

House of Yahweh

By Philip Arnn

Founder: Buffalo Bill Hawkins.

Founding Date: December 2, 1980.

Official Publications: The *Prophetic Word* magazine, plus numerous books and booklets.

HISTORY

1950s: Buffalo Bill Hawkins was named by his older brother after a famous cowboy star. He was one of nine children born to an Oklahoma family. Hawkins and his brother J.G., later to be called Jacob, entered the religious arena with a radio broadcast in the early 1950's out of Eastland, Texas. The broadcast was called *The Question and Answer Program*. The subject matter was Bible Prophecy and Mosaic Law of the Old Testament.

Hawkins purports to have had a recurring dream which has directed the course of his life:

From memory, I think it was about 1951 that I had my FIRST DREAM that my brother Yaaqob and I were the Two Witnesses spoken of in Revelation Chapter 11. My dream went something like this: I knocked on the door of a WHITE HOUSE next to a sanctuary. My brother answered the door, and I asked him, 'Are you ready to go to Israyl and do what we have been called to do?'¹

1969 J.G. Hawkins accepted the dream as divine direction. He actually did immigrate to Israel with his family and two other couples. It was at this time that he began calling himself Jacob or Yaaqob. While in Israel Yaaqob heard of an archaeological discovery of a door mantel with the Hebrew title, "BAYIT YHWH" (House of Yahweh). Both brothers believed this to be the true name of God's true work.

1975 Yaaqob Hawkins returned home to the United States. He settled in Odessa, Texas and began what became the House of Yahweh Odessa. The two brothers, however, divided over the issue of the true name of the Creator. Yaaqob chose to use the title Elohim. Bill disagreed, stating that Elohim was the title for pagan deities. On December 2, 1980, he dedicated the House of Yahweh Abilene.

1982 Buffalo Bill Hawkins had his name legally changed to Yisrayl Hawkins.² The name change enable Yisrayl Hawkins to claim the mantle of prophetic authority as the spokesman for the Two Witnesses of Revelation Chapter 11. Upon Yaaqob's return from Israel in 1975, Yisrayl claimed to have had a third occurrence of his dream. In his third dream, he claimed there was a "TERRIBLE TRAGEDY" involving someone's death. Yisrayl now states this dream was prophetic of his brother's death on March 22, 1991.³

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DOCTRINE

Yisrayl Hawkins, the founder of the House of Yahweh Abilene, Texas, has built his movement on doctrinal themes which are not new to American religion. His theology is an eclectic blend of Sabbatarian, Sacred Name and Anglo-Israel teachings. His internal control over group members is classic authoritarian technique. Critical thinking or dissent is discouraged and controlled by equating rebellion against Hawkins as being rebellion against Yahweh. He represents himself as an end-time prophet who is spoken of in the Bible. He claims his work is the only true work on earth; that all other churches are part of Satan's last days' deception, and those seeking God or Yahweh and salvation can only find that salvation through The House of Yahweh. If a member leaves the group, they are leaving Yahweh and his salvation.

The Two Witnesses: Yisrayl Hawkins boldly claims that he and his late brother are prophesied in the Bible to be the two Witnesses whose ministry is set forth in Revelation Chapter 11:

Yahweh Himself has given this inspired Testimony to Isayah 44:5, showing exactly 'HOW' His Prophesied TWO WITNESSES would obtain NAMES which were not given to them at birth!...The prophecy has come to pass! One of Yahweh's Two Witnesses 'LEGALLY GAVE HIMSELF' the name of 'Yisrayl'...this Prophesied 'WAY' in which Yahweh's Two Witnesses would attain their Prophesied Name, is the most outstanding 'SIGN' Yahweh gives that these TWO MEN are HIS TWO WITNESSES!⁴

Authority of Christ: Hawkins boasts that his organization was ordained of God. He claims that his credentials and authority are equal with those of Christ:

Yahshua Messiah KNEW that He was sent, because He FULFILLED all the Scriptures concerning Himself. And The True Work of Yahweh: Established House of Yahweh - The Place of Yahweh has chosen to Establish His Name in These Last Days - has this SAME AUTHORITY, with the SAME CREDENTIAL.

Yes The House of Yahweh, Established in Abilene, Texas, is SPOKEN OF and WRITTEN ABOUT by the Prophets of Old! This Established House of Yahweh in These Last Days is doing the work that Yahshua Messiah and His Disciples - who were 'SENT' - did; the very same work! It is a Scriptural fact that unless Yahweh gives AUTHORITY to someone, by having SPOKEN ABOUT THEM THROUGH HIS HOLY SCRIPTURES, then that person is NOT SENT!⁵

Yes, Yahweh now has ONLY ONE WORK under His ONE REMAINING WITNESS Yisrayl - His Prophesied Spokesman who will continue to perform all The Will of Yahweh...Just as Yahshua Messiah came as a 'covenant to the people' in These Last Days (Isayah 49:8)."⁶

The Only Message of Salvation: Hawkins joins other self-proclaimed Apostles and Prophets -i.e., Herbert Armstrong, Jim Jones and David Koresh - who were the sole proprietors of God's only true salvation. Hawkins initiation ritual which bestows both salvation and admittance into the group, is water baptism. He teaches:

BAPTISM - The third step one must then take is to be Baptized by the CHOSEN MINISTERS of YAHWEH, so you may receive The Holy Spirit:...Please notice that you can NOT obtain The Holy Spirit of YAHWEH from the preachers of this world!⁷

The One Body of Messiah IS The House of Yahweh!...The Holy Scriptures say this...We are partakers with Yahshua - IF we are part of the Body of Messiah of the House of Yahweh. In Genesis 28:11-17, the Patriarch Yaaqob saw a vision of The House of Yahweh as the way to Yahweh's Kingdom. The House of Yahweh IS THE GAT OF HEAVEN!"IF we 'separate' form the One Body of Messiah: The House of

Yahweh, then we succumb to Satan, then at that very moment we become worshipers of Satan...of if one LEAVES The Body - The only Prophesied, Established Work that Yahweh Himself has chosen, then that one does NOT partake, or is NO LONGER a partaker, with the rest of The body of Messiah - The House of Yahweh.⁸

Early Prophecy: Hawkins has claimed that his authority and credentials are founded on his fulfillment of Bible prophecy: “Yahweh then says, Through Prophecy – ‘Let these TWO WITNESSES FORETELL the things that are coming, and let them PROCLAIM that I am ONE!’”⁹

The RAIN WILL SOON BE CUT OFF AGAIN, as it was in the days of Ylijah. This time, it will not rain for one thousand two hundred sixty days - but this soon-coming Time Period will BEGIN the LAST Seven Years of Satan’s rule upon the earth. This Seven Year Period is known as The Great Tribulation - and for the FIRST 1260 Days of this Period, there will be NO RAIN.¹⁰

In the middle of this Seven Years - in the Midst of This Week, or 3 1/2 Years after this week begins, Satan Is Cast TO THE EARTH, The Last Witness is KILLED by Satan, The seed of The Two Witnesses - The Sealed remnant are delivered to Mount Zion in Yerusalem. When Satan is Cast Out of heaven, his first act is to PERSECUTE The Woman which Brings Forth The Man! Through this PERSECUTION - Satan stops the Propheying of THE ONE WITNESS who is still alive at this time - BY KILLING HIM! It will be at this time that ‘his testimony’ will be perfectly accomplished (Revelation 11:7). However, in spite of this same persecution, ‘THIS WOMAN’ is taken to The Place of Safety!¹¹

Later Prophecy: By late 1994 Hawkins had altered his theology and was teaching that The House of Yahweh was already in “the midst” of Tribulation: He explained:

In order to understand what time period Yahweh is referring to when He says, ‘the midst,’ we will refer to Yahshua’s Message of the End Time - the Time Period known as: The Seven Years of Tribulation...Yahshua Messiah spoke of the FIRST PART of the Seven Year Period...(Matthew 24:7). Since the time of my brother Yaaqob’s death, March 22, 1991, wars have been raging not only in Israyl, but throughout the eastern world.”...”These things: WARS, FAMINES, PESTILENCES, and EARTHQUAKES are Prophesied to take place through the FIRST HALF of the Great Tribulation. But, the end is not yet! When the first three and one half years are complete, the LAST HALF of the Great Tribulation begins. Since the Feast of Tabernacles, September 22, 1994, my brother Yaaqob, the first witness to be killed by the Beastly System, will have been dead THREE AND ONE HALF YEARS.¹²

The hatred taking place at this time, just as we are APPROACHING THE MIDDLE of the Seven Year Time Period known as The Great Tribulation, is strong and is being openly displayed to the point that I am being betrayed to Unrighteous Lawyers and Judges...Those who rise up against me...have turned to judges of the Gods in order to try to destroy Yahweh’s work, just as they did to Yahshua.¹³

Hawkins now claims the world is in the middle of the Great Tribulation. He has not caused the rain to stop, neither has he been slain by a beast power, nor have his followers been taken to Israel. By his own criteria he is a false prophet.

Nature of God: Hawkins denies the Triune nature of the Godhead and the pre-existence of Christ: “Those who are False Prophets and Lying teachers ‘teach’ the false doctrine that there is a ‘trinity’ or a ‘duality’ in the (and I quote) ‘GODHEAD’.” Therefore, it is also The Truth of Yahweh that Yahshua Messiah did not ‘pre-exist!’¹⁴

Yahweh and Jesus: He teaches that Yahweh and Yahshua are two different “beings.” “Some of those trying to support the deception of a ‘pre-existent savior, argue that Yahshua and Yahweh are THE ‘SAME’ BEING...The Holy Scriptures plainly show that Yahshua and Yahweh are TWO DIFFERENT BEINGS!”¹⁵

BIBLICAL RESPONSE

Yahshua is Yahweh: In Zechariah 12:10 the Hebrew text is explicit in showing that the one speaking is Yahweh, “they shall look upon me,” and that the one speaking is the one who is the object of the action; “whom they have pierced” (See also John 19:37 and Revelation 1:7).

Compare the attributes of Yahweh with the same attributes ascribed to Yahshua in these verses: Acts 4:12; Isaiah 43:11; Hebrews 1:8; Isaiah 43:10; Revelation 1:17; 22:13; Isaiah 44:6; John 8:58; Exodus 3:14; John 1:3; Isaiah 40:28; John 1:9 and 8:12; Psalms 27:1; Joel 3:12. Yahshua is Yahweh.

The Church is Christ’s Body: The Church is a spiritual body, not a man-made organization (1 Peter 2:5). No city or organization is the mandated place of worship (John 4:20-24).

The Gospel: The gospel is not a “warning message” (Acts 2:22-24, 32-38; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, 2:1-2).

Only One Mediator: Functionally, Hawkins makes himself a mediator between his followers and God (1 Timothy 2:5).

RECOMMENDED READING

Sabbath in Crisis by Dale Ratzlaff. This book deals with the Sabbath question in exhaustive detail. Vital reading for anyone interested in this issue as it pertains to New Testament believers. 345 pages.

Churches That Abuse by Ronald Enroth. Although not dealing with the House of Yahweh specifically, Enroth’s study of the misuse of spiritual authority, fear, guilt and intimidation by religious leaders is a helpful resource for members of the House of Yahweh and their families. Personal accounts by numerous victims of religious abuse are included. 253 pages.

Notes

¹ *The Prophetic Word*, 7 June 1991, 766.

² *The Prophetic Word*, 7 June 1991, 76.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *The Prophetic Word*, 7 June 1991, 6.

⁵ *What Yahweh’s Feasts Mean to You*, 82-83.

⁶ *The Prophetic Word*, 7 June 1991, 36.

⁷ *Why Aren’t Your Prayers Answered Today?*, 20.

⁸ *What Yahweh’s Feasts Mean to You*, 78, 87.

⁹ *The Prophetic Word*, 7 June 1991, 4.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 15.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 48.

¹² *The Prophetic Word*, November 1994, 14, 16.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 18.

¹⁴ *The Prophetic Word*, 7 June 1991, 7.

¹⁵ *Did Yahshua Messiah Pre-exist?*, 40.



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