01696> (8761) unto the children <01121> of Israel <03478>, and say <0559> (8804) unto them. Concerning the feasts <04 150> of the LORD <03068>, which ye shall proclaim <07121> (8799) to be holy <06944> convocations (miqra)<04744>, even these are my feasts <04150>.

Le 23:3 Six <08337> days <03 1 17> shall work <04399> be done <06213> (8735): but the seventh <07637> day <03117> is the sabbath <07676> of rest <07677>, an holy <06944> convocation (miqra) <04744> ye shall do <06213> (8799) no work <04399> therein: it is the sabbath <07676> of the LORD <03068> in all your dwellings <04186>

Le 23:4 These are the feasts <04150> of the LORD <03068> even holy <06944> convocations (miqra) <04744> which ye shall proclaim <07121> (8799) in their seasons <04150>

Le 23:7 In the first <07223> day <03 117> ye shall have an holy convocation (miqra) <04744> ye shall do <06213> (8799) no servile <05656> work <04399> therein

Le 23:8 But ye shall offer <07126> (8689) an offering made by fire <0801> unto the LORD <03068> seven <07651> days <03117>: in the seventh <07637> day <03117> is an holy <06944> convocation (miqra) <04744>; ye shall do <06213> (8799) no servile <05656> work <04399> therein.

Le 23:21 And ye shall proclaim <07121> (8804) on the selfsame <06106> day <03117>, that it may be an holy <06944> convocation (miqra)<04744> unto you: ye shall do <06213> (8799) no servile <05656> work <04399> therein: it shall be a statute <02708> for ever <05769> in all your dwellings <04186> throughout your generations <01755>.

Le 23:24 Speak <01696> (8761) unto the children <01 121> of Israel - 03478>, saying <0559> (8800), In the seventh <07637> month <02320>. in the first <0259> day of the month <02320>. shall ye have a sabbath <07677>, a memorial <02146> of blowing <08643> of trumpets, an holy <06944> convocation (miqra)<04744>.

Le 23:27 Also <0389> on the tenth <06218> day of this seventh <07637 > month <02320> there shall be a day <031 17> of atonement <03725>: it shall be an holy <06944> convocation (miqra)<04744> unto you; and ye shall afflict <06031> (8765) your souls <05315>, and offer <07126> (8689) an offering made by fire <0801> unto the LORD <03068>.

Le 23:35 On the first <07223> day <03117> shall be an holy <06944> convocation (miqra) <04744>: ye shall do <06213> (8799) no servile <05656> work <04399> therein.'

Le 23:36 Seven <07651> days <03117> ye shall offer <07126> (8689) an offering made by fire <0801> unto the LORD <03068>: on the eighth <08066> day <03117> shall be an holy <06944> convocation (miqra) <04744> unto you and ye shall offer <07126> (8686) an offering made by fire <0801> unto the LORD <03068>: it is a solemn assembly <06116>; and ye shall do <06213> (8799) no servile <05656> work <04399> therein.

Le 23:37 These are the feasts <04150> of the LORD <03068>, which ye shall proclaim <07121>'(8799) to be holy <06944> convocations (miqra)<04744>, to offer <07126> (8687) an offering made by fire <0801> unto the LORD <03068> a burnt offering <05930>, and a meat offering <04503>. a sacrifice <02077>, and drink offerings <05262>, everything <01697> upon his <03117> day <03117>

Nu 10:2 Make <06213> (8798) thee two <08147> trumpets «32689) of silver <03701>; of a whole piece <04749> shall thou make <06213> (8799) them: that thou mayest use <01961> (8804) them for the calling (miqra)<04744> of the assembly <05712>, and for the journeying <04550> of the camps <04264>.

Nu 28:18 In the first <07223> day <03117> shall be an holy <06944> convocation (iniqra)<04744>; ye shall do <06213> (8799) no manner of servile <05656> work <04399> (herein:

Nu 28:25 And on the seventh <07637> day <03117> ye shall have an holy <06944> convocation (miqni)<04744>; ye shall do <06213> (8799) no servile <05656> work <04399>.

Nu 28:26 Also in the day <03117> of the firstfruits <01061>, when ye bring <07126> (8687) a new <02319> meat offering <04503> unto the LORD <03068>, after your weeks <07620> be out, ye shall have an holy <06944> convocation (miqra)<04744>; ye shall do <06213> (8799) no servile <05656> work <04399>:

Nu 29:1 TI And in the seventh <07637> month <02320>, on the first <0259> day of the month <02320>, ye shall have an holy <06944> convocation (miqra)<04744>; ye shall do <06213> (8799) no servile <05656> work <04399>: it is a day <03117> of blowing <08643> the trumpets unto you.

Nu 29:7 And ye shall have on the tenth <06218> day Of this seventh <07637> month <02320> an holy <06944> convocation(miqra)<04744>; and ye shall afflict <06031> (8765) your souls <05315>: ye shall not do <06213> (8799) any work <04399> therein:

Nu 29:12 And on the fifteenth <02568> <06240> day <03117> of the seventh <07637> month <02320> ye shall have an holy <06944> convocation (miqra)<04744>; ye shall do <06213> (8799) no servile <05656> work <04399>, and ye shall keep <02287> (8804) a feast <02282> unto the LORD <03068> seven <07651> days <03117>:

Ne 8:8 So they read <07121> (8799) in the book <05612> in the law <08451> of God <0430> distinctly <06567> (8794), and gave <07760> (8800) the sense <07922>, and caused them to understand <0995> (8799) the reading (miqra)<04744>.

Isa 1:13 Bring <0935> (8687) no more <03254> (8686) vain <07723> oblations <04503>; incense <07004> is an abomination <08441> unto me; the new moons <02320> and sabbaths <07676>, the calling <07121> (8800) of assemblies (miqra)<04744>, I cannot away with <03201> (8799); It is iniquity <0205>, even the solemn meeting <06116>.

Isa 4:5 And the LORD <03068> will create <01254> (8804) upon every dwelling place <04349> of mount <02022> Zion <06726>, and upon her assemblies (miqra)<04744> a cloud <06051> and smoke <06227> by day <03119>, and the shining <05051> of a flaming <03852> fire <0784> by night <03915>: for upon all the glory <03519> shall be a defence <02646>.