



YAIY BEACON

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Choices
The Paradox of the Trees
One Step Closer to Paradise
The Sabbath Changeth Not
Food for Thought
A House Divided (Mark 3:25)
Appointed Times of Leviticus 23

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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CHOICES

Our lives are the sum of our choices



Our lives are the sum of our choices. This statement is straightforward, but we should also consider another variable: Our lives impact others' lives.

To that end, therefore, we must work on ourselves ... not giving place to ego or pride by comparing ourselves to others (2 Cor. 10:12); not thinking ourselves as something more than what we appear before others to be (2 Cor. 12:6); and certainly, not nitpicking others we think could be doing better. The truth is, we can all do better! We'd do well, regarding Yahshua's observation:

*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? Or 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 7:3-5. (The **New American Standard Bible** (1995) used throughout, unless otherwise noted.)*

We should be focused upon lifting up others – especially, the body of Messiah – helping them to experience good and fruitful lives (1 Cor. 14:12; Eph. 4:29; 1 Thess. 5:11). We'd like to see a domino effect of good things passed on to others.

We're Not There, Yet

Concerning choices, we're not at the end of our physical lives. Death will mark the accumulation and sum of our choices. Our works will follow after us, good and bad (Rev. 14:13). Hopefully, either by the return of Messiah Yahshua or by the time of our end, we will have built up much good in our character so that we enter into eternal life. Help proceeds from the Father and the Son, empowering us to do the Father's will, perfectly (Heb. 13:21; Phil. 2:13).

The Master enjoined us to be perfect even as our Heavenly Father is perfect (Matt. 5:38). This is our goal. As a child learns, so do the disciples of the Master. Like young children maturing as they grow older, we, too, are growing spiritually and becoming better at discerning right from wrong (Heb. 5:14), choosing and cleaving to what is good and abhorring and shunning what is evil (Rom. 12:9; 1 Pet. 3:11). Like children, we proceed from a spiritual crawl (beginning with our humbly coming to contrite repentance) to walking and then running.

Whoever is wise, let him understand these things; whoever is discerning, let him know them. For the ways of Yahweh are right, and the righteous will walk in them, but transgressors will stumble in them, Hosea 14:9.

Our understanding of the Word of Yahweh becomes clearer and much more incorporated into our lives as we practice what is preached and become aligned with Yahweh's Spirit and truth (John 4:23-24).

Our physical growth is measurable and so also, is our spiritual maturity:

Simon Peter, a bond-servant and apostle of Yahshua Messiah, to those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours, by the righteousness of our Elohim and Savior, Yahshua Messiah: seeing

that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and righteousness, through the true knowledge of Him Who called us by His own glory and excellence. For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust. Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, righteousness, and in your righteousness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Master Yahshua Messiah. For he who lacks these qualities is blind or short-sighted, having forgotten his purification from his former sins, 2 Peter 1:1-9.

If we are unwilling to grow, then we will be like a dead tree, needing to be cut down.

Bad Trees Cut Down

It bears repeating (as we do in many of our messages) that the reason for the Messiah having come was to forgive our past sins (Acts 13:38), not to continue in them (Rom. 3:24-25, 6:1-2).

John, the immerser had something to say to the “religious” of his day ... disobedient Pharisees and Sadducees, in need of being cleansed from their sins. John’s baptism was one of repentance (Luke 3:3; Acts 19:4). He enjoined their repentance before being baptized.

But when he (John) saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Therefore bear fruit in keeping with repentance; and do not suppose that you can say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham for our father’; for I say to you that from these stones Elohim is able to raise up children to Abraham. The axe is already laid at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire,” Matthew 3:7-10.



This is John’s point to them, and to those of “religion” today. One should not think he can continue sinning with impunity

Yahshua also, emphasized this first requirement of repentance, saying,

Now on the same occasion there were some present who reported to Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. And Yahshua said to them, “Do you suppose that these Galileans were greater sinners than all other Galileans because they suffered this fate? I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. Or do you suppose that those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them were worse culprits than all the men who live in Jerusalem? I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish,” Luke 13:1-5.

Following His recounting of these occurrences, Yahshua speaks

a parable about an unproductive fig tree. It was given time, three years during which it was cared for, and was destined for the axe except for the plea of the husbandman who appealed for yet one more year at the end of which, if it had not borne fruit it should be cut down rather than continue to encumber the ground (Luke 13:6-9). That was the ruling; it will also be the ruling for those who know better but refuse to produce good fruit.

This parable also relates to another, of the talents in which a steward to whom was given a portion of his master’s substance to invest for the purpose of gain, that upon his return he should have his own together with the usury it had earned, instead buried what had been committed to his trust. And when his master returned, the unprofitable servant was cast out into outer darkness in which there would be weeping and gnashing of teeth – obviously, an indirect reference to the lake of fire and second death (Matt. 25:14-30). (Request your free mini-study entitled, ***Just One Resurrection?*** and the in-depth booklet called, ***Understanding Hellfire.***)

Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment, John 5:28-29.

Choose Life

Choice is the product of man's exercise of free will bestowed upon humanity by the Creator. That choice, proceeding from man's exercise of free will, can result in a positive or a negative outcome. Yahweh had set life and good, death and evil, blessing and cursing, before ancient Israel before they stepped across the Jordan into Canaan (Deut. 30:15, 19) then urged this people Israel to choose life. We, too, are told to choose life for a reason: That we live and fulfill the purpose Yahweh has in mind. Observing Yahweh's way of living is always right.

Trust in Yahweh with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear Yahweh and turn away from evil, Proverbs 3:5-7.

Trusting and acknowledging Yahweh in all our ways means that we are choosing life on a minute-by-minute, hour-by-hour, and day-by-day basis. This process defines our long-term goals and plans. While we don't always know what's best, Yahweh has a way of directing us to the best outcome if we commit everything we do, to Him. If we commit our works to Yahweh, our plans will be established (Prov. 16:3).

*The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear Elohim and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person. For Elohim will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil, Ecclesiastes 12:13-14. (Read our mini-study, **The Hope of Israel.**)*

Negative Outcomes

Do not be deceived, Elohim is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life, Galatians 6:7-8.

Let's take a look at the outcome of some of the decisions made by individuals in Scripture.

Adam and Eve, listening to Satan, sinned against Yahweh and lost their place in the Garden of Eden and access to the Tree of Life (Gen. 31-24). What Yahweh intended for a blessing, became a curse to them.

Cain was jealous of his brother Abel because of Yahweh having greater respect toward the younger's offering and subsequently murdered his brother. Cain was then forced to live as a fugitive the remainder of his life, spared from another's vengeance because of a sevenfold requital Yahweh would impose upon any who would slay him.

In Genesis, chapter 11, we read of a people who thought to make a name for themselves, instead of honoring Yahweh by lifting His Name to be esteemed. – just like Satan in the account in Isaiah 14 – by building a tower whose top would reach to heaven. This they did, in rebellion against Yahweh's commandment that man should “be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth” (Gen. 1:28). For Yahweh had created the earth to be inhabited (Isa. 45:18). Consequently, their language was confused into many languages, forcing them to abandon their foolish endeavor.

Abraham and Sarah, and their posterity through Isaac, have suffered the consequences of making a bad choice. Principally, leaning to their own understanding and not trusting Yahweh to fulfill His promise of giving them a child in their old age. Abraham deferred to Sarah's suggestion that he take to himself her Egyptian handmaid, and a child named Ishmael issued from them. Ishmael's progeny has ever since, been a thorn in the side of Israel.

Esau (Edom) lost his birthright as the elder son, by rejecting it for a bowl of lentil stew (Gen. 25:30-34). His father Isaac, in bestowing a secondary blessing upon him, prophesied that he would serve his brother Jacob (Israel), besides living by the sword (Gen. 27:37-40). He vowed to slay his brother Jacob. Indeed, Israel's and Esau's descendants have been in a family feud ever since. The prophet Obadiah foretells the end of Esau's descendants.

Moses, in his frustration with the people's continued rebellion against Yahweh, struck the rock he'd been commanded to speak to, in providing them with water in the wilderness (Num. 20:10). His own act of disobedience, however, precluded him from being able to go into the promised land, despite his appeal to Yahweh he be permitted to do so (Deut. 3:26).

Positive Outcomes

Reflecting on the positive outcomes of past decisions, we read of persons like Job who, though having lost flocks and herds, a very large substance, and his seven children also, and being encouraged by his wife to curse Yahweh and then die, instead rebuked his wife for her foolhardy suggestion, and worshipped Yahweh, saying,

“Naked I came from my mother's womb and naked I shall return there. Yahweh gave and Yahweh has taken away. Blessed be the Name of Yahweh.” Through all this Job did not sin nor did he blame Elohim, Job 1:21-22 declaring, moreover,

“though He slay me, I will hope in Him (Job 13:15).

Little wonder, that with this attitude, Yahweh restored the fortunes of Job when he prayed for his friends and increased all his substance twofold ... blessing his latter days more than his beginning (Job 42:10, 1:2).

Job teaches us that even in seasons of trouble, we should keep the following Scripture in mind:

“For I know the plans that I have for you,” declares Yahweh, “plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope,” Jeremiah 29:11.

While this is a reference to Judah who eventually went into Babylonian captivity due to their persistent sinning, these words also speak to those whom Yahweh calls.

Noah lived at a time when the wickedness was great upon the earth; a time when every imagination of the thoughts of men’s hearts was only evil continually (Gen. 6:5). Yet, the Scripture concludes of him, as it does of Job who was “blameless, upright, fearing Elohim, and turning away from evil” (Job 1:1), that he was a righteous man, blameless in his time, walking with Elohim and finding grace in the eyes of Yahweh (Gen. 6:9, 8). He and his entire family were sanctified and blessed, and once the waters receded, were issued the same commandment as the Creator gave to Adam: to be fruitful and multiply (Gen. 19:1, 1:28). All the families of the earth have come from Noah and his sons.

Abraham (exalted father of a great multitude), too, made some good decisions. Of all the Bible personalities, He alone has the honorable distinction of being called a friend of Yahweh (2 Chron. 20:7; Isa. 41:8; James 2:23). Of him, it is written, *For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of Yahweh, to do justice and judgment; that Yahweh may bring upon Abraham that which He hath spoken of him,* Genesis 18:19, **KJV**. Abraham proceeded through the line of Shem, one of Noah’s sons who were saved on the ark.

By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is Elohim, Hebrews 11:8-10.

Of honorable mention is he in the Scriptures

... a man who was not weak in faith; who neither staggered at the promise of Yahweh through unbelief, but was strong in faith; fully persuaded that what Yahweh had promised, He was able also to perform and whose faith, therefore, was counted to him for righteousness (Rom. 4:19-22).

To walk in the kind of faith is pleasing to Yahweh – a faith which produced a favorable outcome, seen in all the earth.

Yahweh speaking to Isaac, said, *I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven, and will give your descendants all these lands; and by your descendants all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; because Abraham obeyed Me and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes and My laws,* Genesis 26:4-5.

Be a Blessing, and Be Blessed

Many Psalms are written by David, that man after Yahweh’s own heart (1 Sam. 13:14). And quite a few of them start with “Bless Yahweh!” How did King David bless Yahweh? Well, when he was reproved of sin, he immediately repented and stopped doing those things which were contrary to Yahweh’s Word. In his actions, he showed his faith and his obedience became a blessing to Yahweh.

Blessing Yahweh by word and action will help us obtain a good outcome. Faith, too, is integral in blessing Yahweh. We mention Yahweh because *without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to Elohim must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him,* Hebrews 11:6.

Moreover, we bless Yahweh by seeking the well-being of others, giving instead of getting, as

Let no one seek his own [good], but that of his neighbor, 1 Corinthians 10:24 and,

Do not [merely] look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others, Philippians 2:4 and,

In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Master Yahshua, that He Himself said, “It is more blessed to give than to receive,” Acts 20:35.

Sometimes, Suffering Just Happens

Sometimes, suffering just happens. But for the saints there truly is a purpose. In his notable faith chapter, the author of Hebrews mentions those who experienced mockings and scourgings, yes, also chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, sawn asunder, put to death with the sword. Destitute,

afflicted, ill-treated, they wandered about in deserts and mountains and caves and holes in the ground, appareled in sheepskins and goatskins (Heb. 11:36-38). They suffered because Satan, the prince of this world, is in the world, seeking whom he may kill and destroy, and the whole world suffers because of it. Yes, Yahweh allows suffering even among the saints. And, yes, even by the hand of Satan.

Yahshua's disciples all suffered. Indeed, all that live righteously, will suffer (2 Tim. 3:12). The Apostle Paul, suffered more ... perhaps because he inflicted more upon the saints. However, from his own weakness and suffering, he became strong, not trusting in himself. He concluded,

Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we received mercy, we do not lose heart, but we have renounced the things hidden because of shame, not walking in craftiness or adulterating the word of Yahweh, but by the manifestation of truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of Yahweh. And even if our evangel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the evangel of the glory of Messiah, Who is the image of Yahweh. For we do not preach ourselves but Messiah Yahshua as Master, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Yahshua's sake. For Elohim, Who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of Elohim in the face of Messiah. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of Elohim and not from ourselves; we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed, 2 Corinthians 4:1-9.

Rejoice, Knowing the Outcome

Can we rejoice in suffering ... especially if, for righteousness' sake, we suffer? Suffering serves to challenge us. The Apostle Peter observed:

In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Yahshua Messiah; and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, 1 Peter 1:6-8.

Paul agrees, writing in Romans 5:3-5:

And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; and hope does not disappoint, because the love of Elohim has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit which was given to us.

We know that it is through much tribulation that we must enter into eternal life. While suffering is set at variance with human nature, we can embrace suffering, for through the power of Yahweh's Spirit within us, who can be against us? (Rom. 8:31). Not even the struggles we face can overcome us if we walk in the power of Him Who is within us. Therefore, we strive toward the end, in order to be worthy of the Kingdom to come.

This was the encouragement the Apostles provided to, and received from, the Assembly of Thessalonica:

Paul and Silvanus and Timothy, to the assembly of the Thessalonians in Elohim our Father and the Master Yahshua Messiah: Grace to you and peace from Elohim the Father and the Master Yahshua Messiah. We ought always to give thanks to Elohim for you, brethren, as is only fitting, because your faith is greatly enlarged, and the love of each one of you toward one another grows ever greater; therefore, we ourselves speak proudly of you among the assemblies of Elohim for your perseverance and faith in the midst of all your persecutions and afflictions which you endure. This is a plain indication of Elohim's righteous judgment so that you will be considered worthy of the kingdom of Elohim, for which indeed you are suffering, 2 Thessalonians 1:1-5.

Love Like a Seed is to Grow

As we just read, "the love of each one of you toward one another grows ever greater." Love, growing ever greater toward one another – this is how it should be, the culmination of Peter's illustration of the progression of grace, beginning with faith (2 Pet. 1:5-7) ... like Paul's digest in 1 Corinthians 13:13 – *But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love.*

Conversely, love which is the progressive culmination of the work of faith in the Apostles' epistolary dissertations, is mentioned as the first attribute of the Fruit of the Spirit presented in Galatians 5:22-23. The eight attributes which follow – joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control – may be

thought then, as products of love, appropriately describing the character of Yahweh Whom John says is, LOVE: *The one who does not love does not know Elohim, for Elohim is Love*, 1 John 4:8.

It is through the Spirit (Yahweh is Spirit) of Love that we grow. After faith and repentance, we continue to grow through outward demonstration of an inward Source.

Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart, for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring Word of Elohim, 1 Peter 1:22-23.

In Conclusion

We began this treatise by asserting our lives are the sum of our choices. We can change direction at any time but we are advised by Scripture, once we've embarked on the direction Yahweh wants us to go, to continue moving forward – forgetting those things which are behind (Phil. 3:13). Yahshua informs us that once we put our hands on the plow, if we should look back, we're not fit for the Kingdom of Elohim (Luke 9:62).

We looked at examples from Scripture whose outcomes were not good when men made wrong choices. On the other hand, good outcomes proceeded from right choices. The Record bears witness that one can change his outcome, however, by changing his disposition. Note Ezekiel 18:20-32:

The person who sins will die. The son will not bear the punishment for the father's iniquity, nor will the father bear the punishment for the son's iniquity; the righteousness of the righteous will be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked will be upon himself. But if the wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed and observes all My statutes and practices justice and righteousness, he shall surely live; he shall not die. All his transgressions which he has committed will not be remembered against him; because of his righteousness which he has practiced, he will live.

"Do I have any pleasure in the death of the wicked," declares Yahweh Elohim, "rather than that he should turn from his ways and live?" But when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness, commits iniquity and does according to all the abominations that a wicked man does, will he live? All his righteous deeds which he has done will not be remembered for his treachery which he has committed and his sin which he has committed; for them he will die. Yet

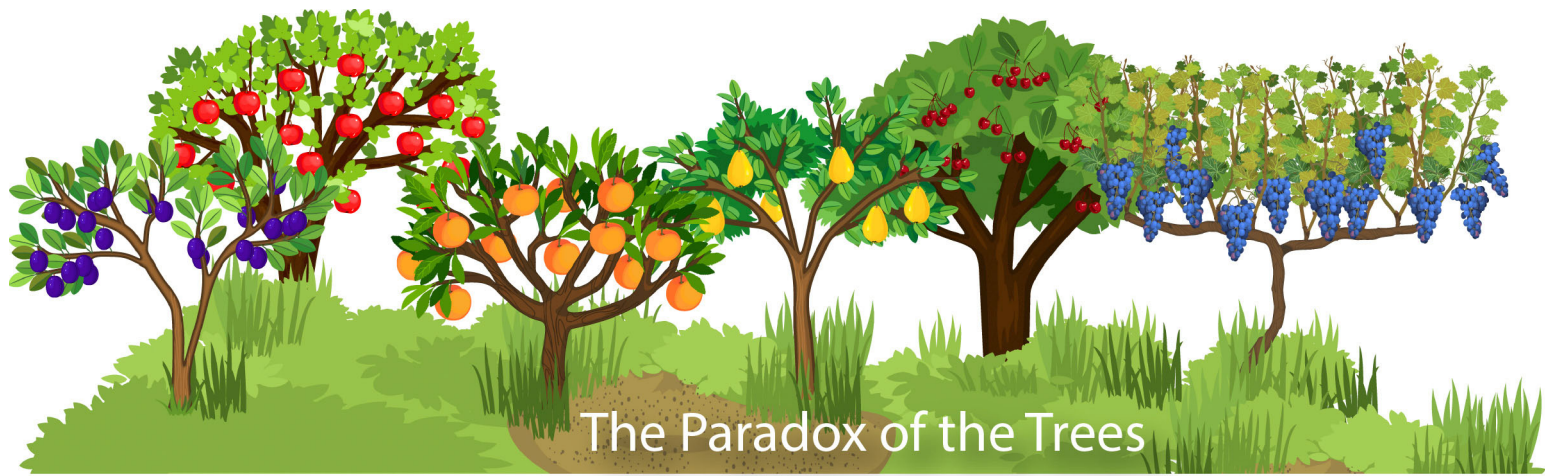
you say, "The way of Yahweh is not right." Hear now, O house of Israel! "Is My way not right? Is it not your ways that are not right?"

When a righteous man turns away from his righteousness, commits iniquity and dies because of it, for his iniquity which he has committed he will die. Again, when a wicked man turns away from his wickedness which he has committed and practices justice and righteousness, he will save his life. Because he considered and turned away from all his transgressions which he had committed, he shall surely live; he shall not die. But the house of Israel says, "The way of Yahweh is not right." Are My ways not right, O house of Israel? Is it not your ways that are not right? Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, each according to his conduct," declares Yahweh Elohim. "Repent and turn away from all your transgressions, so that iniquity may not become a stumbling block to you. Cast away from you all your transgressions which you have committed and make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! For why will you die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone who dies," declares Yahweh Elohim. "Therefore, repent and live." (emphasis, ours)

The decisions we make each day affect the sum of who we are, and what our end will be. Again, the call is to choose life, and to help others along the path that leads to eternal life.

Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Master is coming. But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. For this reason you also must be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think He will. Who then is the faithful and sensible servant whom his master put in charge of his household to give them their food at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master finds so doing when he comes. Truly I say to you that he will put him in charge of all his possessions. But if that evil servant says in his heart, "My master is not coming for a long time," and begins to beat his fellow servants and eat and drink with drunkards; the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour which he does not know, and will cut him in pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, Matthew 24:42-51.

- Elder David Brett



And Elohim said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb-yielding seed, and the fruit tree-yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth," and it was so. And out of the ground made Yahweh Elohim to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

*And Elohim commanded the man He created saying, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die, Genesis 1:11, 2:9, 16-17. (The **King James Version** used throughout.)*

Man, Endowed with Power to Choose

Here, Yahweh endows man with free will and the power to make choices. Everything Yahweh had created, from day one through day six ... from the flora to the fauna, to man in His own Image, He saw it was good. The evil that was present in the garden of Eden was related to *ha shatan* (Satan) of whom it is said in Ezekiel 28:13 and 15, "*Thou has been in Eden, the garden of Elohim ... Thou [wast] perfect in all thy ways from the day thou wast created, til iniquity was found in thee.*"

Initially, man, and the woman whom Yahweh had created out of the man, chose to live in obedience – choosing not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. His opportunity to exercise this gift of free will came when Elohim brought the beasts of the field and the fowl of the air to him, to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof (Gen. 2:19). This prerogative extended him by the Creator evidences that he had not yet, eaten of forbidden fruit. Moreover, assigning names to every beast of the field and to every fowl of the air hardly qualifies as properties belonging to eating forbidden fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil – forbidden fruit that is presented as good for food, pleasant to the eyes, and desired to make one wise (Gen. 3:6). Clearly, man initially chose to be obedient and thus, good.

And so long as man remained innocent and unaware of the distinction between good and evil, the evil associated with *ha shatan* posed no threat to his holiness. Man did not realize that he was doing good; he simply knew that he was being obedient. By his obedience, he was living in the Image of Elohim – holy and good, and as Genesis 1:31 affirms, very good.

Nevertheless, inherent in the exercise of free will is choice. The only way that Yahweh, and the man, could know whether or not man would with free will exercise his choice in obeying the Creator, was to have positioned the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the midst of the garden and given him opportunity to exercise his choice. It follows therefore, that for Yahweh to have created man but not to have created the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, could not prove to Himself, neither to the man, whether he would choose to continue his obedience to the Creator. And so, the adversary existed, nay, co-existed with the man ... yes, to try the man, whether or not, he and his progeny would exercise this gift of free will.

Choose You This Day ...

Now, some erroneously conjecture that Yahweh tempted Adam by placing in the midst of the garden, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:9). However, Scripture tells us in James 1:13 that Yahweh cannot be tempted with evil, and that He neither tempts man. He simply gives man opportunities to either choose to do right and be obedient, or to do wrong and be disobedient.

Yahweh presents before every living soul, that same choice His prophet Joshua, and Moses' successor in the wilderness, provided the children of Israel: "Choose you this day whom you will serve" (Josh. 24:15)

and appreciated as but a reiteration of Yahweh earlier calling heaven and earth as two witnesses, to record a particular day on the which He set before Israel, life and death; blessing and cursing; and then urged Israel to choose life that both they, and their seed might live (Deut. 30:19). Indeed, Yahweh says, “*For I know the thoughts that I think toward you,*” saith Yahweh, “*thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon Me and ye shall go pray unto Me, and I will hearken unto you. And you shall seek Me and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart,*” Jeremiah 29:11-13. Oh, that this people then at Sinai, and since, had honored their thrice-spoken pledge in saying, “All that Yahweh hath said will we do, and be obedient” (Exod. 19:8, 24:3, 7).

But when Adam and Eve chose to yield to the serpent’s deception, cunning and subtlety and put their hand and their lips to eat of the forbidden fruit, they committed the first recorded sin by the species, and incurred to themselves, its wages of death (Rom. 6:23). There being nothing unclean of itself (Rom. 14:14), it was not the tree that made man capable of sinning. The tree only revealed that man had the capacity, through his exercise of free will, to permit evil to manifest itself through him.

The warning given him from the beginning, was that “in the day thou eatest of it, thou shalt surely die” (Gen. 2:17) – the adversary’s assurance to the contrary, notwithstanding (Gen. 3:4).

Death Reigned Until ...

Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned ... even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression” (Rom. 5:12, 14).

Nevertheless, *But not as the offence, so also [is] the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of Yahweh, and the Gift by grace, [which is] by One Man, Yahshua Messiah, hath abounded unto many. And not as [it was] by one that sinned, [so is] the gift: for the judgment [was] by one to condemnation, but the free Gift [is] of many offences unto justification. For if by one man’s offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the Gift of righteousness shall reign in life by One, Yahshua Messiah. Therefore as by the offence of one [judgment came] upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of One [the free gift came] upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man’s disobedience many*

were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous. Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Yahshua Messiah our Master. What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? Yahweh forbid. ... Romans 5:15-6:2a.

And since through that action, by one man came sin, and death by sin and was so, passed unto all men, because all have sinned and come short of the glory of Elohim (Rom. 3:23), so by the obedience of One, as Romans 5:19 states, shall many be made righteous.

For as in Adam all die, even so, in Messiah shall all be made alive, 1 Corinthians 15:22 – that is, for all those who choose Him; that is, to such as keep His covenant, and to those that remember His commandments to do them, Psalm 103:18. (emphasis ours)

Then, we will no longer be sinners through Adam, but saints through Yahshua (Rev. 14:12).

The Paradox of the Trees

In the words of the old standard: “Yield not to temptation, for yielding is sin.” Always, what’s forbidden by commandment is transformed by the adversary to appear good, pleasant, and desired. To acknowledge this is to understand the wiles of the adversary and the advantage he seeks in overcoming our obedience to the commandments given us by Yahweh.

Here is the paradox of the trees. Where good is, evil is always present (Rom. 7:21). In a time out of time, before the earth itself was without form and void of life, that anointed cherub, fallen because of iniquity having been found in him – for he said, “I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of Elohim ... I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High” (Isa. 14:13-14) – and which afterward found his place in Eden, implies that in the created order, if the Garden should be planted with a tree of the knowledge of good and evil, then evil preexisted before man.

Yahweh’s observation in Genesis 3:22, “Behold, the man is become as one of Us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever,” implies that man could have that same capacity as his adversary, to yield to pride and an haughty spirit ... wise in his own conceits (Rom. 12:16) thinking

himself to be something when he is nothing (Gal. 6:3), and experience as his adversary, the same outcome of falling into perdition (Prov. 16:18).

Therefore, there will always be that choice needing to be made between eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, or from the tree of life; a choice to be made between life and death; a choice to be made between blessing and cursing.

Moreover, there is a paradox that resides in the Creator, too. For the creation narrative in Genesis, chapter one, is punctuated with these words: “And Elohim saw that it was good.” And yet, Yahweh says through the prophet Isaiah, “*I form light and create darkness; I make peace and create evil: I Yahweh do all these things,*” Isaiah 45:7.

Conclusion

Yahweh preserveth all them that love Him: but all the wicked He will destroy, Psalms 145:20.

“I will be like the Most High,” (Isa. 14:14) ... become as one of Us (Yahweh and Yahshua, “the Image of the invisible Elohim, the Firstborn of every creature,” Col. 1:15) to know good and evil, that’s the root of all evil.

But the will of Yahweh is for good to come upon His children through prosperity in Grace given through the shed blood of His unblemished Lamb, His only begotten Son, Yahshua Messiah – that they should be blessed who do His commandments; that they may have right to the Tree of Life enter in through the gates into the city (Rev. 22:14) when His Kingdom rules on earth. Amen.

- Brother Joshua Bey with
Elder John W. Reece



One Step Closer to Paradise

I am *Alef* and *Taw* – “the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last” – reads Revelation 22:13. He Who made that declaration promised in the next verse: *Blessed [are] they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates of the city.* (The **King James Version** used throughout, unless otherwise noted.) From the second chapter of Genesis in which the Tree of Life is first introduced, these words from Revelation 22:14 summarize the content of all the Scriptures.

Such is the goal of walking in this Way; the purpose of our striving and overcoming all that is in the world; the reason back of the Apostle Paul writing in Philippians 3:13-14: *Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but [this] one thing [I do], forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of Elohim in Messiah Yahshua.*

Before we close our eyes for the last time, we ought each one of us, be able to declare for ourselves, the testimony of this one who wrote to his protégé Timothy, *For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished [my] course, I have kept the faith,* 2 Timothy 4:6-7. And this we shall be confidently able to say, if during the life that now is, we delighted ourselves in doing the law of Yahweh, meditating therein, day and night; prospering in all that we had done, having become as that tree planted by the rivers of water that had brought forth its fruit in season; as that tree whose leaf had not withered (Psa. 1:2-3).

Principal among Yahshua’s final commands to His disciples is recorded in Mark 16:15: “Go ye into all the world, and preach the Evangel to every creature” ... as fishers of men (Matt. 4:19), bringing others to the City, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets

(Eph. 2:20) and whose Builder and Maker is Yahweh (Heb. 11:10). Obeying this command is also, a prerequisite toward having right to the Tree of Life.

Where, and What is the City?

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from Yahweh out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of Yahweh [is] with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and Yahweh Himself shall be with them, [and be] their Elohim," Revelation 21:1-3.

In the beginning, and before sin befell Eve and Adam, the Tree of Life, placed in the midst of Eden, was purposed to give eternal life (Gen. 2:9, 3:22) to these two, and their posterity, whom Yahweh had created in His own image (Gen. 1:27). Eden, on earth, was the closest thing "to paradise of Elohim" (Rev. 2:7) – (**Strong's** G.3857, *par-ad'-i-sos*, of Oriental origin, a *park*, i.e., specifically, an *Eden* (place of future happiness, "*paradise*" : paradise, [comp. H.6508, *par-dace'*, of foreign origin, a *park* : forest, orchard] in which was situated, the Tree of Life, its fruit given them to eat who overcome. In Revelation 22:2, it is further revealed that the Tree of Life will yield twelve manner of fruits every month, its leaves will provide for the healing of the nations – not that in the new Jerusalem, there should be any disease which needs healing, but that the Tree of Life is become that means by which the perpetual health and life and general well-being of the redeemed inhabitants are maintained and sustained.

Of all the trees in this earthly paradise, Adam and Eve were enjoined to eat, except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil – the good and the evil, providing man opportunity to explore this Yah-given gift of free will and choice between good and evil. Even today, as the Apostle acknowledged, that when he would do good, evil is also present (Rom. 7:21). And so, likewise is it the experience of every man: the flesh (in which dwells no good thing, Rom. 7:18) contends with the Spirit, and the Spirit with the flesh (Gal. 5:17).

Eve's (she was first in transgression, 1 Tim. 2:14) then Adam's disobedience set in place the need for the species' redemption, hence the coming of Yahshua, the Lamb of Yahweh, as a once-for-all Offering for the sins of mankind (Heb. 9:28).

Without Eve and Adam having revealed the nature of every man, Yahweh's plan of redemption might have been deferred ... or not needed to have been instituted at all, if sin had never found a place (Rom. 5:12).

Though Adam had received the commandment – and we are confident that he communicated it to the woman (Gen. 3:2-3) – the Law (Torah) was not necessary, but after sin's commission, Yahweh gave Law to keep man safe from the lure of sin. For who can know what sin is, except there is a law forbidding its commission, or omission? (Rom. 7:7).

Even before the Law was codified, men showed the work of the Law written in their hearts. Adam and Eve had thought to hide themselves from Yahweh after their trespass. Cain slew his brother, and then countered Yahweh's query with a lie, replying to the Creator, he didn't know where his brother was (Gen. 4:9) – the cause for his murdering his brother attributable to his envying Yahweh's having greater respect to Abel's offering of a lamb's sacrifice than to his offering the fruit of the field (Gen. 4:3-4).

Even before the Law was codified, men showed the work of the Law written in their hearts. For 120 years, Noah who had found favor before Yahweh preached righteousness to them of his generation but afterward, even with the construction of the ark – certainly a phenomenal undertaking in that day – only eight of a great many souls were found worthy to escape the impending waters that would cover the earth. Ten generations from creation, and ten more to Abraham, how was it, that Noah differentiated between clean and unclean animals that were to be brought into the ark for the purpose of repopulating the restored earth? (Gen. 7:2).

Even before the Law was codified, men showed the work of the Law written in their hearts. How is it that Lot knew to say to those who had laid siege at his door, "do not so wickedly" (Gen. 19:7).

And so, with the introduction of sin so early, the question needing to be answered is this: Would you be able to resist the temptation of the subtle serpent? Would not the lusts of the flesh and of the eyes, and the pride of life (1 John 2:16) be an overwhelming attraction? Would you always yield and submit to the Holy Spirit's guiding and instructing you in Yahweh's Righteous Law?

The Psalmist provides us with the answer to these rhetorical questions: *Unless Thy Law [had been] my delights, I should then have perished in mine affliction*, Psalm 119:92.

Yahshua, the Route to the Tree of Life

The Scriptures declare the truth.

Yahweh looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, [and] seek Elohim. They are all gone aside, they are [all] together become filthy: [there is] none that doeth good, no, not one, Psalm 14:2-3.

For [there is] not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not, Ecclesiastes 7:20.

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of Yahweh, Romans 3:23.

It is for these reasons that the Creator positioned “Cherubim and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the tree of life” (Gen. 3:24) and to prevent the man from putting forth his hand, and taking of its fruit, eating and thus, living for ever in a state of rebellion and disobedience – the very cause for Satan’s expulsion from before the face of his Creator (Isa. 14:12-20).

This is why the Tree of Life is so important to Yahweh, and this corruptible earth is no longer able to provide a sanctuary for it. At some point, Yahweh apparently relieved the Cherubim of their duty, and to conserve the Tree of Life into His own paradise, reserved for those “that overcame him (Satan) by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony” ... for those who “loved not their lives unto the death” (Rev. 12:11).

The irony is that one is made a partaker of the Tree of Life in the paradise of Elohim, by having first come by way of the *tree of death* – if you will, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Testimony is given in the Acts of the Apostles, and in Peter’s first general epistle, concerning this tree upon which Yahshua was impaled. Peter with his apostle peers rebutted the chief priests who had challenged their teaching in This Name above every name, saying, *The Elohim of our fathers raised up Yahshua, Whom ye slew and hanged on a tree, Acts 5:30.* In the presence of a Roman centurion, Cornelius, and his company, he declared in their audience, *And we are witnesses of all things which He did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; Whom they slew and hanged on a tree, Acts 10:39.*

The Apostle Paul, in addressing a Sabbath gathering at Antioch in Pisidia, spoke of Yahshua Who had fulfilled all that was written of Him being taken down from the tree, and laid in a sepulcher (Acts 13:29).

Again, the Apostle Peter, writing to the strangers, nevertheless “elect according to the knowledge

of Yahweh the Father” (1 Pet. 1:1-2), declared of Yahshua, *Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by Whose stripes ye were healed, 1 Peter 2:24.*

Without apology, these who had witnessed, and they which had received their testimony, agreed that Yahshua was impaled upon a tree.

A tree, **Strong’s** G3586, *xoo’lon* and rendered, timber (as fuel or material); by implication, a *stick, club* or *tree* or other wooden article or substance: staff, stocks, tree, wood – and figuring significantly in Yahshua’s death – and having the same denotation as “the tree” (H.6086) in Deuteronomy 21:22-23 in which speaking perhaps prophetically of Yahshua, we read, *And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree: His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged [is] accursed of Elohim;) that thy land be not defiled, which the Yahweh thy Elohim giveth thee [for] an inheritance.*

Thus, we can appreciate why it was imperative to the Jews to remove the impaled bodies of Yahshua and the transgressors with whom He was numbered, before the next day (a high Sabbath, John 19:31) should begin at sunset. Moreover, Messiah Who knew no sin, became both sin and curse for us (2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13).

We, too, become impaled with Him – as it were, metaphorically, on a tree – dying daily (1 Cor. 15:31) ... and reckoning ourselves to be dead to sin (Rom. 6:11), having impaled “the flesh with the affections and lusts” (Gal. 5:24), nevertheless living in the flesh by the Son of Yahweh Who loved us, and gave His life for us (Gal. 2:20).

Conclusion

Simply put, by confessing with our mouths the Master Yahshua, and believing in our hearts that Yahweh has raised Him from the dead (Rom. 10:9) and that with conviction of sin, we repent and submit to the workmanship Yahweh’s Spirit to renew us in the spirit of our minds and to conform us into the image of Yahweh’s Dear Son, we will gain one step closer to paradise and access to the Tree of Life which Yahweh has reserved for those whom He has appointed to become heirs to His undefiled and incorruptible Kingdom.

- Brother Joshua Bey with Elder John W. Reece



The Sabbath Changeth Not

Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, “Verily My Sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I Am Yahweh that doth sanctify you,” Exodus 31:13.

For I am Yahweh, I change not; therefore, ye sons of Jacob are not consumed, Malachi 3:6.

Many are they who cleave to the wrong notion that the seventh-day Sabbath, which Almighty Yahweh sanctified at creation and proclaimed to be the holy day of rest and worship, has somehow been changed to another day. Influenced by a man-made decree, vis-à-vis erroneous Bible interpretation, they presumptuously make the unscriptural claim that the first day of the week, rather than the seventh day, is now the holy day that men should observe as the day of rest and worship. However, a sincere and thorough examination of the Scriptures reveals clearly that nothing could be farther from the truth. (***Restored Name King James Version*** used throughout, unless otherwise noted.)

This article will present multiple reasons why the Seventh day Sabbath has not and cannot change or cease to be observed.

Creation Ordinance

And on the seventh day Elohim ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And Elohim blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which Elohim created and made, Genesis 2:2-3.

This is the first mention of the Sabbath in the Scriptures. The word translated ‘rest’ here, is the Hebrew word *Shabbat* – H7673 in ***Strong’s Concordance***, meaning to repose, i.e., desist from exertion.

Indeed, the Sabbath originated from the creation account in Genesis 2:2-3, which affirms Yahweh rested on the seventh day and sanctified it. This rest was not due to fatigue, but rather a deliberate act of cessation from creative work, signifying the completion of creation.

By resting on the seventh day, Yahweh established a pattern for humanity to follow which demonstrated the importance of rest, worship, and renewal. The Sabbath became a sacred institution, a gift to humanity to promote spiritual and physical well-being.

Throughout the Bible, the Sabbath is emphasized as a day of rest, worship, and communion with Yahweh. It’s a time for one to cease from secular activities and focus on spiritual renewal.

A Command Written by Yahweh

The Sabbath is one of the Ten Commandments (Exod. 20:8-11), written by Yahweh Himself on tablets of stone on Mount Sinai (Exod. 31:18) ... hence, emphasizing both the importance and the permanence of this commandment.

The Sabbath is not a human institution, but an ordinance by Yahweh, rooted in creation and established by covenant with Israel. Therefore, it is inconceivable that a commandment written by Yahweh’s own finger could be changed without explicit authorization from Him.

The Bible emphasizes the unchanging nature of Yahweh's Word, including the Sabbath (Psa. 119:89). Furthermore, Yahshua explicitly stated that He did not come to abolish the Law (Matt. 5:17). Any attempts to alter or abolish the Sabbath then, would require clear Scriptural authority which is conspicuously lacking.

Believers respect the integrity and authority of Scriptures, particularly when it comes to Yahweh's commandments. The Sabbath remains a crucial part of His plan for humanity, serving as a testament to His creation and ongoing relationship with His people.

Covenant Sign

And Yahweh spake unto Moses, saying, "Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, 'Verily My Sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am Yahweh that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the Sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to Yahweh: whosoever doeth any work in the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days Yahweh made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed,'" Exodus 31:12-17.

The Sabbath is a covenant sign between Yahweh and His people (Exod. 31:12; Ezek. 20:12, 20). This means that observing the Sabbath is not just a commandment, but an identity marker that distinguishes Yahweh's people from the rest of the world.

By keeping the Sabbath, believers demonstrate their loyalty, faith, and commitment to their covenant with Yahweh. It's a visible sign that they



belong to Him and are set apart for His purposes.

One cannot claim to be among Yahweh's people without observing the Sabbath. It's a fundamental aspect of our identity and relationship with Him.

By observing the Sabbath, we honour our covenant with Yahweh, affirm our identity as His people, and express our faith in a tangible way.

Perpetual Observance

Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant, Exodus 31:16. The Sabbath is to be observed in all generations and as a lasting and immutable ordinance, underscoring His intention that the Sabbath is an enduring and unchanging institution. Yahweh has not, and will not, change His mind concerning the seventh-day Sabbath (Mal. 3:6). By observing the Sabbath, therefore, believers demonstrate their commitment to upholding Yahweh's eternal Torah and their willingness to submit to His unchanging will.

The Sabbath is for All Peoples

Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to Yahweh, to serve Him, and to love the Name of Yahweh, to be His servants, every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of My covenant; Even them will I bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon Mine altar; for Mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people, Isaiah 56:6-7

And He said unto them, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath," Mark 2:27. The Greek word translated 'man' in Mark 2:27 is *anthro-pos* – **Strong's** G444, meaning human being.

The above passages demonstrate that the Sabbath was made for humanity, and not exclusively for Israel and that even foreigners who join themselves to Yahweh and keep the Sabbath will be blessed and accepted by Him. The Sabbath is, therefore, a timeless and universal commandment, relevant to all humanity, regardless of ethnic or cultural background.



Yahshua Kept the Sabbath

And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up: and, as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read, Luke 4:16.

And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the Sabbath day He entered into the synagogue, and taught, Mark 1:21.

Yahshua, the Son of Yahweh and our Master, Guide, and Perfect Example, consistently observed the Sabbath ... giving attendance to the synagogue, and teaching the congregation. Those today, who refuse to keep the seventh-day Sabbath are proclaiming openly that they do not follow His example of obedience. We, by keeping the Sabbath, demonstrate we are but emulating His obedience, and our submission to Yahweh's. On the other hand, refusing to keep the Seventh-day Sabbath implies a disregard for Yahshua's example and Yahweh's purpose for humanity.

Sabbath-keeping will also be relevant in the Messianic kingdom, when Yahshua returns to rule on the earth. By observing the Sabbath now, we align ourselves with Yahweh's eternal purposes and prepare ourselves for the coming kingdom.

Yahshua Didn't Break the Sabbath

In the Evangelists, we see Yahshua healing people on the Sabbath (Matt. 12:9-13; Mark 3:1-5; Luke 13:10-17; John 5:1-18). For these reasons, the Pharisees falsely accused Yahshua of not only breaking the Sabbath, but also asserting that Elohim was His Father, thus making Himself equal to the Sovereign One and which also served their indicting Him before Pontius Pilate (John 5:18, 19:7).

Today, many people, like the Pharisees of old, continue to perpetuate this false accusation, insisting that since Yahshua 'broke' the Sabbath, they don't have to keep it.

However, Yahshua's doing good and healing all that were oppressed by the devil on the Sabbath, and instructing the healed paralytic to carry his bed on the Sabbath, were not tantamount to breaking the Sabbath. Instead, He was making it clear that critical health issues requiring urgent attention can be attended to even on the Sabbath. Also, praying for the sick on Sabbath is not forbidden anywhere in the Scriptures. But the Pharisees were angry because Yahshua's actions challenged and undermined their man-made traditions attending the Sabbath. Such traditions made it burdensome for people to keep Yahweh's law. Perhaps, these were what Yahshua alluded to when He severally said to them, "Why do

ye also transgress the commandment of Elohim by your tradition?" (Matt. 15:3) and concluded of them, "Thus have ye made the commandment of Elohim of none effect by your tradition" (Matt. 15:6) and in the 23rd chapter of Matthew in which He no fewer than six times called them "hypocrites," and also "blind guides," He asserted that they bound heavy burdens and grievous to be borne and lay them on men's shoulders (Matt. 23:4).

Yahshua declared to His disciples that He had kept Yahweh's Torah (John 15:10).

Moreover, the apostles confirmed these things, saying in their reference to Yahshua,

- *Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth, 1 Peter 2:22.*
- *Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. And ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin, 1 John 3:4-5.*
- *For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin, Hebrews 4:15.*
- *For He (Yahweh) hath made Him (Yahshua) to be sin for us, Who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of Yahweh in Him, 2 Corinthians 5:21.*

These testimonies underscore Yahshua's sinless nature, which is a fundamental aspect of His identity as the Messiah and the Son of Yahweh. His sinlessness qualified Him to be the perfect sacrifice for man's sins. For even hereunto are we also called: because Messiah left us an example, that we should follow His steps.

The Apostles Kept the Sabbath

But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and sat down. And after the reading of the Law and the prophets the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, "Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on." Then Paul stood up, and beckoning with his hand said, "Men of Israel, and ye that fear Elohim, give audience." ... And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath. Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the favor of Yahweh. And the next Sabbath day came almost the

whole city together to hear the Word of Yahweh, Acts 13:14-16, 42-44

And on the Sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither. And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped Yahweh, heard us: whose heart Yahweh opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul, Acts 16:13-14.

And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, Acts 17:2.

It is clear from the passages cited above that the disciples of Yahshua did not abandon the Sabbath after His resurrection and ascension. Rather, they continued to observe the Sabbath as a day of rest and worship. Note also, that the women who ministered to the Messiah while He was living observed the Sabbath while He reposed on the Sabbath – both the first annual Sabbath, of the Days of Unleavened Bread and the weekly Sabbath that preceded His resurrection (Mark 16:1-2; Luke 23:55-56).

Who could deny, or even defy, what is so obvious: That neither Yahshua while He was alive, nor His followers after He was dead, buried, and resurrected, abandoned or changed the Sabbath day which Almighty Yahweh Himself had sanctified and blessed at creation?

The Sabbath Will be Kept in the Last Days

Yahshua hints that the Sabbath will be relevant in these last days. Here is the passage:

*But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on **the Sabbath day**: for then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened, Matthew 24:20-22. (**emphasis**, ours)*

In this passage, Yahshua was discussing the end times and the great tribulation that will occur. He instructed His disciples to pray that their escape from trouble spots, especially the land of Israel, will not occur on the Sabbath or in winter. The reason? Yahweh's people are restricted from traveling on the Sabbath day.

That Yahshua mentioned the Sabbath in this context implies that it will still be observed by Yahweh's people during the end times.

Furthermore, we are informed in the book of Revelation that two things will distinguish the elect from the rest of the world in these last days: They

will hold on to the faith of Yahshua and they will continue keeping the commandments of Yahweh. And that would assuredly include keeping the Sabbath set apart (Rev. 12:17, 14:12).

Soon, Sabbath Will Be Kept Worldwide

*"And it shall come to pass, that **from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me,**" saith Yahweh, Isaiah 66:23. (**emphasis**, ours)*

But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of Yahweh shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of Yahweh, and to the house of the Elohim of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for the Law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of Yahweh from Jerusalem, Micah 4:1-2.

The prophets are saying that in the forthcoming Messianic kingdom, there will be a universal observance of the Sabbath on which people from all nations and cultures, having discarded their false religious practices, will be learning the Torah and worshipping Yahweh.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is obvious from the Scriptures that Yahweh never intended to change the Sabbath. He never revealed through any of His servants that a time should come when the Sabbath would cease to be observed, or be changed to another day. Quite, do we find just the opposite to be true. Whenever Yahweh intends to do a major thing, He reveals it in advance to His prophets (Amos 3:7). It is, therefore, interesting to note that no prophecy in the entire Bible points to a future cessation or change of the seventh-day Sabbath.

The transition from Sabbath to Sunday is not of Yahweh. Rather, it is a product of the apostasy that took place more than two centuries after the death of the last apostles. The Christian church's shift from Sabbath to Sunday – under the auspices of observing the Master's presumed resurrection on the first day of the week – represents a departure from the true faith observed by the prophets, the Messiah and the apostles (1 Tim. 4:1).

Nevertheless, today, Yahweh is calling out a remnant and urging them to earnestly contend for the original faith that was once delivered to the saints (Jude 1:3). Are you among that remnant?

- Elder Israel Omatoyo, Nigeria

Food for Thought



While on duty in Iraq, during a time when not only bombs and bullets were claiming lives – three of my comrades included – the severity high, arid temperatures, coupled with wearing full body armor, was incapacitating soldiers.

There was a saying among us: “Hydrate or die” – perhaps a bit exaggeration, as nobody in our unit was dying of dehydration but many, waking up with intravenous intubation infusing normal saline into their arms, were asking, “What happened?” It seemed to have happened all of a sudden, but as I learned the hard way, if a person is thirsty, they’ve already started to become dehydrated. So, I ask, “Are you dehydrating ... spiritually, and wondering why you’ve been feeling lethargic?”

Give Us This Day, Our Daily Bread

In the wilderness, Yahweh daily provided the children of Israel with manna, the “bread from Heaven,” and gathering it but six days, they ate of it, daily. Yahweh, of Whom it is written in Malachi 3:6, “changes not,” still provides bread from heaven, daily.

Had many of the disciples of Yahshua been able to grasp His declaration, “I Am the Bread of Life ... For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed ... Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you” (John 6:48, 55, 53), they would have not have replied, “This is a hard saying, who can hear it?” and gone back, walking no more with Him (John 6:60, 66).

He tried to explain to them in the simplest of terms, This is the Bread which cometh down from Heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die, John 6:50. But as Isaiah questions, Who hath believed our report and to whom is the arm of Yahweh revealed? Isaiah 53:1. (The King James Version used throughout.)

To one unfamiliar with the language of the sacred texts, upon first hearing “our report,” Yahshua’s invitation to eat His flesh and to drink His blood, does come as quite a mysterious metaphor. Add to this seemingly incomprehensible diet of His flesh and His blood, His observance of His last Passover meal with His disciples. And as they were eating, Yahshua took bread, and blessed [it], and brake [it], and gave [it], to the disciples, and said, “Take, eat; this is My body.” And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave [it], to them, saying, “Drink ye all of it; for this is My blood of the new testament which is shed for many for the remission of sins,” Matthew 26:26-28.

Again, the solemnity of this event was lost on the disciples. Now, He was saying that the unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine were His body and His blood – His flesh, meat indeed; His blood, drink indeed (John 6:55). Now, He was equating the Passover species with His body and His blood, and suggesting, moreover, what the Apostle Paul later affirmed: “For even Messiah our Passover is sacrificed for us” (1 Cor. 5:6) – “the Mediator of the new testament ... For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the Testator ... without shedding of blood is no remission” (Heb. 9:15, 16, 22).

Secret? Mystery? Yahshua’s life and ministry were attended by patterns and examples. Whereas He said, “My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed,” for us to eat and to drink, He also declared, “My meat is to do the will of Him that Sent Me, and to finish His work” (John 4:34).

“My meat ... His work?” May we understand, His meat ... Yahweh’s work, in the context of His Gethsemane prayer? “I have given them Thy Word ... Sanctify them through Thy Truth; Thy Word is Truth ... Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their Word” (John 17:14, 17, 20).

Desire the Sincere Milk of the Word

Though the mysteries of the Kingdom were reserved to them whom Yahshua foreknew, yet did He speak in parables so that only they which had been given ears to hear could perceive and understand what He was saying. Nevertheless, there were yet some things, apparently, that were withheld until they were able to bear (John 16:12). The Apostle Paul could not speak some things to the Assembly at Corinth, owing to their carnality of envy, strife, and division (1 Cor. 3:1-3). On the other hand, having labored among the Ephesians for three years, upon his final departure from them, he affirmed that he had “kept back nothing that was profitable unto them” (Acts 20:20), neither had he “shunned to declare unto them all the counsel of Yahweh” (Acts 20:27).

The difference of approach between the two assemblies was their heart preparation to receive the meat of Yahweh’s Word.

A baby learns to crawl before he can walk. He drinks milk before he has teeth with which to masticate solid food. But an infant is not purposed to remain in a state of infancy, but to grow ... to become of full age. Even so, we “desire the sincere

milk of the Word, that we may grow thereby” (1 Pet. 2:2) – growing in grace and in knowledge of our Savior and Master Yahshua Messiah (2 Pet. 3:18) – that studying to show ourselves approved to Him, we might rightly divide the Word of Truth (2 Tim. 2:15), speaking It as an Oracle (1 Pet. 4:11) and Which, by reason of use, we have our senses exercised to discern both good and evil (Heb. 5:14). And seeing that we cannot know Yahweh any better than we know His Word, we shall not be able also, without knowing His Word, be able to discern between the Spirit of Truth and the spirit of error (1 John 4:6).

Conclusion

It is said, “You are what you eat.” So, what are you eating? Wholesome words and sound doctrine? or, damnable heresies, doctrines of demons, and lies in hypocrisy? And are you growing and matured from drinking milk to eating strong meat?

Messiah exhorted His followers, saying, both to “take heed what ye hear” (Mark 4:24) and to “take heed therefore how ye hear” (Luke 8:18) and, moreover, If any man have ears to hear, let him hear ... and unto you that hear shall more be given. For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he ... seemeth to hath” (Mark 4:23, 25; Luke 8:18).

Maybe, this is that perfect time to consider your diet. This was just an appetizer, a little food for thought. Where’s your Bible?

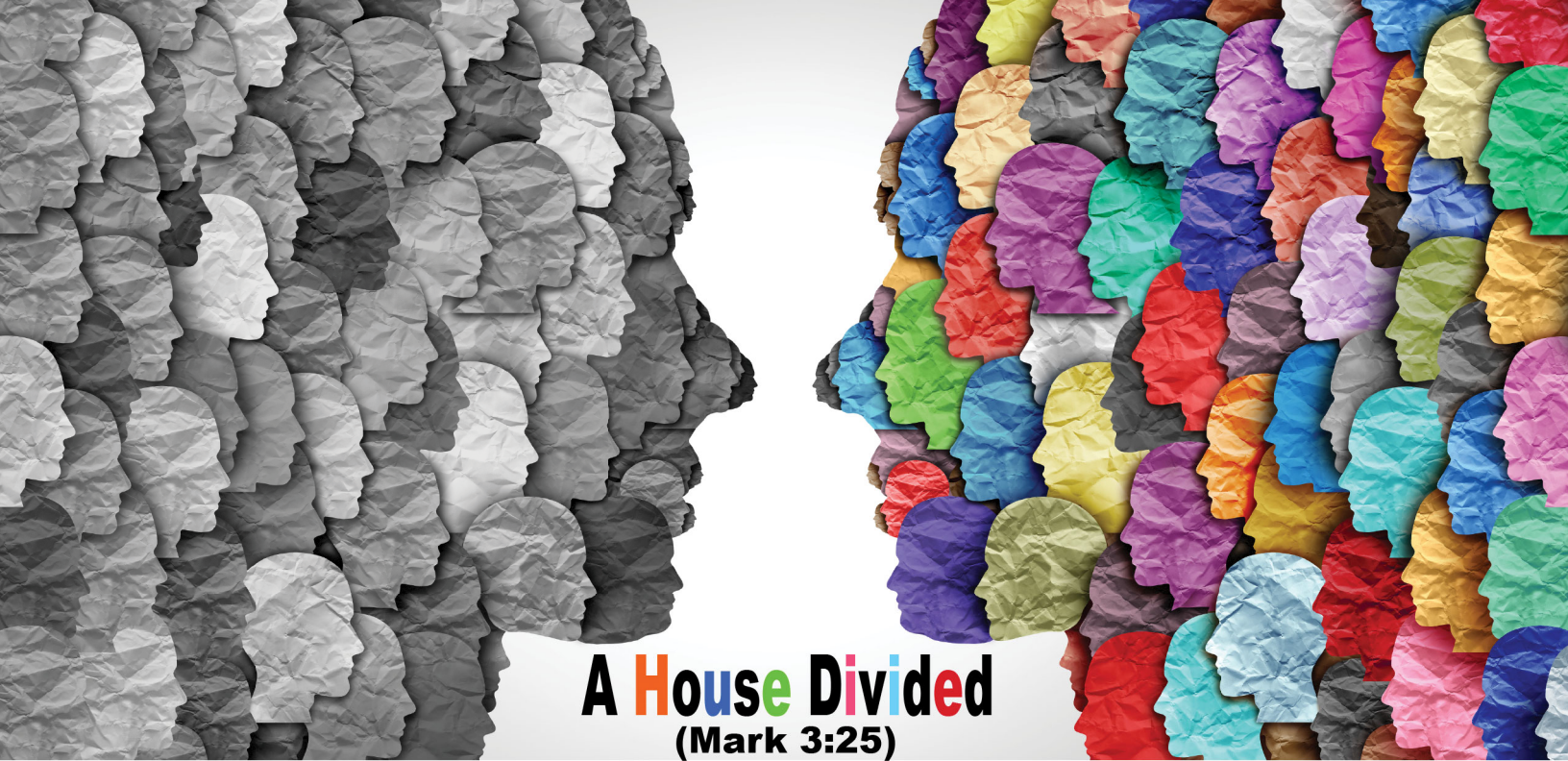
- Brother Joshua Bey with Elder John W. Reece

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A House Divided (Mark 3:25)

It used to be, the Christian church influenced the culture, leading by example and thus, establishing the mores and standards of behavior in society. The church may not have completely understood the Truth but acted upon what they knew as best they could. Then, there was a spiritual conscience with shame informing what was regarded as acceptable social behavior

However, crept in was ‘the spirit of the age’. The church failed to discipline its people and excommunicating them which would not submit to correction, caring more for pleasing them than obeying Yahweh. Grace was exalted above obedience.

Gone was accountability for sin. Taking license to “loose on earth” (Matt. 16:19) such of those Laws regarded as disagreeable, the church justified Law-breaking ... uncaring that a little leaven leavens the whole lump (Gal. 5:9).

Some, separating themselves from the others’ disorderly conduct, strove to maintain a semblance of righteousness and continued for a time ... until they, too, succumbed to a people wanting to hear the smooth words of the doctrines of demons with which to tickle their ears (2 Tim. 4:3).

Mutation after mutation occurred within the Christian camp, each time spawning more and more division. Consequently, the Christian church having compromised itself in order to accommodate a ‘new order’, has had far-reaching effects. Whether one acknowledges it or not, the church has influenced the culture by contributing to the breakdown of law and order. And the decadent behavior come in its wake has spread like gangrene through all of society.

The Government: Downstream from the Church

Sadly, the failure of the church to acknowledge sin as sin has spread to the government – itself set opposed to those Assemblies which still hold true to Yahweh’s laws – by yielding to the demands of the culture by making laws that repress the foundation of ordinances premised on the Bible and upon which, two and a half centuries ago, this government of the people, by the people, for the people was instituted with the shedding of much blood, sweat, toil, and tears.

Yes, America has become a divided house, polarized politically, socially, economically but especially, spiritually. While there are those who seek to maintain righteousness, others are bent upon destroying every trace of righteousness. Little do these latter care, that *Righteousness exalts a nation, But sin is a disgrace to [any] people*, Proverbs 14:34.

For example: In the weeks preceding the general election in November 2024 in the United States, the Democratic Party released an advertisement in behalf of its presidential candidate, Kamala Harris, calling for, and urging married Bible-believing women to vote for its candidate, even if their ballot would be contrary to that of their husbands. Women were urged even, if questioned by their husbands, to lie for whom they voted.

This was a blatant attack on the Biblical understanding of the very order Yahweh ordained for marriage – become a common trend in western society in recent years: sociopolitical institutions urging woman to subvert the authority and headship of their husbands – and a trend, incidentally, that threatens all of society. Many are either ignorant of, or indifferent to, what is emerging in the culture and what is also, bringing injury to the basic family unit of marriage: the emergence of feminism that seeks to subvert the authority of the man as the head of the household.

Yahweh has established order for a reason, and since before the fall of man in Eden, Satan has sought to make chaos and confusion out of order. One of the adversary's greatest ploys is division; and the family and households of faith are become the targets of his endeavors.

Attack on Headship

In his first letter to the Corinthians, the first among many problems the Apostle Paul addressed was this issue of division. He asked, "Has Messiah been divided?" (1 Cor. 1:13a). (*The New Amercian Standard Bible* used throughout, unless otherwise noted.)

We might ask, "Is the family divided?" Messiah declared in Mark 3:25, *If a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand.*

In Eden, because the woman was first in transgression (Gen. 3:6; 1 Tim. 2:14), Yahweh committed the headship to the man (Gen. 3:16). But Satan has convinced the world that this is somehow unfair and evil toward women. But in the beginning, and even before the fall, Yahweh purposed that the man should be a covering for the woman ... to protect her from harm.

However, if the relationship between the man and the woman (the house) can be divided, it is doomed to fall. One way Satan accomplishes this division in a household, is to provoke its members to challenge the headship of the husband/father.

Yahweh's Portraiture of a Husband/Father

Yahweh has in His Scriptures established the order of headship:

But I want you to understand that Messiah is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and Yahweh is the head of Messiah. ... For man does not originate from woman, but woman from man, 1 Corinthians 11:3, 8.

This, however, does not mean the man is to abuse his headship over the wife, as the woman was made

from man's rib, not from his foot. She is supposed to be by his side (*rib*) not under his boot (*foot*).

This portraiture of the man – husband or father, depending under whose authority the woman is positioned – as head over the woman, is illustrated in the narrative of Numbers 30:3-12 which addresses the prerogative the man may exercise either to permit or disannul a vow the woman under his watch-care should make when he hears or learns of it. His headship over her supplies him with the authority to protect her from a potentially harmful or injurious pledge she might make.

Scripture recognizes the woman as first in transgression. 1 Timothy 2:12-14 reads,

But I do not allow a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man ... [to whom was given superordinate authority, Gen. 1:26, 2:18-20] ...but to remain quiet. For it was Adam who was first created [and] then Eve. And [it was] not Adam [who] was deceived, but the woman being quite deceived, fell into transgression.

This may seem like a cruel punishment upon women, but it is intended for their protection. A man is to keep his woman on the right path and to guard her with all his might which Adam, the first man, failed to do. The Apostle Peter, too, admonishes husbands, saying, "You husbands likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel, since she is a woman ... (1 Pet. 3:7). Both Paul and Peter emphasize the heavy responsibility laid upon the man in governing and protecting his household ... so loving their wives as Messiah loved the members of His Body and for whom also, He gave His life (Eph. 5:25).

Contrary to what some women may believe, men are endowed with this authority by the Creator because they represent their families, and their families represent them – whether negatively, or positively. To illustrate this, we have no farther to look than to Scripture.

In Genesis, chapter 34, we read of Shechem violating Jacob's daughter, Dinah. Jacob became aware of Shechem's vile behavior. His sons Levi and Simeon who, perhaps without their father's knowledge, exacted what they assumed as just retribution upon the men of Shechem's city – requiring all their men to become circumcised, ostensibly for the 'privilege' of intermarriage and then afterward, slaying them while they were recovering (Gen. 34:20-30).

But alas! They, by avenging their sister, displeased their father Jacob who alleged they had made his

name to become “odious among the inhabitants of the land” (Gen. 34:30). Jacob’s rebuke of his sons, however, is overshadowed more by his fear that “the inhabitants of the land” the Canaanites and Perizzites among whom his family dwelt, would gather themselves together against him and attack and destroy him and his household. Indeed, his sons’ reply, “Should he (Shechem) treat our sister as a harlot?” (verse 31) serves as a reproof to the father who ought himself, exercised the responsibility of becoming a covering for his daughter.

Another example: the High Priest Eli was dilatory in rebuking his sons, Hophni and Phinehas who profaned the sacrifice offerings of the people by taking their portions before Yahweh had first received His (1 Sam. 3:13-16) and who “lay with the women who served at the doorway of the tent of meeting” (1 Sam. 3:22).

These accounts from the pages of Scripture, among others that could be cited, illustrate the responsibility heads of households bear in extolling Yahweh’s authority before the larger community.

Problems with Being Unequally Yoked

Assaults upon the Biblical headship in the home can produce major issues within the family, even dissolving family unity. A family works best when the husband/father and wife/mother are in agreement in mind, speech, judgment (1 Cor. 1:10) and particularly, in matters of morality and child discipline. Disagreements on these latter two produce confusion and tension in relationships and contribute to members of the family separating themselves one from the other.

Those most often affected are the children. Children learn more by example. Parents are supposed to be good examples to their children. With that in mind, parents’ behavior can shape the behavior of generations. A united couple, therefore, is a strong couple.

Married couples should be “equally yoked” in their practice of faith and agree together on what constitutes moral behavior. 2 Corinthians 6:14 reads: *Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?* Paul’s use of the word “yoke” is interesting in light of what’s read in Deuteronomy 22:10, *You shall not plow with an ox and a donkey together.*

This dynamic of an ox being “unequally yoked” with a donkey imposes a much heavier burden on

the much stronger ox and might even bring injury to either the stronger ox or inadvertently, to the weaker donkey. Applying this principle to the home, where one is strong in faith and the other weak in faith or having none at all, household government becomes less efficient and might even break down altogether.

Thus, a husband with his wife should both believe in Yahweh and live accordingly, to His Word, as it is written: “Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes out of the mouth of Yahweh” (Matt. 4:4).

Marriage: *Echad* with Yahweh and Yahshua

In the beginning, *Elohim said, “Let Us make mankind in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the livestock and over all the earth, and over every crawling thing that crawls on the earth,”* Genesis 1:26.

Notice, “*Elohim said let us make man in our image.*” Fewer things describe what relationship looks like than the Hebrew word, *echad* which means “one” and more specifically, “a unified one” in mind, speech, and judgment (1 Cor. 1:10) and as much implied in Yahshua’s own words: *I and [My] Father are One*, John 10:30, **KJV**, and perhaps appreciated in Yahweh’s saying, *For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh*, Genesis 2:24. (**emphasis**, ours)

It has been said, that Yahweh was the Draftsman and that Yahshua is the Craftsman. Yahshua Himself said, *My food is to do the will of Him Who sent me, and to accomplish His work ... My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working ... For I am come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him Who sent Me*, John 4:34, 5:17, 6:38.

In a proper marriage, both husband and wife need to be *echad*, not only with one another but they should also be *echad* with Yahweh and Yahshua, as well. There is a benefit to a husband and his wife being *echad*, that is, equally yoked in faith: if one falls, the other may lift his or her partner up (Eccl. 4:9-12). Moreover, a three-fold cord in which Yahweh and Yahshua make up the third ‘strand’ is not easily broken. (See also Matthew 18:20.)

Years ago, there was a message posted by a first-day church at curbside which read, “Loved the wedding, now invite Me to the marriage.”

Here is a rhetorical question: Before *whom* do a man and woman make their marriage vows? While some may say, “ministers and other witnesses”

(which is true), most importantly it is before Yahweh Who bears witness to, and Who ultimately blesses a marriage – What therefore Yahweh has joined together, let no man separate, Mark 10:9.

Yahweh and Yahshua are both participants in a marriage with a man and a woman. In fact, without Them, the marriage is weak at best and at worst, may be doomed to failure. Scripture tells us that unless Yahweh builds a house that it will not stand (Psa. 127:1). It is Yahweh's desire that we are *echad*, that is, one in mind, goal, and purpose with Him. We see this expressed so well in Yahshua's prayer during His passion in Gethsemane (John 17:21, 22, 23).

Three times, in Yahshua's Gethsemane prayer He asserts His desire that His disciples be *echad*, one with Him and The Father. Certainly, He desires the same thing for a husband and wife who are also His disciples. One may ask "Why does He desire this?" because in having been laborers together with Him (2 Cor. 6:1), He has gone to prepare a place for us ... in heaven, from which He will return to receive us to Himself, that where He is, we may also be (John 14:2-3).

Thus, it is important that a married couple here, and in this present time, be in agreement together, and with Yahweh and Yahshua, so that all things work together toward a peaceful and prosperous marriage.

Moreover, according to Scripture (Deut. 17:6; Matt. 18:16, 2 Cor. 13:1), the testimony of two or three equates to truth and suggesting, therefore, that a married couple who are *echad* are witnesses/representatives for Yahweh and His Word.

Indeed, might those apart from having *echad*, have cause to see the witness of the light of Yahweh and Yahshua in the married couple who are *echad* in mind, speech, and judgment and which is manifested in their assuming the Master Yahshua's example of humble obedience to His Father's commandments; in their seeking not to be served, but serving; in neither pursuing their own things, but glorifying Yahweh the Father in all that they do.

For as Yahweh and Yahshua, agreeing together in

goal and purpose, work together to accomplish much, so also do a couple in an *echad* marriage covenant. A marriage relationship in which there is little or no agreement about how to make the marriage work will be strained – much like a rope is strained when pulled from its two ends. Unfortunately, many couples fight each other and this results in a game of ideological tug-of-war ... a scenario in which little of nothing is accomplished.

Marriage: A Complementary Relationship

Yahweh made marriage a complementary relationship. Each partner to the marriage has attributes to offer to the marriage that the other lacks. Each has particular skills or talents that Yahweh has given to build up the marriage. Each is like half of a portrait; both are required to complete the portrait, and both together should reveal the character of

Yahweh's nature. Perhaps the wife is more emotional showing the understanding and caring properties of Yahweh, while the husband may be of a more firm and serious disposition, displaying Yahweh's just nature. But both work together with Yahweh and for the mutual benefit of each other.

Why is all of this important? because the marriage is the first institution ordained by Yahweh (Gen. 2:24). The marriage, and the family marriage produces, influence all other social behaviors and laws in the community ... even in a congregation of believers.

Raise a Child in the Way

Train up a child in the way he should go, Even when he grows older he will not abandon it, Proverbs 22:6. When children are raised according to the truth of Yahweh's Word, they will have a firm foundation for life. But training up "a child[ren] in the way he [they] should go" requires both parents to be in agreement (*echad*) in order to eliminate confusion.

For example: one parent believes the Bible and would teach the children Yahweh is the Creator and that they should obey Him, while the other parent who is an atheist would teach the children there is no Elohim and that they need only to do what they think is right.



Diametrically opposed to each other, one position is selfless and the other, selfish. Little wonder, their children might become confused. Little wonder, too, their children would choose the path of least requirement: selfishness!

Parents do not teach by words alone, but by deeds as well. Parents whose disposition toward their children is, “Do as I say,” without themselves doing as they say, will discover to their sorrow their children’s response of, “Monkey see, Monkey do.” Children learn most by their parents’ example. If, for example, one parent teaches smoking is bad, while the other parent is behind them smoking, that child will see and think, “Smoking? It’s ok!”

Parents should agree on how to discipline their children. Disagreement can produce confusion and even, manipulation by the children as they discern which of the two parents is more permissive and which is more strict. A married couple should consider before becoming parents how they will, consistently, discipline their children and abide to their agreement, only though allowing for deviation from what was previously established ‘protocol’, when circumstance warrants that consideration.

Finally, children learn what relationships look like from their parents’ behavior toward each other. This is why it’s extremely important for a child to see that their mom and dad love each other. And because children give notice to their parents’ relationship with each other, they have a model to inform their quest toward looking for these same attributes in a prospective marriage partner – whether those characteristics are loving, or abusive.

The Assembly, Like a Family

Scripture likens Yahshua and the Assembly to a husband and wife. Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 11:2, *For I am jealous for you with a righteous jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, to present you [as] a pure virgin to Messiah.* And again, in Revelation 19:7, we read, *Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, because the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His bride has prepared herself.*

Corporately, the Assembly, though composed of individual members represented by husbands/fathers, wives/mothers, and children – each bringing some particular, complementary property to the family relationship – is likened to the bride of Messiah with Yahshua as Its Head. and informs what the foundational model of marriage and the family is supposed to look like.

The Assembly is one family. Those who are
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baptized believers in Yahshua and who do the will of Yahweh are called brothers and sisters, or collectively, brethren (Matt. 12:50).

Conclusion

Remember that husbands and wives are purposed by Yahweh and Yahshua to be *echad* – one in goal and purpose, and accomplished through having but one mind, speech, and judgment. They agree in faith and on a moral standard and in training and raising their children. This same attitude distinguishes the Assembly, purposed by its Head, Yahshua the Messiah, to be a beacon of light to those in the darkness of the world (Matt. 5:14-16) – preaching and teaching Yahweh’s Truth in word and deed, while preparing its members to live righteous lives in anticipation of Master Yahshua’s return.

The Assemblies should affect the culture, rather than the culture influencing the spiritual polity of the Assemblies. With this in mind, we who remain faithful to Yahweh as the body of Messiah must do our due diligence to prevent becoming assimilated into what has emerged as the ‘new order’. We must maintain our house on the Rock (Yahshua), so that the storm will not prevail against us (Matt. 7:24-27). We are light the light of the world, and we must do our best to shine bright in this growing darkness. Even if the world around us falls, owing to the house of government and culture being divided, as long we in the Body remain *echad* in the unity of the faith – remember: a house divided against itself will not be able to stand, Mark 3:25 – we will not fall, because we are His house “if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end” (Heb. 3:6).

- Brother Lucas Bentley



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APPOINTED TIMES of LEVITICUS 23 (excerpt from *Biblical Holy Days*)

Examining the Appointed Times (*Moedim*) of Leviticus 23

Names, Times, Meaning, Observance

Verse	Name	Hebrew	Time	Commemorates	Foreshadows	Israel's Lesson	We are to...	Our Lesson
Leviticus 23:03	Weekly SABBATH Seventh Day	SHABBAT <i>a Miqra Qodesh</i>	Sunset to Sunset 7 th Day	Creation and Redemption	Yah's 7th Day Millennial Reign of Messiah	SABBATH Day Rest and Restoration	Rest. Do no Servile Work. Assemble Together	Enter His Rest
23:05	PASSOVER "Last Supper"	PESACH	14 th Abib (After Sunset the Previous Evening)	Deliverance from Death Angel	Salvation from 2nd Death	See and Remember Yahweh's Salvation	Humble Ourselves and Care for Others	Justified Through Yahshua's Sacrifice
23:6-7	1. First Day of UNLEAVENED BREAD	Chag haMATZOT <i>a Miqra Qodesh</i>	Eve of 15 th Abib 1st day of 7 Unleavened Bread	Departure from Rameses, Egypt at Night	Coming Out From Sin and False Worship	Clean House, Do Not Follow Ways of Heathens	Remove ALL Leaven from House (physical), and Life (Spiritual)	Removing Sin from Life, Obedience to Messiah to the End
23:08	2. Last Day of Feast of UNLEAVENED BREAD	Yom haSHEBIY <i>a Miqra Qodesh</i>	Eve of 21st Abib 7th Day of 7 Unleavened Bread	Crossed Red Sea Free from Egypt	Freedom from Penalty of Sin	Anticipate Receiving Law and Will of Yahweh	Eat Unleavened Bread Each Day. Be Pure and Perfect	Seek Righteousness Endure Trials Avoid Sinning
23:9-14	WAVE SHEAF OFFERING of Firstfruits	OMER RESHIYT	Day after Weekly Sabbath in Days of Unleavened Bread	Yahshua's Ascension to Heaven	Promise of Eternal Life	Bountiful Harvest, a Gift from Yahweh. Count to Pentecost	Be a Type of Firstfruits, Like Yahshua	First Resurrection is for the Faithful
23:15-22	3. Day of PENTECOST, FEAST OF WEEKS, FIRSTFRUITS	SHAVOUT, <i>a Miqra Qodesh</i>	7 Sabbaths and 1 Day (50 days) from Wave Sheaf	Giving of Law (<i>Torah</i>), Spirit of Yahweh to His Disciples	Harvest of Souls for Yahweh's Kingdom Message	Yahweh's Spirit Needed to Keep Law and Overcome	Be Filled with Spirit of Yahweh with Fear and Trembling	Spirit Given for Obedience to Yahweh
23:23-25	4. Feast of Trumpets 1st Day of 7th Month	Yom TERUAH, <i>a Miqra Qodesh</i>	Eve of 1st Day of 7th Month	Remembrance of Victories Yahweh's Protection	Return of Messiah at Sound of Last Trumpet	Yahweh is our Strength, Song, and Salvation	Prepare and Watch for Yahshua's Return	Take Care of Today and Be Vigilant for His Return
23:26-32	5. Day of ATONEMENT, (Fasting) "day of affliction"	Yom KIPPUR "haKipperim", <i>a Miqra Qodesh</i>	Eve of 10th day of 7th Month	Whole House of Israel's Sins Forgiven	Gathering of Whole House of Israel At-One-Ment	Both Houses Will Be Restored	Fast Entire 24-hour Day. No Food or Water. Love Brethren & Enemies.	Do Not Forsake Gathering Together
23:33-36, 39-42	6. 1st Day FEAST of TABERNACLES -SUKKOT-	Chag haSUKKOT <i>a Miqra Qodesh</i>	Eve of 15th Day of 7th Month	Brought Out from Egypt, Living in Temporary Dwellings	Entrance into Yahweh's Kingdom for 1000 years	Wandering from Yahweh is Death	Obey Laws Now as if We're already in the Kingdom	1000 Year Reign of Messiah Yahshua
23:36-39b	7. THE EIGHTH DAY Solemn Assembly "Last Great Day"	Yom haSH'MINI ATSERET, <i>a Miqra Qodesh</i>	Eve of 22nd day of 7th Month	Life in Promised Land	Eternity! New Heaven and Earth. New Beginnings	Yahweh Defeats Israel's Enemies and will Reign Forever	Be Joyful and make HIS Law Part of our Way of Life. Walk in the Spirit.	Obedience Leads to Eternal Life in Yahshua haMashiach

NOTE: All Feasts are celebrations, except for Passover and Atonement. Chag H2282 (from H2287) can mean a festival/celebration, or alternatively, a sacrifice/victim.

New Moon Establishes Feast Days

David shows that the new moon was appointed for the festival seasons in Psalm 104:19. Isaiah points out that the new moon will be kept as the time to set Yahweh's Feasts in the future Millennium, Isaiah 66:23: *And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me, says Yahweh.*

We have, in times past, observed the new moons with a Bible study to memorialize and acknowledge the beginning of a new month of Yahweh's calendar. However, the new moons are not annual Sabbaths, and not a sacred time, except for the new moon of the seventh month, which is known as the Feast of Trumpets. New moons also do not establish the weekly pattern, which was set from creation.

Church-secular holidays such as Halloween, All Saints' Day, Christmas, New Year's Day, and Valentine's Day come during the year irrespective of the moon. These holidays are in the cold, winter season.

But Yahweh's Feasts are seasonal, and at a pleasant time of the year. All of Yahweh's Feast days take place in the cool spring or fall weather. Insect pests are minimal at His Feasts. Contrast this with many churches that hold extra-Biblical "camp-meetings" in the hot summer months of July or August.

The week of Unleavened Bread always begins with a full moon (as does Tabernacles), which means the obedient brethren could always fellowship well into the night, being that electricity was lacking anciently.

We must not neglect the new moons even though they are not Holy Days. Moons are the sign Yahweh gave us that enables us to observe special days at the proper time, and thus to worship Him properly. What could be a better place for such a reminder than the sky?

Yahweh's Assembly in Yahshua publishes a calendar each year showing when the new moons will be visible so that we can determine His Feast days (see our calendar). We as moon-watchers diligently seek the new moon so that the Feast Days will not come upon us unawares. We should be looking ahead to the Feast Days and making plans to observe all seven of them throughout the year.



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Q Whoever calls upon the Name of Yahshua will be saved (Acts 2:21). Is calling upon the Name of Yahshua all that's necessary to be saved?

A To call upon His Name is to acknowledge Him. But Yahshua emphasized obedience to the Father. And His own obedience to the Father – even to His death on the stake (Phil. 2:8) – is an example to us.

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.

So, obedience to Yahshua is to acknowledge and obey the Father. Although the Son is not the Father, they are One in mind, speech, and judgment.

While He was still speaking to the crowds, behold, His mother and brothers were standing outside, seeking to speak to Him. Someone said to Him, "Behold, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside seeking to speak to You." But Yahshua answered the one who was telling Him and said, "Who is My mother and who are My brothers?" And stretching out His hand toward His disciples, He said, "Behold My mother and My brothers! "For whoever does the will of My Father Who is in heaven, he is My brother and sister and mother," Matthew 12:46–50.

Thus, to call upon Him is to use His Name as a proper noun and to understand that He Who is without sin (Heb. 4:15) is the Image of His Father (John 14:6-11).

Q Can you have an evening and morning without first having a day?

A It appears you may be referencing the Genesis account, in which the creation is given in seven days. Our understanding is that a Biblical day is from sunset to sunset (around 24 hours). The first day (one day) was stated as evening and morning (night and day), so from a Scriptural standpoint, the answer to whether one can have an evening and a morning without

first having a day is, "No," as the evening and the morning are defined as a day. Yahweh has permitted a record of the physical creation that mankind can comprehend. However, we often inquire, "Wasn't the sun and moon created on the fourth day?" Request our Combined Study entitled *Midnight, Noon, or Sunset* for further study.

Q Deuteronomy 7:15 reads, *Yahweh will remove from you all sickness; and He will not put on you any of the harmful diseases of Egypt which you have known, but He will lay them on all who hate you.* What have become of these diseases?

A This comes with a stipulation, however. With Israel's obedience came blessings; but with their disobedience, sickness was guaranteed.

He will bring back on you all the diseases of Egypt of which you were afraid, and they will cling to you, Deuteronomy 28:60.

Yahweh, in keeping His promises to Abraham through Isaac, sent Yahshua Who with His coming, healed all manner of infirmities and diseases to give hope once again to Israel (Matt. 15:24).

The news about Him spread throughout all Syria; and they brought to Him all who were ill, those suffering with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, paralytics; and He healed them, Matthew 4:24.

Today, by His stripes, we are healed. Ultimately, for those who abide in Him, there will be no more sickness or death in the Kingdom (Rev. 21:4).

Q Did Noah sin by being drunk, or did Ham by his actions?

A While not the best judgment, Noah may not have purposely become inebriated. Scripture indicates he was "a just man and perfect in his generations" (Gen. 6:9). One that continues in the pattern of drunkenness, however, has a significant sin that would prevent his admittance into the Kingdom (1 Cor. 6:10; James 4:17). The other sin of not honoring one's parents (5th Commandment) is evident. An evident mocking of Noah had occurred (Gen. 9:22-24) by Ham who incurred a transgenerational curse toward his progeny, as his son Canaan became a dishonorable child to him. Some postulate that either Ham or his son Canaan perpetrated a homosexual act with the drunken elder, or that Ham had had an incestual relationship with his mother. But these conjectures are without merit, having not the text of Scripture as a foundation upon which to build suggestion.

Q 1 John 5:17. What is “a sin not unto death”?
A There are sins that lead to death. They all have one thing in common: willful unrepentance. This is likened to the one who is enlightened to know the truth only to reject it afterward.

For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of Elohim and the powers of the age to come, and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again impale (put to the torture stake) to themselves the Son of Elohim and put Him to open shame. For ground that drinks the rain which often falls on it and brings forth vegetation useful to those for whose sake it is also tilled, receives a blessing from Elohim; but if it yields thorns and thistles, it is worthless and close to being cursed, and it ends up being burned, Hebrews 6:4-8.

For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain terrifying expectation of judgment and THE FURY OF A FIRE WHICH WILL CONSUME THE ADVERSARIES, Hebrews 10:26-27.

Producing good fruit, rather than bad fruit (thorns, thistles, tares, etc.), is a principle throughout Scripture. The end result for one having produced bad fruit is to be thrown into a consuming fire.

But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of Elohim, Romans 2:5.

For if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live, Romans 8:13.

The idea behind these warnings is that we should repent and turn from evil works. Solomon’s prayer during the dedication of the temple asked Yahweh for mercy when His people turn back to Him.

When they sin against You (for there is no man who does not sin) and You are angry with them and deliver them to an enemy, so that they take them away captive to a land far off or near; if they take thought in the land where they are taken captive, and repent and make supplication to You in the land of their captivity, saying, “We have sinned, we have committed iniquity and have acted wickedly;” if they return to You with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their captivity, where they have been taken captive, and pray toward their land which You have given to their fathers and the

city which You have chosen, and toward the house which I have built for Your name, then hear from heaven, from Your dwelling place, their prayer and supplications, and maintain their cause and forgive Your people who have sinned against You, 2 Chronicles 6:36–39.

A sin not unto death is forgivable once one asks for forgiveness and stops sinning. This repentance is acceptable to Yahweh and provides life for the one forgiven.



Q How is Matthew 25:1-13 (the Parable of the Ten Virgins) representative of the body of Messiah in today’s evil world?

A The Parable of the Ten Virgins is but one of several illustrations the Messiah makes in Matthew’s Evangel (see Chapter 13) of the Kingdom of Heaven. This particular account accentuates the necessity of vigilance – *Be on the alert, for you do not know the day nor the hour*, Verse 13 – on the part of His body, and directs us to the end of the age. The ten virgins (representative of a Jewish minion) and understood in Jewish culture as companions of the bride are gone out to meet, and await, the Bridegroom who has come for His bride. But only five were prudent enough to prepare themselves for His arrival, taking oil with their lamps in the event the Bridegroom should delay His coming.

It has been suggested that the oil which the prudent took into their lamps, might be the resources one can purchase to better understand the Scriptures – likened to studying to show one’s self approved of the Bridegroom. In this case, it is essential to give diligence studying resources like the Scriptures, concordances, commentaries and interlinears to understand the content of the Scriptures and particularly, different translations, and the significance of Hebrew names.

More Questions and Answers and over 100 studies are available for viewing online @ yaiy.org.
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***“...On the fifteenth day of the seventh month is the
Feast of Tabernacles for seven days to Yahweh.” Leviticus 23:34***

