



YAIY
BEACON

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**Good Relationship Skills
Stand Ready to Forgive
Grrr-atitude or Gratitude?**

The Children of Israel

The Three Levels of Prayer

Profile of the Sect of the Nazarene

Hell: Fact or Fiction?

INTRODUCTION

Churchianity in general has not been faithful in following the Bible. Surprisingly, many of today's popular teachings and customs are not based in Scripture. We strive to return to the old paths of truth that have largely been ignored, and obediently follow in the footsteps of the Redeemer of Israel, Jude 3.

We observe the weekly Sabbath (on the seventh day) known as Saturday, just as did the Savior, Luke 4:16, as well as Paul and the Apostles, Acts 13:42-46; 17:2; 18:4.

We also call our Heavenly Father by His revealed, personal Name Yahweh, which He says is His memorial Name forever, Exodus 3:15. Most pastors, Bible scholars, and seminary students will acknowledge that Yahweh is the correct Name of the Heavenly Father. The short form of His Name, Yah, can be seen in many words, including the most popular hallelujah ("halleluYAH," meaning, "praise you Yah"). It is also found in the suffix of Biblical names like IsaYAH, (Isaiah), JeremYAH (Jeremiah), NehemYAH (Nehemiah), and ObadYAH (Obadiah).

Our membership comes from nearly all denominations and all walks of life. Most began searching for deeper truth when they learned that their former affiliation was teaching another Evangel from what they found in Scripture. We continue to search the Bible for deeper understanding. We believe that the Bible teaches a way of life through the commandments in the Old Testament and from the same example of obedience given us by our Savior in the New Testament.

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MISSION STATEMENT

Our Mission and purpose is to reach people around the world with the message of the revealed personal Names of Yahweh and His Son Yahshua, the Messiah, as well as teaching the salvational truths that have been neglected for centuries.

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Good Relationship Skills

Good relationships all have one thing in common: Communication. Without communication, we are left without friendships which are built not only upon open communication, but upon other skills developed over a lifetime. And Scripture supplies us with insights on how to communicate and live peaceably with others. In fact, Scripture calls us to peace. *Yet if the unbelieving one leaves, let him leave; the brother or the sister is not under bondage in such cases, but Elohim has called us to peace,* 1 Corinthians 7:15. (*New American Standard Bible* used throughout, unless otherwise noted.)

Marriage

Marriage is the most intimate relationship one can have in this life. But because of unresolved issues – oftentimes, sin outstanding with one or both marriage partners – and a lack of communication between them, many marriages end in divorce. Another contributor to unsuccessful marriages is the spiritual “unequal yoking” between a believer and a nonbeliever. But the body of Messiah is called to a higher standard (Eph. 5:22-33).

Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? Or what harmony has Messiah with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? Or what agreement has the temple of Elohim with idols? For we are the temple of the living Elohim; just as Elohim said, “I WILL DWELL IN THEM AND WALK AMONG THEM; AND I WILL BE THEIR ELOHIM, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE. Therefore, COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST AND BE SEPARATED,” says Yahweh. “AND DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN; and I will welcome you. And I will be a Father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to Me,” says Yahweh Almighty, 2 Corinthians 6:14-18.

Separation can still occur, but there are resources available for challenged marriages: *The Five Languages of Love*, by Gary Chapman; *His Needs, Her Needs*, by Willard F. Hartley, Jr.; and, *Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus*, by John Gray. They who have come into the faith already married, are given instruction not to seek dissolution of their marriages.

Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be released. Are you released from a wife? Do not seek a wife. But if you marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. Yet such will have trouble in this life, and I am trying to spare you, 1 Corinthians 7:27-28.

My wife and I have a good marriage because we entered into the relationship committed to each other without reserving divorce as an option. And today, our marriage after 26 years is intact and flourishing.

Yes, we’ve talked through some difficult things, sometimes with heightened emotions, but we’ve never given up. We have listened to each other and striven to make our marriage work with Yahweh and His Son, Yahshua, our focus. Their Spirit is active in our lives to make us become more than we would have been alone. The love we have for each other, and for Them, has increased over the life of our marriage – and perhaps aided the more by having read the resources previously mentioned.

We advise anyone planning to marry to first seek counseling as preparation for a marriage that can prosper and grow.

Dealing with Others

When dealing with others, Scripture provides protocols for believers and nonbelievers alike. For example, *A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger*, Proverbs 15:1.

Generally, co-workers are not going to be our closest friends but we can still be friendly toward them. They might want us to participate with them in activities of a worldly nature, but we are called to a spiritual life.

Some years ago, a man with whom I was working, was angry at me, and wouldn't speak to me for some time. But eventually, I was able to sweeten his disposition by offering him candy – a gesture that changed his attitude toward me.

Reaching out to others with the Truth will be met with different responses. Some are intent listeners. Others simply will not hear. Others still, will want to argue. And though we need to be ready in meekness to give an answer to them who ask us a reason of our hope, we don't have to befriend everyone. We shouldn't waste time with those not interested in righteousness or who care less about the Savior and their salvation. We must not compromise our relationship with Yahweh through Yahshua.

Therefore, since Messiah has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose, because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, so as to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men, but for the will of Elohim. For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousing, drinking parties and abominable idolatries. In all this, they are surprised that you do not run with them into the same excesses of dissipation, and they malign you; but they will give account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead, 1 Peter 1:4-5.

Yes, they may not understand and may even talk about you behind your back. But it is better to submit to Yahweh than to man, and to nurture the answer of a good conscience that is void of offense toward Yahweh and toward man (Acts 24:16; 1 Pet. 3:21). *Walk in the Spirit and don't let the flesh get the best of you. If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another,* Galatians 5:25-26.

Be Humble with Outsiders

People are more insulting and sarcastic than ever these days, and we can get caught up in their behavior. Though it is harder to do in today's society which is less compassionate and exudes poorer

manners, we should humble ourselves (Matt. 18:3-4). For Yahshua was focused on relationships in His teachings, and we do well to understand what He is saying to us.

Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be shrewd as serpents and innocent as doves, Matthew 10:16:

You have heard that it was said, "AN EYE FOR AN EYE, AND A TOOTH FOR A TOOTH." But I say to you, "Do not resist an evil person; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also," Matthew 5:38-39.

Neither should we take that which is set apart and give to them unworthy to receive it (Matt. 7:6). *Whoever does not receive you, nor heed your words, as you go out of that house or that city, shake the dust off your feet,* Matthew 10:14.

Sometimes, we just need to be silent and, figuratively speaking, turn the other cheek. Sure, this will require great humility and understanding, but as the people of Yahweh, we cannot be involved in the vengeance that occupies others' pursuits. It helps to believe that revenge belongs to Yahweh, and not to us. *Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of Elohim, for it is written, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY,"* says Yahweh, Romans 12:19. This alone, if obeyed by the world, would curtail many of the crimes about which we hear and read in the news.

Believers and Problems

Everything should be done in an orderly manner. *For Elohim is not an Elohim of confusion but of peace, as in all the assemblies of the saints,* 1 Corinthians 14:33.

At assembly meetings, we should remember that we are gathering with fellow believers, brothers and sisters in Messiah, coming before the Almighty with the purpose of praising and worshipping Him. We are those called out of the world, choosing to do what Yahweh wants and so, let's remember why we are coming together and be loving, kind, and merciful – expressing the Fruit of the Spirit.

This doesn't preclude problems from occurring, but the Scriptures give us clear guidance in how to resolve problems when they occur. *For we all stumble in many ways. If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body as well,* James 3:2.

We are not yet perfect. We have room for growth. A video I watched portrayed how foolish it is for the one with the plank to try and remove the speck out another's eye. One held an imaginary log with

two hands next to the eye compared to the other beholding a speck between two fingers. But the Scripture enjoins us, saying,

Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? O how can you say to your brother, "Let me take the speck out of your eye," and behold, the log is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye, Matthew 7:3-4.

When We're the Problem

Reconcile with a brother or sister first, then come before Yahweh.

Therefore if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering, Matthew 5:23-24.

When we've offended another, whether in word or deed, it is incumbent upon us to make amends, that we and our offering might be acceptable to Yahweh.

Rebuke and Forgive

Be on your guard! If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. And if he sins against you seven times a day, and returns to you seven times, saying, "I repent," forgive him, Luke 17:3-4.

Another video presentation showed a big man, taunted and provoked by two smaller men throwing objects at him, while saying, "Please forgive us. You have to forgive us."

While the story line is humorous, it brings out a point: Be aware of those who are truly repentant and they who aren't. If one refuses rebuke but continues to sin, there is this instruction:

If your brother sins go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother. But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that BY THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES EVERY FACT MAY BE CONFIRMED. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the assembly; and if he refuses to listen even to the assembly, let him be to you as Gentile and a tax collector, Matthew 18:15-17.

Understand, these verses seek to redress civil and relational issues. Serious criminal activities – such as child molestation or domestic violence – need to be referred to appropriate law enforcement and judicial authorities for resolution (Rom. 13:1-5; 1 Pet. 2:13-14; Titus 2:1).

Even in the Assembly and among brethren, as noted earlier, it is impossible but that offenses will occur (Luke 17:1). These require immediate attention. For example, a vile sexual sin was committed by a member of the Corinthian Assembly (1 Cor. 5). Paul rebuked the Assembly for not censuring and removing the offender (verses 1-2). Perhaps, the Apostle had Solomon's counsel in mind, in addressing this issue: *Because the sentence against an evil deed is not executed quickly, therefore the hearts of the sons of men among them are given fully to do evil, Ecclesiastes 8:11*

In the Corinthian example, some time later the individual became penitent as Paul records here:

But if any has caused sorrow, he has caused sorrow not to me, but in some degree – in order not to say too much – to all of you. Sufficient for such a one is this punishment which was inflicted by the majority, so that on the contrary you should rather forgive and comfort him, otherwise such a one might be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. Wherefore I urge you to reaffirm your love for him. ... I now rejoice, not that you were made sorrowful, but you were made sorrowful to the point of repentance; for you were made sorrowful according to the will of Elohim produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation, but the sorrow of the world produces death, 2 Corinthians 2:5-11, 7:9-10.

This is an example of rebuking and then forgiving when the person or persons come to true repentance. As servants of Yahweh, we should without striving with another, patiently and gently seek to restore brethren from their mistakes (2 Tim. 2:24-26).

Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Messiah. For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself, Galatians 6:1-3.

Dealing with the Unrepentant

If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he shall ask and Elohim will for him give life to those who commit sin not leading to death. There is a sin leading to death; I do not say that he should make request for this, 1 John 5:16.

What is the sin that leads to death? Unrepentant sin. Not only are we to refrain praying for those who defiantly live in sin, but we are to avoid them altogether. *Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and*

turn away from them, Romans 16:17. We are instructed to depart from those who won't receive correction.

Pride goes before a fall (Prov. 16:18). Knowledge, too, puffs up (1 Cor. 8:1). In Luke 18:10-14 – the account of the Pharisee and the tax collector – has given us an example. Many, like the Pharisee, are rich in the knowledge of Yahweh's Word, but their knowledge swells their heart with pride. This can happen among brethren in the Assembly, too.

Even elders can sometimes become corrupt and fall prey to Satan. They must be rebuked before all, as it is written:

For we are not bold to class or compare ourselves with some of those who commend themselves; but when they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are without understanding, 2 Corinthians 10:12.

Those who continue in sin, rebuke in the presence of all, so that the rest also will be fearful of sinning, 1 Timothy 5:20.

Dealing with the Righteous Servants

Righteous servants aren't just Elders and Deacons who should be above reproach, but includes members who do those things pleasing to the Father and who go out of their way to serve others, like some whom Paul commended, saying,

Acknowledge them that refresh the Spirit. I rejoice over the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus, because they have supplied what was lacking on your part. For they have refreshed my spirit and yours. Therefore acknowledge such men, 1 Corinthians 16:17-18.

These had addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints (1 Cor. 16:15). Paul noted another brother,

But I thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger and minister to my need; because he was longing for you all and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick. For indeed he was sick to the point of death, but Yahweh had mercy on him, and not on him only but also on me, so that I would not have sorrow upon sorrow. Therefore I have sent him all the more eagerly so that when you see him again you may rejoice and I may be less concerned about you. Receive him then in the Master with all joy, and hold men like in high regard, Philippians 2:25-29.

The Apostle noted many other servants and helpers... sisters also, who were esteemed among the brethren and who had assisted much in the work (Rom. 16:1-15).

Leadership, a High Standard

Remember those who led you, who spoke the Word of Elohim to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith ... Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you, Hebrews 13:7, 17.

Showing respect toward those to whom respect is due, is beneficial to us. Ultimately, it is Yahshua Who is our Head, Leader, Teacher, and Master. In another place, the Apostle instructed the brethren to esteem them who labored in the Word and admonished them, very highly for their work's sake (1 Thess. 5:12-13). For each Elder and Deacon have been placed in the body to keep order and serve the body of Messiah by example. Peter spoke to the assemblies, saying,

Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Messiah, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, shepherd the flock of Yahweh among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of Elohim; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; nor yet as mastering it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory, 1 Peter 5:1-4.

The elders who rule well are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching, 1 Timothy 5:17.

Leaders work together in making decisions affecting ministry among the brethren. The accounting of the Council at Jerusalem in Acts, Chapter 15, exemplifies the presbytery coming together to hammer out a problem they were having with some that would impose strictures upon new believers as conditional for salvation. Their consensus was carried out as they passed through the cities, they delivered the decrees to be observed, which had been decided upon by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem (Acts 16:4).

Conclusion

Natural relationships work with a balance of give and take. The Kingdom-life is lived in righteousness, both here and now, and having promise of the life that shall be (1 Tim. 4:8). Spiritual relationships work with a view toward all the parties thereto, forgetting what was behind (Phil. 2:13) and being renewed in the spirit of their minds (Rom. 12:2) and seeking, moreover, to be conformed into the image of Yahweh's Son, Yahshua (Rom. 8:29).

-Elder David Brett

STAND READY TO



It could be said, “It is saintly to forgive.” Indeed, living “saintly” and “sanely” in this world depends on being able to forgive and forget wrongs. Some of those wrongs, however, are not soon forgotten.

Just ask someone who has been abused as a child by a relative or ask the one who suffered a loss of a loved one because of the murderous action of another person. Not even a lifetime can fully erase some wrongs, but there is hope.

It is a hope of a future without wrongs. It is hope beyond sorrow. It’s a hope assured to come in the Kingdom of Yahweh. *And Elohim shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. ... For, behold, I (will) create (a) new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind,* Revelation 21:4; Isaiah 65:17. (The **King James Version 1900** used throughout unless otherwise noted.)

The question is, will we be able to forgive so that we ourselves can receive forgiveness and enter that kingdom? *For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses,* Matthew 6:14-15.

The seriousness of our calling and how we are to treat our fellow man will impact the final outcome of whom we become.

7 X 70 = Continuously

Yahshua taught that we need to be ready to forgive one another. Time and time again, if need be. *Then came Peter to Him, and said, “Master, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?” Yahshua saith unto him, “I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven,”* Matthew 18:21-22.

After answering Peter’s question, He gave this parable as an example of the seriousness of forgiveness and its importance in our lives:

Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents. But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his master commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, “Master, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.” Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt (see Matt. 6:12). But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, “Pay me that thou owest.” And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, “Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.” And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their master all that was done. Then his master, after that he had called him, said unto him, “O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee?” And his master was wroth, and delivered

him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall My heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses, Matthew 18:23-35.

The lesson is clear, and we need to understand that the outcome can be very bad for us if we don't hear and heed the lesson in our own lives. Though Yahshua didn't say it this time, He would sometimes say, "Let those who have ears, hear."

It would be appropriate to remember that He is wanting us to listen, no matter what the subject, but this in particular is very important. It means salvation for the one who heeds its call.

Notice, He said forgive "from your heart," that is to say, be sincere about it and don't just say you are and then walk off in a huff. We need to see the importance and understand that we ourselves are in debt to Yahweh through Yahshua, who provides forgiveness to those of us who have been immersed into His saving Name. *Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from Elohim, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify Elohim in your body,* 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, **NASB**.

We need to be standing ready to forgive as our High Priest does (Heb. 4:15-16). After all, are we not to eventually be a kingdom of priests ourselves? (Rev. 1:6, 5:10).

Practicing Priestly Duties

We wouldn't normally think of Solomon as a priest or doing priestly things, but he and others (e.g., Daniel 9:3-19; Ezra 9:5-15) are, at times, examples of practicing priestly duties such as beseeching Yahweh on behalf of the people.

Solomon prayed to Yahweh on behalf of the people while dedicating the temple. He basically asked again and again, "If the people pray and confess, then forgive them."

Before reading further, open your Bible to 1 Kings 8:30-9:9 and read the account and see how he pleads to Yahweh specifically for the people throughout the prayer.

What was Yahweh's response? We read in 2 Chronicles 7:12-14, *And Yahweh appeared to Solomon by night, and said unto him, "I have heard thy prayer, and have chosen this place to Myself for an house of sacrifice. If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among My people; if My people, which are called by My Name, shall*

humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

It's interesting to see how Yahweh answered. It's obvious that if people sinned that there would be punishment. Punishment so that they'll stop sinning and repent. *It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them; that they may return every man from his evil way; that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin,* Jeremiah 36:3. But the people didn't always stop, as they should have. The warnings, nor the actual punishment, woke them up. Chapter 4 of Amos is a good example of their neglect to hear and act upon what Yahweh was telling them:

Listen to me, you fat cows of Samaria, you women who oppress the poor and crush the needy and who are always asking your husbands for another drink! The Sovereign Yahweh has sworn this by his holiness: "The time will come when you will be led away with hooks in your noses. Every last one of you will be dragged away like a fish on a hook! You will leave by going straight through the breaks in the wall; you will be thrown from your fortresses." I, Yahweh, have spoken! "Go ahead and offer your sacrifices to the idols at Bethel and Gilgal. Keep on disobeying – your sins are mounting up! Offer sacrifices each morning and bring your tithes every three days! Present your bread made with yeast as an offering of thanksgiving [this was against His law (Lev. 2:11)]. Then give your extra voluntary offerings so you can brag about it everywhere! This is the kind of thing you Israelites love to do," says the Sovereign Yahweh. "I brought hunger to every city and famine to every town. But still you wouldn't return to Me," says Yahweh. "I kept the rain from falling when you needed it the most, ruining all your crops. I sent rain on one town but withheld it from another. Rain fell on one field, while another field withered away. People staggered from one town to another for a drink of water, but there was never enough. But still you wouldn't return to Me," says Yahweh. "I struck your farms and vineyards with blight and mildew. Locusts devoured all your fig and olive trees. But still you wouldn't return to Me," says Yahweh. "I sent plagues against you like the plagues I sent against Egypt long ago. I killed your young men in war and slaughtered all your horses. The stench of death filled the air! But still you wouldn't return to Me," says Yahweh. "I destroyed some of your cities, as I destroyed Sodom

and Gomorrah. Those of you who survived were like half-burned sticks snatched from a fire. But still you wouldn't return to Me," says Yahweh. "Therefore, I will bring upon you all these further disasters I have announced. Prepare to meet your Elohim as He comes in judgment, you people of Israel!" For Yahweh is the One who shaped the mountains, stirs up the winds, and reveals His every thought. He turns the light of dawn into darkness and treads the mountains under His feet. Yahweh El Shaddai is His Name! Amos 4:1-13, *NLT*.

Yahweh was seeking repentance from the people. He wanted them to turn back to Him and disciplined them so that they would. A loving father will do the same for his children (Prov. 13:24; Heb. 12:5-8). Sometimes, though, the children go too far.

Yahweh is Not Mocked!

Joshua put it plainly before the people so they might fear and obey. *And Joshua said unto the people, "Ye cannot serve Yahweh: for He is an holy Elohim; He is a jealous Elohim; He will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins. If ye forsake Yahweh, and serve strange elohim, then He will turn and do you hurt, and consume you, after that He hath done you good." And the people said unto Joshua, "Nay; but we will serve Yahweh,"* Joshua 24:19-21.

Joshua told the people that if they forsake Yahweh, that He will forsake them. It's a warning we find in both the Old and New Testaments:

And the Spirit of Elohim came upon Azariah the son of Oded: and he went out to meet Asa, and said unto him, "Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin; Yahweh is with you, while ye be with Him; and if ye seek Him, He will be found of you; but if ye forsake Him, He will forsake you." ... For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of Elohim, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know Him that hath said, "Vengeance belongeth unto Me, I will recompense," saith Yahweh. And again, Yahweh shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands

of the living Elohim, 2 Chronicles 15:2; Hebrews 10:26-31.

We are actually to remove sinners from our midst who are unrepentant, that they might repent and not corrupt the rest of the members:

I wrote unto you in an epistle not to [keep] company with fornicators: Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world. But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator; or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without Elohim judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person, 1 Cor. 5:9-13.

John says, in 1 John 5:16, *If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.*

Some walk away from the truth by putting the Bible up on the shelf and saying, "no more." Others just willfully and arrogantly despise their calling and only care for themselves. They are, as Jude puts it, "clouds without water," in other words, without the Spirit of Yahweh. Their end will be destruction:

For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the stake of Messiah, whose end is destruction, whose elohim is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things, Philippians 3:18-19, *NASB*.

The Word is true; what you sow is what you'll reap (Gal. 6:7-8). It's something we need to keep in mind and not walk away from His Truth that He sets before us. It's important to live according to His Way and not our own. To do otherwise is spiritual suicide.

Yahweh Is Merciful

Like the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-16), we are told that if we repent, there can be forgiveness and reconciliation. *For thou, Yahweh, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon Thee,* Psalms 86:5.

Yahweh is sometimes made out to be a spiteful and vengeful Creator of the Old Testament, but we have to understand that His lovingkindness has been extended throughout all ages.

Some very insightful passages get into Yahweh's thought processes regarding how He looks upon mankind.

He truly loves us but hates the sin and won't tolerate it forever. Read the following with an open mind and heart and know that Yahweh is not spiteful but rather very loving, forgiving, and full of mercy:

*The one who sins is the one who dies. The child will not be punished for the parent's sins, and the parent will not be punished for the child's sins. Righteous people will be rewarded for their own goodness, and wicked people will be punished for their own wickedness. But if wicked people turn away from all their sins and begin to obey my laws and do what is just and right, they will surely live and not die. All their past sins will be forgotten, and they will live because of the righteous things they have done. "Do you think, asks the Sovereign Yahweh, that I like to see wicked people die? Of course not! I only want them to turn from their wicked ways and live. However, if righteous people turn to sinful ways and start acting like other sinners, should they be allowed to live? No, of course not! All their previous goodness will be forgotten, and they will die for their sins. "Yet you say, 'Yahweh isn't being just!' Listen to me, O people of Israel. Am I the one who is unjust, or is it you? When righteous people turn from being good and start doing sinful things, they will die for it. Yes, they will die because of their sinful deeds. And if wicked people turn away from their wickedness, obey the law, and do what is just and right, they will save their lives. They will live, because after thinking it over, they decided to turn from their sins. Such people will not die. And yet the people of Israel keep saying, 'Yahweh is unjust!' O people of Israel, it is you who are unjust, not I. 'Therefore, I will judge each of you, O people of Israel, according to your actions,' says the Sovereign Yahweh. 'Turn from your sins! Don't let them destroy you! Put all your rebellion behind you, and get for yourselves a new heart and a new spirit. For why should you die, O people of Israel? I don't want you to die, says the Sovereign Yahweh. Turn back and live!'" Ezekiel 18:20-32, **NLT**.*

Yahweh is a firm but loving Father. We are the ones who need to humble ourselves before Him, not the other way around.

Overlooking Ignorance

Yahweh calls us to walk on higher ground and says that He used to wink at certain wrongdoings, especially of wrong worship, but now calls us to repent and turn from such ways (Acts 17:29-30).

Paul elaborates on why:

*And now, brethren, I know that you acted in ignorance, just as your rulers did also. But the things which Elohim announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets, that "His Messiah should suffer," He has thus fulfilled. "Repent therefore and return, that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Master; and that He may send Yahshua, the Messiah appointed for you, whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things about which Elohim spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time," Acts 3:17-21, **NASB**.*

Today, we need to turn the other cheek, so to speak, at certain actions of others. We need to understand that some don't know what they're doing. We need to stand ready to forgive them, and even those who readily repent for actions that they should have known were wrong

As an example, Jonah was upset that Nineveh was forgiven by Yahweh. Jonah must have harbored resentment toward them as it was the capital of Assyria, and they were a terrible force at odds with Israel. Assyria was known for its cruelty and its unmerciful ways in war. Certainly, Jonah had his reasons, but Yahweh showed him something that we also need to understand, and that is, sometimes people just don't know what they're doing.

Yahweh asked Jonah, *And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?* Jonah 4:11.

Those in Nineveh weren't the brightest people around for Yahweh to have said, "they cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand." In other words, they didn't really "get it," just as many don't today.

The Apostle Paul asked that even those who were with him and yet deserted him be forgiven:

*At my first defense no one supported me, but all deserted me; may it not be counted against them, 2 Timothy 4:16, **NASB**.*

This also happened to Yahshua. The disciples deserted Him when trouble came (Matt. 26:31).

Yahshua, the Messiah, had mercy for the people of His day. He knew they didn't know what they were doing. *Then said Yahshua, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." And they parted his raiment, and cast lots, Luke 23:34.* Remember, these are they that put Him to death. We all have, so not one of us is guiltless for His shed blood. But, by

His blood, we can have forgiveness.

Guilt Can Be Erased

If we recognize and confess our sins, what is the result? The Apostle John says, *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness, 1 John 1:9.*

Many will stop there and think that is all there is to it. Understand that confessing one's sins is only the beginning.

And hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth His Word, in him verily is the love of Elohim perfected: hereby know we that we are in Him, 1 John 2:3-5.

What does keeping His Word mean? What did Yahshua Himself say?

Not every one that saith unto Me, "Master, Master," shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven. ... For whosoever shall do the will of My Father which is in heaven, the same is My brother, and sister, and mother, Matthew 7:21, 12:50.

Repentance and forsaking an old life of living contrary to Yahweh's words of life is a lifelong commitment. One in which there is to be no turning back.

Cleansing our conscience of all past sins (1 John 3:4) happens when one is immersed in water and into Yahshua's Name.

The Savior's Name

Yahshua's Name holds the Father's Name within it. Yahshua means "Yahweh is Salvation." It is a Hebrew Name and the one given from heaven. *Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other Name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved, Acts 4:12.*

The Messiah was a Jew and not a Greek. We do not make Him out to be a Greek by calling Him "Christ." The Greek language was only able to bring forth a very poor and misrepresented pronunciation of His actual Name, which was corrupted even more with further translation. Hence, what should have been transliterated, as names are, when spoken in a different language, was not properly done with the Savior's Name.

Many have been baptized in the form of John's baptism, a baptism of repentance. Once a clear understanding comes, one must be obedient and act accordingly. Read the following account and see

how Paul addressed a similar issue in his day. Note his recommendation and also the people's response:

And he said unto them, "Unto what then were ye baptized?" And they said, "Unto John's baptism." Then said Paul, "John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on Him which should come after him, that is, on Messiah Yahshua." When they heard this, they were baptized in the Name of the Master Yahshua, Acts 19:3-5.

A person needs to be washed in His blood (Rev. 1:5) and through His Name for forgiveness and remission of sins:

But these are written, that ye might believe that Yahshua is the Messiah, the Son of Elohim; and that believing ye might have life through His Name, John 20:31.

There Is Still Time

There is much more that can be said but suffice it to say, forgiveness is through Yahshua the Messiah. Those immersed in His saving Name are now, more than ever, prepared to stand ready to forgive others as they now have a Spirit within them that can overcome the world. They also now have hope for the coming Kingdom of Yahweh.

These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world, John 16:33.

Yahweh's people, who have been forgiven and continue to grow and overcome, will have the opportunity to see Yahshua as He is in the coming Kingdom. The call is going out, and the time is growing short, but forgiveness is still available. It is, in fact, within your reach if only you will believe.

And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of Elohim and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him: And they shall see His face; and His Name shall be in their foreheads. ... And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come." And let him that heareth say, "Come." And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely, Revelation 22:3-4, 17.

Yahshua is standing ready to forgive, and He is faithful as the High Priest in heaven, a Mediator between Yahweh and the brethren.

-Elder David Brett



So, What's Your? Grrr-Attitude Or GRATITUDE?

And it came to pass, as He went to Jerusalem, that He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. And as He entered into a certain village, there met Him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off: And they lifted up their voices, and said, "Yahshua, Master, have mercy on us." And when he saw them, he said unto them, "Go shew yourselves unto the priests." And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified Yahweh, And fell down on his face at his feet, giving Him thanks: and he was a Samaritan. And Yahshua answering said, "Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to Yahweh, save this stranger." And He said unto him, "Go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole, Luke 17:11-19. (King James Version used throughout, unless otherwise noted.)

This is the classic passage used by Word Expositors when speaking on the subject of GRATITUDE.

And before proceeding further, we would be remiss in not mentioning four prominent features found in This Passage:

- Verse 14: "Go shew yourselves unto the priests." – for reason that the Levitical *kohanim*, according to what we've learned in Leviticus 14:1-32, were charged with pronouncing one clean of *tsaw-rah'-oth* (H.6883) leprosy;
- Verse 14: "... and as they went, they were cleansed" – so that they could through observation, see and feel themselves being made clean;
- Verse 16: "... and he was a Samaritan" – giving credence to Yahshua's observation that "a prophet is not without honor, save in his own country and in his own house" (Matt. 13:57). He had come to His own, but His own received Him not (John 1:11);
- Verse 17-18: "... Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to Yahweh, save this stranger" – ought not Yahshua to have expected receiving their expression of GRATITUDE? and;
- Verse 19: "... thy faith hath made thee whole" – we are told, *So faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of Yahweh*, Romans 10:17 – though we might read something else in Yahshua's commendation to the Samaritan inasmuch as, FAITH is SUBSTANCE, and GIVING THANKS is EVIDENCE.

This word "WHOLE" is significant, because most all of us have suffered in our flesh from health issues. Just consider the different physicians specializing in different medical disciplines to whom we give attendance, and the medications prescribed us and the reasons for which we take them.

Nevertheless, when Yahshua declared to one, "go thy way, thy faith hath made thee whole," it may be supposed that He addressed the whole of his being and not just the infirmity for which he had sought redress. And with respect to our narrative of the ten, we can't but wonder that the nine, in failing to return, falling down upon their faces at His feet, manifested their ATTITUDE was not one of GRATITUDE and hence, they probably retired from the priests *unwhole* with residual infirmities, and all because they hadn't been as HONORABLE as this Samaritan.

The Heart Determines Attitude

The most of humanity, like the nine, by their fallen nature, are not THANKFUL and, moreover, even we who are day by day being renewed in the spirit of our mind and conformed into His Image, also struggle being THANKFUL.

And there are several markers by which we can measure GRATITUDE, and from the abundance of our hearts, our ATTITUDE.

His Word says that He makes the sun to shine and the rain to fall on the good and the just, and the evil and the unjust alike (Matt. 5:45) and that so long as the earth remains – seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease (Gen. 8:22). But sometimes we, like all the rest of the world, Gripe, Murmur, and Complain (GMC) that it's too hot; or it's too cold; or it seems like the sun forgot us; or we wish it would rain; or that it would stop raining.

The Apostle Paul wrote in Philippians 4:12 “every where and in all things, I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need,” but we ... well, we'll complain when we are hungry, suffer need and are abased, instead of learning from that instruction that in whatsoever state we are in, therewith to be content (Phil. 4:13).

The Scripture advises, “the fruit of *our* lips giving thanks to His Name” (Heb. 13:15). But all too often, whether to Him as our Benefactor or to some other, it is become too much a sacrifice to say, “THANK YOU,” for an expression of His, or another's beneficence. Our neglect may be owing to a disposition of entitlement that thinks or says to another, “you have but done that which was your duty to do” (see Luke 17:10). Nevertheless, if we could have been instructed in, learned, and practiced saying “THANK YOU,” we might just encourage the other to want to do more even, than what might have been expected.

The heart of GRATITUDE spends and will be spent; won't mind being inconvenienced in aiding another, loving more abundantly though it should be less loved.

The heart of GRATITUDE exercises itself “void of offense toward Yahweh, and toward men” (Acts 24:16); overcomes the self by bringing every thought into captivity; ruling its spirit, and making every one of its member – eye, ear, tongue, hands, and feet to become subject to, and yielded to, the Commandment.

Before GRATITUDE, is humility but our pride (we call it self-respect) deems meekness as weakness

and prevents us from being GRATEFUL.

We marginalize the very young – as in, “children should be seen and not heard” – instead of intreating the very young as they are, “the heritage of Yahweh” (Psa. 127:3) and presenting ourselves exemplary in word, behavior, love, faith, and purity. We marginalize the very old, and instead of honoring the elderly, regard addressing their life-needs as annoying and an inconvenience.

The heart of our INGRATITUDE neglects opportunity to reconcile, and to be reconciled with them of whom we have been offended (or offended) but instead, reasons the other should assume the initiative because after all, they started it ... we, oblivious to the Truth, assuming that uncomfortable initiative is a good measure of our SPIRITUALITY.

GRATITUDE bears one another's burdens and so fulfills the law of Messiah, but we counter with another Scripture, saying, “let every man bear his own burden” (Gal. 6:2).

GRATITUDE distributes to the necessity of others without hope of receiving as much again. On the other hand, INGRATITUDE dismisses them that are in any need, saying, “Be ye warmed and filled” (James 2:16) and, moreover, retorts, “I've got mine; let them get theirs” when in Truth, no one has anything but what he hasn't received of Yahweh.

GRATITUDE practices All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the TORAH and the prophets, Matthew 7:12. This Way is not tit for tat, neither does It think or say, “I don't get mad, I get even” but rather, if it be possible, as much as lies within me, seek to live peaceably with all men, overcoming their evil by my good. And one thing is certain: seeking reconciliation with, or not seeking reconciliation with, one thought an adversary, will reveal what is the ATTITUDE of my heart.

GRATITUDE doesn't go around looking like it's been baptized in lemon juice – with disfigured face and a sad countenance, so as to get others' notice of pity. Remember this: A smile trumps a scowl every time and at the same time, improves one's face value. If we see someone without a smile, give them one of ours; A man that shows himself friendly, will have friends.

One of the GRATITUDE BEATITUDES, reads: *Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy*, Matthew 5:7 – as we have therefore opportunity, let us do good and NOT as the Priest and the Levite, passing to the other side – out of sight, out of mind?

Whatsoever the hand of GRATITUDE finds to do,

it does it with all its might. GRATITUDE is faithful in much, because it has first been proved faithful in that which is least – doing more than what it’s paid to do and assured, on the great and notable day, getting paid for what it’s done.

GRATITUDE leaves GRATITUDE as a legacy-heritage to ITS children’s children.

GRATITUDE makes no recitation of Murphy’s Law: If anything can go wrong, it will. Neither does GRATITUDE say, “If it wasn’t for bad Luck, I wouldn’t have any luck at all.

Conclusion: “THANK YOU”

The Truth is, people appreciate being appreciated, to hear a “THANK YOU,” but we refrain from saying it, because we wouldn’t want anyone’s head to swell by complimenting what is their reasonable service and whole duty to have done.

Two words – “THANK YOU” – whether expressed by a Hallmark Card, a telephone call, a letter, or accompanying a handshake, hug, or pat-on-the-back – will do more toward advancing and promoting us in the estimation of people with whom, and for whom, we work. Two words – “THANK YOU” – will improve relationships with them from whom we may be estranged. Two words – “THANK YOU” – will obtain for us favor from them who are in a position to gladly return a favor upon us in a time of our need.

Lastly, there is something else for which we need to be GRATEFUL: *Blessed [be] the Sovereign, Who daily loadeth us [with benefits], even the Elohim of our salvation, Psalm 68:19:*

- Who is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy, forgiving all our iniquities, trespasses, and sins;
- Who crowns us with lovingkindness and tender mercies, not dealing with us after our sins, nor rewarding us according to our iniquities;
- Who heals all our diseases;
- Who redeems our lives from destruction and executes righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed;
- Who satisfies our mouths with good things (Deut. 34:6 and Psa. 103:2-10).

THANKS [be] unto Yahweh for His Unspeakable Gift, 2 Corinthians 9:15. We have reason for GRATITUDE, let us use IT.

- Elder John W. Reece





The Children of Israel

Yahweh's people are severally called, the holy nation; the people of Israel; the house of Israel; and the children of Israel. The descendants of Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel, are key to understanding what Yahweh is doing today. The promises by Yahweh to Abram through Isaac, will be kept. To be children, we must be obedient to the Father.

At the time of the Exodus, the children of Israel were told:

Now therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people: for all the earth is Mine: and ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, Exodus 19:5-6. (The **King James Version 1900** is used throughout unless otherwise noted.)

Do you see the condition placed before them and, therefore us? Yahweh has always wanted obedience from the heart, and obedience is required of all mankind (Exod. 12:49; Eccl. 12:12) if they are to be accepted.

We read in Ezekiel 36:22, *Therefore say unto the house of Israel, "Thus saith Yahweh Elohim; I do not [do] this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy Name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went."*

Spiritually Discerned

His people were once physical Israelites, and there were physical promises – a land flowing with milk and honey. Today, His people are to be Spiritually-minded, because His people today are, in a sense, spiritual Israelites, having the better promise of eternal life.

There is much to say about this. *For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace,* Romans 8:6.

Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. But we are sure that the judgment of Elohim is according to truth against them which commit such things. And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of Elohim? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of Elohim leadeth thee to repentance? Romans 2:1-4.

It goes on to say in verse 13, *For not the hearers of the law are just before Elohim, but the doers of the law shall be justified.* (See also Acts 5:32; Heb. 5:9.)

Then Peter said unto them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Yahshua Messiah for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the holy Spirit," Acts 2:38.

After we repent (turn back to Yahweh and His ways of life) and are immersed in the saving power of Yahshua's Name, we receive a portion of Yahweh's Spirit with the laying on of hands by the elders in the faith. All those receiving the Spirit are guided to keep "every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of Elohim" (Matt. 4:4).

Children of Yahweh

As amazing as it may sound, we can be children of Yahweh and not just Israel! *Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of Elohim: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not,* 1 John 3:1.

We also discover that we are not referred to as physical but spiritual. We are put into a spiritual family (body).

We read in John 1:13, *Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of Elohim.* (Request our free mini-study, **How To Be 'Born Again.'**)

There are spiritual gifts that are given. *For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established,* Romans 1:11.

The law is spiritual. We read, *For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin,* Romans 7:14.

Spirit Within

Just because His instructions are written on paper doesn't mean they are earthly and unnecessary for His Spiritual children to obey. Yahweh's Word is inspired and is put into us (Heb. 8:10).

The Spirit within us reminds of the Word which

Yahshua spoke and kept (John 14:26). *If you keep My Commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's Commandments and abide in His love,* John 15:10, **NASB**.

Yahweh's laws, though some physically oriented toward sacrificial offerings and rites, provided spiritual principles that, if kept, move people in the direction of staying in harmony with His will.

In Conclusion

Some things have changed (Heb. 7:12, 9:8-24), but we still obey. We are servants of Yahweh inwardly.

Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Messiah. But with many of them Elohim was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness, 1 Corinthians 10:1-5.

Many died in the wilderness because they did not obey His spiritually-inspired laws. Their unbelief found them unfaithful, and sinners worthy of death (Heb. 3:12-19).

"Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of Yahweh" (Deut. 8:3b; Matt. 4:4, **NIV**). Yahshua, when on earth in a physical body, taught us how to keep the laws and commandments of Yahweh (Matt 5:13-6:30). Never did He teach against them, but rather directly from them.

-Elder David Brett

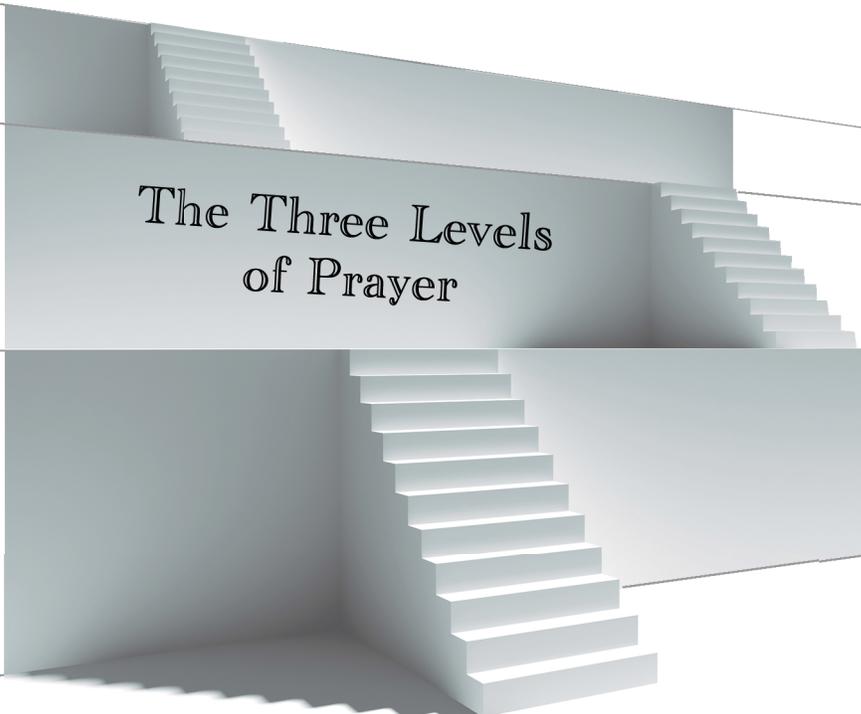


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The Three Levels of Prayer

Take just a minute and ask yourself, “When I pray, is it a level one prayer, a level two prayer, or a level three prayer? Do you have an answer? Are you thinking about what a level one prayer might be like, or a level two? Let’s look at all three.

First, though, let’s look at one kind of prayer that doesn’t belong and is therefore counted not among the three. We find this prayer described by our Master Yahshua, *And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, “They have their reward,”* Matthew 6:5. (The **King James Version 1900** is used throughout unless noted otherwise.)

He goes on to tell them directly, *Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye devour widows’ houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation,* Matthew 23:14.

Did you notice that Yahshua put “giving long prayers” (to be seen by men) along with “consuming widows’ houses” (unprotected estates)? It emphasizes what a worthless and unrighteous act they were doing!

Prayers can be divided into three categories or levels with the following attributes:

1. Simple request or thanksgiving, short-type prayers.
2. Heartfelt and concerned, which can include fasting.
3. Type three will have attributes of one and two. Type three can have a more fervent, impassioned, or effectual emphasis. But, type three will specifically have supplication or petition for others included in it, a deep outgoing concern for others’ well-being.

All three should be with a humble and contrite attitude, believing that Yahweh will answer. We are also to be unceasing or constant, e.g., Daniel 6:13 and Psalm 55:17.

First Level of Prayer

Pray then that the Master of the Harvest would send out workers to His harvest, Matthew 9:38, **TS**. Here Yahshua is telling us to pray and request more workers (servants) for His harvest (people). If you ask quickly, without giving earnest thought and feelings to it, it could be classified as a type one prayer.

But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day, Matthew 24:20. This would be a simple prayer. But, if we found ourselves fleeing, I’m sure our prayer would rise a level or two.

Paul set an example to pray and give thanks before a meal:

And when he had thus spoken, he took bread, and gave thanks to Elohim in presence of them all: and when he had broken it, he began to eat, Acts 27:35.

Yahshua gave the same example:

And He took the seven loaves and the fish and gave thanks, broke them and gave them to His disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitude, Matthew 15:36, NKJV. There's not too much elaboration here, just a quick and simple "thanks." He would have given this "thanks" to Yahweh, of course.

Second Level of Prayer

We are told by Yahweh to humble ourselves and to seek a relationship with Him, this prayer would be, at least, an earnest level-two prayer. *If My people, which are called by My Name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land, 2 Chronicles 7:14.*

Speaking to married couples, the Apostle Paul says, *Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency, 1 Corinthians 7:5.*

Fasting, along with prayer, is certainly more than just a simple prayer. This level two type of prayer takes effort and time away from other things in your life, so you can focus on your relationship with Father Yahweh.

Following is a "prayer" that is often said by some, but which is an outline to follow, not something to repeat again and again. He warns us about vain repetition in prayer, just before, in Matt 6:7). We read in Matthew 6:9-13:

After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen." This would be a level two prayer, a very well-balanced prayer.

Third Level of Prayer

This third level will have attributes of the previous two levels, but this third level is distinguished from the others by its intercession for others.

The Apostle Paul had great concern for the well-being of those in the faith. After listing some hardships that he had had, he then declared his

"anxiety for all the assemblies" (2 Cor. 11:28, **TS**. Imagine trying to answer someone that you know is being called by Yahweh and that the answer that you give, will either help or hinder them, then you can appreciate what the Apostle Paul must be talking about. He certainly prayed many fervent and heartfelt prayers, not only that he would be able to answer properly, but also that those to whom he gave those answers would understand. Paul preached, answered questions, rebuked, and prayed. Certainly, he had great anxiety and prayed many level-three prayers for all of Yahweh's people.

Paul says to those in Philippi, *And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment, Philippians 1:9.*

Paul also told those in Corinth, *Now I pray to Elohim that ye do no evil; not that we should appear approved, but that ye should do that which is honest, though we be as reprobates, 2 Corinthians 13:7.*

Our Good Shepherd Yahshua prayed this type of level three prayer, too, as I'm sure all good teachers do, And being in agony, *He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground, Luke 22:44, NKJV.* We know He wasn't just praying for Himself, as He had a great love for all for whom He was about to give His life. (Read also Hebrews 5:7.)

The prophet Samuel knew that it would be a sin not to pray a level three prayer, saying, *Also, as for me, far be it that I should sin against Yahweh in ceasing to pray for you, but I shall teach you the good and straight way, 1 Samuel 12:23, TS.*

Conclusion

We find that the example and instruction are clear for us today, Paul included all the apostles when He said, *But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word, Acts 6:4.*

One time when Yahshua went to pray, he prayed all night! We read, *And it came to pass in those days, that He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to Elohim, Luke 6:12.* Have you ever prayed all night? I haven't, but if I ever do, it will include all three levels of prayer.

Next time we pray, let's think about what kind of prayer is offered. Is it a level one or two, or a level three prayer? Whatever level it is, let's continue and never fail to pray all three levels throughout our lives.

Then He said to them, "Why do you sleep? Rise and pray, lest you enter into temptation," Luke 22:46, NKJV.

-Elder David Brett

Profile Of The Sect Of The Nazarene

I remember an old preacher saying many years ago, that we were living far below the privileges that attended our calling and election. And the reason? because we looked like ... thought like ... talked like ... behaved like, all the rest of the world – blending in with all that is the rest of the world, instead of standing out from all that is the rest of the world; permitting the spirit of the age admittance, and its rule from the abundance of our hearts and advancing the warfare that rages between the will of the flesh and the will of Yahweh.

But before proceeding further, I want to introduce two words to you, come from Ephesians 2:12: Commonwealth and Covenant – words related to each other, by definition and in practice and at the core of what follows.

It's far easier to profess and confess ourselves called out and separated – talking the talk, but hardly walking the walk – and to pretend sharing in the Commonwealth as an heir to the Covenants of Promise, than actually contributing to the Commonwealth and inheriting the Covenants of Promise through counting, then paying, the cost to the self: mutually pledging to one another, our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.

Yes, it's far easier to nurture an Ananias and Sapphira spirit who withheld to themselves more than what was convenient ... and that to their destruction, than it is to live up to being manifestly declared the epistle of Messiah, known and read of all men.

Pattern, Type, Figure of the Sect of the Nazarene

So, let us consider the profile of the first Sect of the Nazarene which is a pattern, type, figure shown us and which is expected by Yahweh, we should replicate.

This Sect of the Nazarene had its inception with men, called, chosen, and ordained by the Master to continue and complete the work He had inaugurated, and Who unequivocally declared to them, “Ye are the salt of the earth ... Ye are the light of the world ... Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven ... By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another” (Matt. 5:13, 14, 16; John 13:35). (*King James Version* used throughout, unless otherwise noted.)

They could not, of course, have begun to continue and complete His work until that notable Pentecost when they had been endued with Power from on High, and then Peter ... but one, “standing up with the eleven” (Acts 2:14) and noted as “unlearned and ignorant” (Acts 4:13) among them, spoke the first recorded message he had ever preached, and who had evoked from his audience such response that most Word expositors could only wish for: “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” (Acts 2:37).

So, with that introduction, let's look at Scripture. *Then they that gladly received his word were immersed: and the same day there were added [unto them] about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul; and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles, Acts 2:41-43.*

“... Many wonders and signs were done by the apostles ...” And among the first recorded following that Upper Room experience, was “a certain man lame from his mother's womb” (Acts 3:2) being raised up by the Apostles Peter and John – a work that caused no small stir among Jewry, a work providing yet another opportunity for Peter to practice his homiletical skills. We can only imagine the aura of these moments, because few of us have ever experienced being filled with wonder and amazement at some supernatural event.

Few of us have ever experienced being filled with such wonder and amazement that gave occasion to respond,

- > “It was never so seen,” (Matt. 9:33);
- > “We never saw it on this fashion,” (Mk. 2:12);
- > “We have seen strange things today,” (Lk.5:26);
- > “Never man spake like this man,” (John 7:46).

The Record of the first Sect of the Nazarene affirms that ‘signs, wonders, and amazements’ are the rewards that endure, the works destined to follow after the laborer and make up part of the pattern that we, too, should look toward with expectation. And what greater reward could there be, than that the Master should make addition to His Body of the such as should be saved, of them which are ordained to eternal life, and who are become the outcome of some manifesting themselves as ‘the salt of the earth and the light of the world,’ shining before men who are then moved to glorify Abba Yahweh ... yes, even with words,

- > “It was never so seen,” (Matt. 9:33);
- > “We never saw it on this fashion,” (Mk. 2:12);
- > “We have seen strange things today,” (Lk. 5:26);
- > “Never man spake like this man,” (John 7:46).

Today, More Commotion Than Devotion

But sometimes, instead of presenting ourselves as fervent in spirit and zealously affected in a good thing as they, we devise programs under color of ‘ministry’ to grow ourselves ... taking stock of our deficits, yes; but as the manner of some, comparing ourselves with others and measuring ‘success’ in terms of numbers, rather than devotion.

And so, like others, we inaugurate activities that cater more to the affections and lusts of the flesh than to create ministries that train, nurture and provoke faith and the doing of good works. We transform traditional venues of worship into contemporary and innovative, culturally-relevant ‘worship’ behaviors that excite more commotion than arouse what’s Good and Acceptable: Worship in Spirit and in Truth.

We shift the original purpose of media ministries, from bringing the message to homebound shut-ins whose health or disability precluded them from physically attending services, to accommodating the manner of some to forsake the Assembling of themselves together – an easier alternative for some who, having no particular health or disability issue to preclude them from coming to Assembly, to stay at home, still in their night apparel, seated in a comfortable armchair, eating breakfast from a TV tray as they give half (or less) attention to the pulpit and half (or more) attention to such distractions that

only a home can provide.

It was recognized that the traditional venue of worship doesn’t hold much appeal to a generation given more to hip-hop and its accouterments of light and sound than to guarding the meditations of the heart (lest these should proceed as the speech of the lip). With respect to the person of this demographic, we transform what ought to have been set apart, into something as common as a sporting event.

(Oh, yes, and we should be remiss if we didn’t mention that Assembly is a good place, too, to distract and draw away, tempt and entice, beset and overcome its attendees with casual, cultural relevance, as some come, attired as if they were going to a sporting event.)

And then, because we strive to become all things to all men, we form youth groups and invite public high school students to come together with our youth to unchaperoned all-night lock-ins in the Family Life Center where, who knows what occurs there.

Sabbaths, that ought to have been reserved for rest and a refraining from doing one’s own pleasure, moves over to the encroaching spirit of the age that assures us that we can handle giving into the flesh ... you know, here a little, there a little, oblivious to the Truth that in giving Satan an inch, he’ll soon become a ruler!

And because we want to be a today’s Assembly for today’s people, we host week-end get-aways for the young and the young-at-heart at the paintball emporium; marriage enrichment encounters for those needing a respite from the daily grind of actually making their nuptial covenant work. And not wanting to leave out the elderly among us, senior weekend excursions via motorcoach to Silver Dollar City and an evening with the Baldknobbers.

All these, and more, rival tribute to a Sabbath service of worship.

And to help finance all these ‘ministry’ undertakings, we open up for-fee child day care centers in the Assembly basement and cater to the *gentiles* by renting out our meeting halls for their wedding receptions and there also, convene trash-treasure sales, doughnut pastry sales, pancake suppers, Hillbilly auctions, Independence Day youth fireworks sales, salad tastings, etc., etc.

And in the interest of public service, we provide space in the Family Life Center for Addictions Anonymous and Celebrate Recovery meetings.

And the purpose of all this busyness? (Never mind that the King’s Business is left undone, or at best, unfinished.) Yes, as we were saying, and the purpose

of all this busyness? If we can just expose what we have to the larger community, then maybe.

Getting Back to the Sect of the Nazarene

But despite all this busyness, there was, and still is, no greater ‘sign, wonder, and amazement’ than a people becoming “the salt of the earth ... the light of the world” so letting the light of their good works and their love for one another shine before men.

Two times in the TORAH (Exodus 25:40 and Numbers 8:4) and once in the New Testament (Hebrews 8:5) we read the instruction Yahweh gave to Moses to make all the furnishings and apparel of the Tent of Meeting according to the pattern shown him at Sinai.

And so, it is, if we want to see and experience the growth (spiritually and physically) – the Master adding to His Body daily such as should be saved – then we ought probably to look at the pattern which the Record of the first Sect of the Nazarene provides for that growth.

Principally speaking, it was.

- love that brought them together; and,
- love that kept them together, sustaining them ... even through trials occurring during perilous times of persecution, infirmity, distress, and necessity, to stay together.

And the first principle underlying love is that they were all with one accord in one place – oh, maybe not necessarily altogether in one location, but certainly altogether, that is, perfectly joined together in mind, in speech, and in judgment ... agreeing together, that they might walk together which might even, encourage such practice, of “breaking bread from house to house” (Acts 2:46) and provide that means by which we might know who among us were suffering or being honored, so that we could suffer or rejoice with them.

It was precisely because they were perfectly joined together in mind, in speech, and in judgment that we are able to discern a pattern:

And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all [men], as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Acts 2:44-46

And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any [of them] that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection

of [Yahshua]: and great grace was upon them all. Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, And laid [them] down at the apostles’ feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need, Acts 4:32-35

And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; (and they were all with one accord in Solomon’s porch. ... And believers were the more added to the Master; multitudes both of men and women.) Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. There came also a multitude [out] of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one, Acts 5:12, 14-16

Indeed, it was precisely because “the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul” (Acts 4:32) that what’s become uncommon today, “great power” and “great grace,” were upon them all – yes, they, “the salt of the earth ... the light of the world ... a sign, wonder, and amazement ...” so shining before men who in seeing their good works, had reason and cause to glorify their Father which is in heaven.

Conclusion: A Pattern Shown to Us, Also

For [I mean] not that other men be eased, and ye burdened: But by an equality, [that] now at this time your abundance [may be a supply] for their want, that their abundance also may be [a supply] for your want: that there may be equality: As it is written, He that [had gathered] much had nothing over; and he that [had gathered] little had no lack, 2 Cor. 8:13-15.

Yes, this the measure of their love – from each according to his ability; to each according to his need – fulfilling His Word, working no ill or hardship toward another; none saying of the things over which they were but stewards, were theirs ... acknowledging rather, all they ‘owned’ was but ‘loaned’ them by Him from Whom every good thing, and every perfect thing proceeds.

Yes, this the measure of their love – holding all things in common, so that it became common that without malice or malintent, each pledged to one another, their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor – that pattern being shown to us also, beholding how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity ~ a common practice for that First Sect of the Nazarene.

-Elder John Reece

HELL: FACT OR FICTION?

Fire and brimstone? A place of everlasting torment and punishment? There are four words used for Hell in the Scriptures.

1. *Sheol*, a grave or pit. Exclusively used in the Old Testament Tanach, an acronym for the *Torah* (the Law), the *Nebi'im* (the Prophets), and the *Kethubim* (the Writings).
2. *Hades*, a Greek word and equivalent to the Hebrew, *Sheol*.
3. *Gehenna*, literally, a reference to the valley of Hinnom – a refuse dump, near the gate of potsherds, where fire consumed garbage, the offal of sacrificial animals, and bodies of criminals. Symbolically, it represents the Lake of Fire
4. *Tartaroo*, the deepest abyss of *Hades*, used only in 2 Peter 2:4, a place reserved for the fallen angels held in chains of darkness and awaiting the Judgment.

Hell is used 31 times as *Sheol* in the *Tanach*, 23 times in *Brit Chadasha* (New Testament) – twelve times as *Gehenna*, ten as *Hades*, and once as *Tartaroo*.

Hell, a Place of Everlasting Torment?

The concept of hell as an everlasting place of punishment, of fire and brimstone, comes from folklore, Greek fables, and from “The Divine Comedy” written in the 14th century by the Italian playwright, Dante Aleghieri – an allegory of the history of politics – and, as the name suggests, contrary in meaning to the Old Testament *Sheol* and the New Testament *Hades*.

The patriarchs of the Old Testament all died, and understood death as but a state of “sleep” ... in the grave, awaiting resurrection. Yahweh told Moses that he should die, but clearly saying, “Behold, thou shalt sleep with thy fathers ...” (Deut. 31:16. King David, too, that when his time should come to die, he would sleep with his fathers (2 Sam. 7:12).

Now, let’s look at Scripture for other examples:

*Why died I not from the womb? [why] did I [not] give up the spirit when I came out of the belly? ... For now should I have lain still and been quiet, I should have slept: then had I been at rest, with kings and counselors of the earth, which built desolate palaces for themselves; or with princes that had gold, who filled their houses with silver: or as an hidden untimely birth I had not been; as infants [which] never saw light. There the wicked cease [from] troubling; and there the weary be at rest. [There] the prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the oppressor. The small and great are there; and the servant [is] free from his master. Wherefore is it given to him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter [in] soul, Job 3:11, 13-20. (The **King James Version** used throughout)*

My days are past, my purposes are broken off, even the thoughts of my heart. ... If I wait, the grave is mine house: I have made my bed in the darkness. ... And where is now my hope? ... If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come, Job 17:11, 13 15, 14:14.

The Psalmist David wrote, *As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness,* Psalm 17:15. These Scriptures speak of resurrection. (Read 1 Corinthians 15.)

... and where [are] the dwelling places of the wicked? ... and do ye not know their tokens, that the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction? They shall be brought forth to the day of wrath. ... Yet shall he be brought to the grave, and shall remain in the tomb, Job 21:28-30, 32.

He looketh upon men, and [if any] say, "I have sinned, and perverted [that which was] right, and it profited me not": he will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light. Lo, all these [things] worketh Yahweh oftentimes with man, to bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living, Job 33:28-30.

Setting the Record Straight

Don't believe everything you hear or read as Truth. Prove all things. Be a Berean, test everything with the Scripture. Yahweh is not the author of confusion, or delusion, and neither can His Word be broken. Paul in 2 Timothy 2:15 instructs the student of Scripture to study to show himself a workman approved of Yahweh, that he might without shame rightly divide the Word of Truth.

We must clear up some references to "hell" in the *Brit Chadashah* (the New Testament). First of all, the "hell" to which "fire and brimstone" preachers allude, is the Lake of Fire in Revelation 19:20. Yes, there it mentions "fire and brimstone" ... a repository into which the beast and the false prophet are cast. But there is no mention there of eternal gnashing of teeth, pain, torment, or suffering.

Yahshua in the Evangel, declares the Truth:

"And I say unto you my friends, 'Be not afraid of them that kill the body ... but are not able to kill the soul ... and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you Whom ye shall fear ... rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna ... yea, I say unto you, fear Him'" (Matt. 10:28; Luke 12:4-5).

Scripture suggests that the wicked are "swallowed

down" as if they never existed (Obad. 1:16).

The Psalmist confirms this: *For evildoers shall be cut off ... For yet a little while, and the wicked [shall] not [be]: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it [shall] not [be],* Psalm 37:9, 10.

Malachi 4:1, 3 makes it clear:

"For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up," saith Yahweh of hosts, "It shall leave them neither root nor branch. ... for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do [this], saith Yahweh of hosts."

Our beloved brother Paul affirms that punishment for sin is death (Rom. 6:23), not everlasting torture in a "hell fire." The Psalmist says furthermore, "Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more" (Psa. 104:35).

Peter tells of fire, reserved against the day of judgment and perdition of the unrighteous when they, together with their works, shall pass away and be dissolved with fervent heat – along with "the heavens and the earth, which are now" passing away with a great noise, and its elements also – in that day of the Sovereign One, Who will come as a thief in the night (2 Pet. 3:7, 10-11).

Of Unquenchable Fire, Worms, Outer Darkness, and Gnashing of Teeth

Let's start with Mark's Evangel, Chapter 9, Verses 43-47, which are a parallel to Isaiah's prophecy in Chapter 66, Verses 22-24.

First of all, Yahweh speaks of "new heavens and the new earth" (Isa. 66:22) that shall remain before Yahweh, following the passing of "the heavens and the earth, which are now." Then, He says in Verse 23, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, all flesh shall come and to worship before him. In Verse 24, we read these Hebrew idioms, "for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched" which also appears three times successively, in Mark 9:43-48.

These "phrases" aren't speaking of eternal torment but rather, consumption that is both determined and decreed (Isa. 10:22-23). This same "unquenchable fire" was employed by Yahweh before, when at Sodom and Gomorrah and all the plain and all the inhabitants of the cities and what grew upon the ground (Gen. 19:24-25) were reduced to ashes and salt in the day that Yahweh rained down fire and brimstone upon them. There's nothing here spoken about gnashing of teeth or eternal torment, only obliteration and absolute consumption.

Deuteronomy 4:24 declares, *For Yahweh thy Elohim [is] a consuming fire, even a jealous Elohim*, and is corroborated in Hebrews 12:29. Little wonder the writer of Hebrews would also assert, [It is] a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living Elohim, Hebrews 10:31.

And I say unto you, "That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the Kingdom of Heaven. But the children of the Kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth," Matthew 8:11-2.

First of all, darkness is defined as the absence of light. Light can be measured on a scale of lumens or watts to unlimited brightness. The lower the lumen or wattage, the dimmer the light. Turn off altogether light, and there is total darkness ... like the creepy sort of darkness when one is in the depth of a cave, and the lights are turned out – even such darkness that can be felt, as when Yahweh plagued Egypt with darkness (Exod. 10:21).

Scientifically then, darkness isn't something that exists, it's the void of light that gives substance, form (read Genesis 1:1-4). Yahshua is Light, so to be "cast into outer darkness" is to become separated from Yahweh and Yahshua, the Elohim!

In Psalm 35, David entreats Yahweh to fight against them that fight against him (v. 1). We get a hint here, that he is speaking prophetically of the Anointed One:

But in mine adversity they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together: yea, the abjects gathered themselves together against me, and I knew it not; they did tear me, and ceased not: with hypocritical mockers in feasts, they gnashed upon me with their teeth, Psalm 35:15-16.

Hypocrites, their preaching scarcely agrees with their practice. The phrase, "gnashing with their teeth" is related to "cutting asunder," exegetically, and respectively, G.1031, meaning to grate the teeth (in pain or rage) and G.1371, meaning to cut; to bisect, i.e., by extension, to flog severely which is what hypocrites do with their tongues.

An example: In the matter of the Deacon Stephen's apologetic which he addressed to them who were in dissension against him (Acts 6:9) and who were as much put off by him because "they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake" (Acts 6:10), when he had finished his discourse, "they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth" (Acts 7:54) which as far more the sense of "grating the teeth in rage" than being in

a place of perpetual torment!

Other examples of "gnashing with their teeth" (grating the teeth in rage) follow:

All thine enemies have opened their mouth against thee: they hiss (call out in scorn) and gnash the teeth: they say, "We have swallowed [her] up: certainly this [is] the day we have looked for; we have found, we have seen [it]," Lamentations 2:16.

He teareth [me] in his wrath, who hateth me: he gnasheth upon me with his teeth; mine enemy sharpeneth his eyes upon me, Job 16:9.

The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth, Psalm 37:12.

[There is] a generation [that] curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother. [There is] a generation [that are] pure in their own eyes, and [yet] is not washed from their filthiness. [There is] a generation, O how lofty are their eyes! and their eyelids are lifted up. [There is] a generation, **whose teeth [are as] swords, and their jaw teeth [as] knives, to devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from [among] men,** Proverbs 30:11-14. (emphasis, ours).

What of the Fixed Great Gulf?

And so, what about the rich man and Lazarus? Ah, yes, the one "parable" taken literally by the ever-burning, hell fire and brimstone preachers! Many have used this parable to illustrate that one can end his mortality in a torturous hell.

First of all, a parable is but a proverbial or metaphorical allegory, using figurative language with which an audience might understand to convey a moral truth. For example: The dead speaking, vis-à-vis, Abel's blood crying out from the ground (Gen. 4:10), or the trees speaking in choosing a king (Judg. 9:8). What is presented to us in Luke 16:19-31, is but one parable among many which the Master taught. Let's consider this parable:

There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell (hades) he lift up his eyes, being in torments and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, "Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in

water; and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.” But Abraham said, “Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that [would come] from thence,” Luke 16:19-26.

Let’s examine some key elements here:

1. Lazarus (G.2976, probably of Hebrew origin, from H.499 *Elazar*, meaning, “Eloha is helper.”)
2. “Clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day” (v. 19) – the estate of rich men and particularly, of royalty and of whom Yahshua affirmed in another place, “How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of Yahweh” (Mark 10:23).
3. We have already noted parenthetically, that “hell” here is *hades*, defined earlier in this treatise as, “grave.”
4. Both die: The rich man “grieves” in his grave, while Lazarus has been carried away (resurrected) – the thesis of this parable – into the bosom of Abraham, and why? because Lazarus, like his father Abraham, was obedient, kept Yahweh’s charge, His Commandments, His Statutes, His Law (Gen. 26:5).
5. “Being in torments” – (G.3600, *odunao*, to grieve: sorrow, torment); “tormented

by this flame” (G.5395, *phlox*, to flash, that is, a past life revealed in the bright light of Truth, and reason enough for grief and sorrow) – and will likely become that experience of very many ... a flash, in a moment in the twinkling of an eye (1 Cor. 15:52) when the books are opened, and the Book of Life (Rev. 20:12).

6. “A great gulf fixed” – (G.5490, *chasma*, to “gape” or, “yawn”; a “chasm” or, vacancy; impassable interval).
7. “They which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, *that would come* from thence” – a stark reminder, that now, in the life that is, is the accepted time to behold the day of salvation; to make one’s calling and election sure, so that there might be a life that shall be ... reserved in Heaven, that is both incorruptible and undefiled.

Conclusion

Then he said, “I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father’s house: For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.” Abraham saith unto him, “They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.” And he said, “Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent,” Luke 16:27-31.

These five verses are key to understanding the parable. First of all, One did rise from the dead – Yahshua ha Maschiach, the Blessed and Only Potentate, the King of kings, and Sovereign of masters, Who only has immortality (1 Tim. 6:14-16). But secondly, seeing that to Israel belong the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and giving of the Law, and the service of Eloha, and the promises (Rom. 9:4), it was first necessary that The Message be spoken to them because to them, the oracles were first committed (Rom. 3:2).

We who are Israel cannot then, dispense with the Law and the Prophets, because These are the foundation upon which our faith is built.

So, Hell: Fact or Fiction? Which Hell are you talking about? Fire and brimstone, a place of everlasting torture and punishment (*Gehenna*), or the grave (*Sheol/Hades*)? Now, in a time accepted, you’d better decide before you take that ride!

-Brother Ruben G. Aragon/Aparicio





QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Q I have a question on the topic of cutting your beard. I have noticed that your organization does not push that law. Could you explain your position on this law with Scripture?

A The custom, not the law, of having a beard was pretty much the standard for people of ancient societies. *It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments,* Psalms 133:2. The Egyptians didn't follow this custom, and in fact may not have been able to grow much of a beard even if they wanted to, similar to the Native Americans.

Israelites were able to grow beards. Notice that Joseph, a servant of Yahweh, shaved:

Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon: and he shaved himself, and changed his raiment, and came in unto Pharaoh, Genesis 41:14.

Pagans, like the Babylonians, would shape and cut their beards into funny shapes –something Yahweh didn't want His people doing, He didn't want them acting pagan.

Ye shall not round the corners of your heads, neither shalt thou mar the corners of thy beard, Leviticus 19:27.



They shall not make baldness upon their head. Neither shall they shave off the corner of their beard, nor make any cuttings in their flesh, Leviticus 21:5. During times of distress, mourning, or grief, it was quite common to shave or even pluck (which would be painful) one's beard.

And when I heard this thing, I rent my garment and my mantle, and plucked off the hair of my head and of my beard, and sat down astonished (astonished), Ezra 9:3.

He is gone up to Bajith, and to Dibon, the high places, to weep: Moab shall howl over Nebo, and over Medeba: on all their heads shall be baldness, and every beard cut off, Isaiah 15:2.

Old photos or videos from the “Roaring Twenties” show almost everyone with hats. If we could have a picture today from ancient tribes, we'd see the men would have full beards. You won't see everyone wearing hats today, and neither will you see all men wearing beards. It is not unlawful to go without a beard, but in some cultures today, it may be out of place not to have one.

Q I realize the Bible says to pray three times a day. Is this something we should strive for?

A We are to have an attitude of prayer throughout each day (1 Thess. 5:1-18). At times we also go to our figurative prayer closet (Matt. 6:6). Sometimes, we just don't know how to pray (Rom. 8:26).

We know that Daniel prayed three times a day on his knees and that it was toward Jerusalem (Dan. 6:10). It may have been geared toward times in which he ate (breakfast, lunch, and dinner), which is often when people pray today, but that is conjecture on our part.

What we do know is, there is no set standard (for example, in times of, nor location of, nor even the position of one's body) when praying each day. This is, however, an example outline given by the Messiah Himself, which is often wrongly spoken verbatim by some.

We can recall in Scripture the use of outstretched hands (Isa. 1:15), looking toward heaven (Matt. 14:19), standing (Mark 11:25), kneeling (1 King 8:54), laying prostrate (Exod. 34:8-9), etc. These are all examples, having one thing common: a humble attitude.

The thing to strive for is to have the proper attitude, being thankful and giving praise each day, to the One deserving of such from His creation.

Q Are the Palestinians in Jerusalem today the Jebusites mentioned in Joshua 15:63 and Judges 1:21? Or rather, are the Palestinians of today the Philistines of old? In Exodus 23:32-33 Yahweh states not to make a covenant with the Philistines nor let them dwell in their land. Does this hold true today with the Palestinians?

A When Israel crossed the Jordan, they were told to kill off the seven vile nations in the land and let none survive, nor were they to marry or have any social contact with them. They were to destroy their idols & images, burn their altars & rid the land of paganism (Deut. 7:1-6).

When Yahweh thy Elohim shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou; And when Yahweh thy Elohim shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, [and] utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them, Deuteronomy 7:1-2 ASV.

Israel never did cleanse the land of these seven heathen nations, for they are still a problem described in the book of Judges. The offspring of these nations may well be there even today and are they Yahshua fights before He attends the wedding supper, where His garments are stained with blood. Revelation 19:13:

And He [was] clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and His Name is called The Word of Yahweh.

He comes from Edom (Esau) Isaiah 63:1-7, obviously a play on words (e.g., red, adam, etc.), but still pointing to the Messiah. It is difficult to identify the peoples today that are mentioned in early Scripture, but it is clear that all can be part of Israel (Rom. 9-11). See our study entitled, *The Hope of Israel*.

Q How can I determine what tribe I come from?

A It is unlikely that any of us can determine of which tribe we are, but in Messiah, we can enter through the gate of Judah. *It [New Jerusalem] had a great and high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names were written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel, Revelation 21:12, NASB.*

And, remember, skin color doesn't matter. *And have put on the new self, which is continually being renewed in fuller and fuller knowledge, closer and*

closer to the image of its Creator. The new self allows no room for discriminating between Gentile and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, foreigner, savage, slave, free man; on the contrary, in all, the Messiah is everything, Colossians 3:10-11, Complete Jewish Bible.

Q The Bible (ex. Psalms, Proverbs) talks a lot about getting knowledge, specifically, what kind of knowledge is it referring to?

A The heart of an individual can be toward helping or being helped, giving to others or seeking to get. When King Solomon had started out, he had the right attitude:

Solomon said to Elohim, "You have dealt with my father David with great lovingkindness, and have made me king in his place. Now, O Yahweh Elohim, Your promise to my father David is fulfilled, for You have made me king over a people as numerous as the dust of the earth. Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people, for who can rule this great people of Yours?" 2 Chronicles 1:8-10.

Yahweh's response was favorable toward him as he asked rightly to help others. He was also granted more than he asked, receiving wealth and long life. If we relate this to ourselves, we can also do well if we ask rightly.

Yahshua said that Mary had chosen the good part; speaking of being discipled by Him. We should also choose this and study the Word of Yahweh, which the Messiah lived by in the Spirit of Yahweh. *For Yahweh gives wisdom; from His mouth comes knowledge and understanding, Proverbs 2:6 (also Deut. 8:3; Matt. 4:4).*

This does not mean we cannot be schooled in knowledge of science, math, etc. But in the end, there is understanding that is gleaned from living according to Yahweh's Word.

Your commandments make me wiser than my enemies, for they are ever mine. I have more insight than all my teachers, for Your testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the aged, because I have observed Your precepts, Psalm 119:98-100.

More Questions and Answers and over 100 studies are available for viewing online @ yaiy.org. Please contact us if you have Biblical questions of your own.

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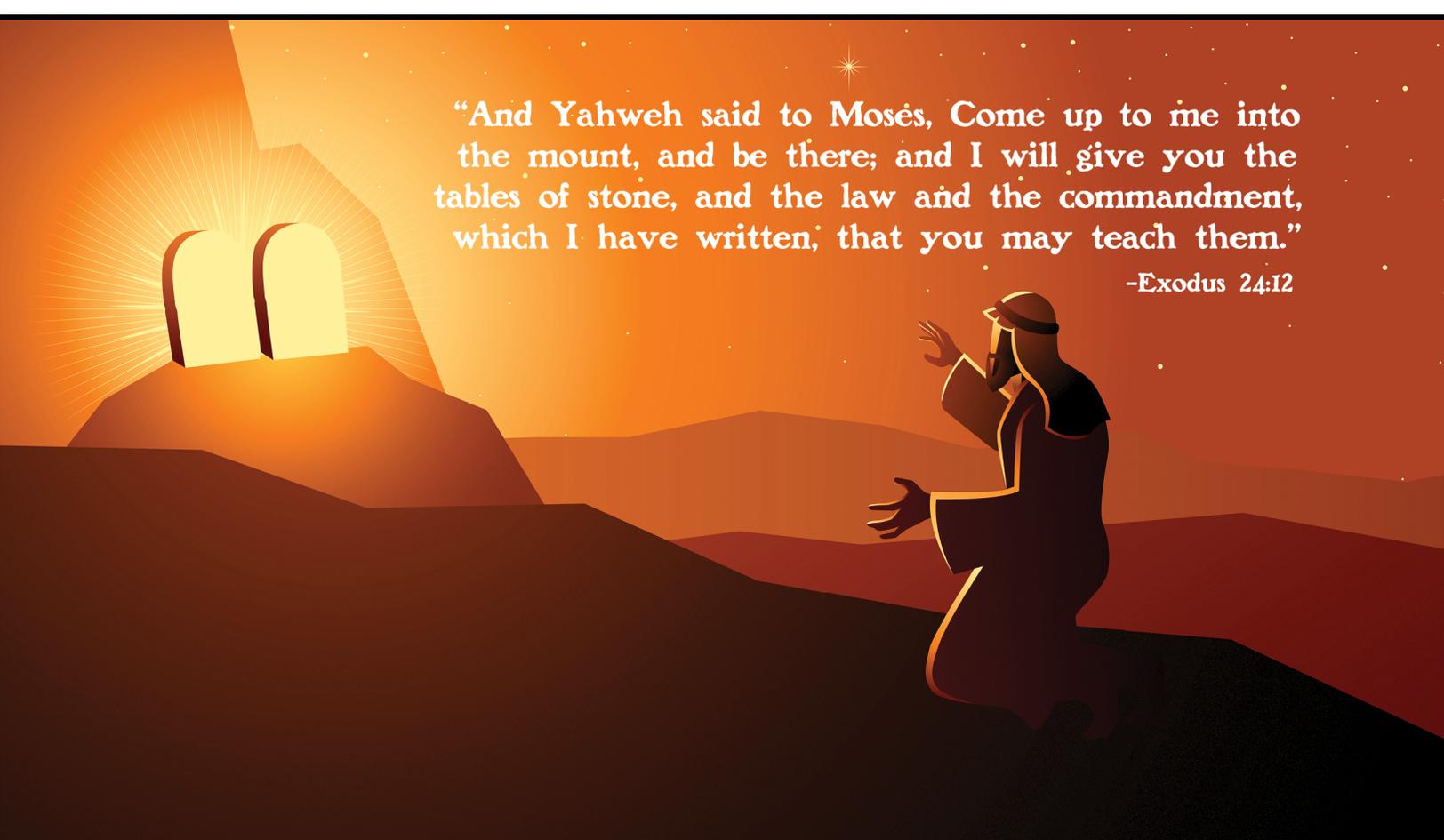
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An illustration of Moses in a desert landscape, kneeling and receiving the Ten Commandments. The scene is set against a warm, orange and red sky with a bright sun or moon on the left, casting rays. The ground is dark and rocky. The text is overlaid on the right side of the illustration.

“And Yahweh said to Mosès, Come up to me into
the mount, and be there; and I will give you the
tables of stone, and the law and the commandment,
which I have written; that you may teach them.”

-Exodus 24:12