

108 Worship in the Early Church--Part 2

I. Worship among the Jewish Followers of Jesus (Messianic Jews)

A. The Central Place of Worship in 30 AD –The Temple Mount

When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house (building) where they were sitting. (Acts 2:1,2) And at this sound the multitude came together, (Acts 2:6) There were added that day about three thousand souls. (Acts 2:41) Every day they continued to meet together in the Temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts. (2:46 NIV)

Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour. And a man lame from birth was being carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple that is called the Beautiful Gate to ask alms of those entering the temple. (Acts 3:1,2) While he clung to Peter and John, all the people, utterly astounded, ran together to them in the portico called Solomon's. (Acts 3:11) And they were all together in Solomon's Portico. None of the rest dared join them (Acts 5:12,13)

B. Thirty years later [60 AD] *You see, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews of those who have believed. They are all zealous for the law, (Acts 21:20)*

C. Ten years later in 70 AD, once again with the destruction of the Temple all communal ceremonial worship in Jerusalem stops and not just for 70 years. How did and do they cope with it? Micah 6:6-8 and Isaiah 1:11-17 are the justification used by present-day Judaism.

D. By the end of the 1st century (30 years later) –no trace of Messianic congregations.

II. Worship among Gentile Christian Congregations

A. During the first century they met in private homes. *And the church that meets in their house Romans 16:5 Give my greeting to Nympha and the church in her house Col. 4:15 To Archippus and to the church that meets in your home Philemon 2*

B. Men and women met together in the same room.. 1 Corin. 14

C. Women had an important place in the early church. Romans 16:1 Phoebe was a deaconess. Priscilla was Paul's fellow worker. Her name usually appears first. Romans 16:3

D. Worship services consisted of several messages or testimonies. 1 Corin. 14

E. In the synagogues men had to have their heads covered for worship. Women were excluded from the group. They were spectators, not participants. In the assemblies of believers the men came with uncovered heads but the women had their heads covered. 1 Corin. 11:4-7, 10

F. Jews met for worship on the Sabbath (Saturday). Christians began to meet on the first day of the week ,the Lord's day, Sunday. Acts 20:7, 1 Corin. 16:2 and Rev. 1:10.

G. The Roman government considered the Christians as a Jewish sect. Paul and the new believers wanted to show that this was not the case.