

YAIY BEACON

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In the Wilderness
New Year Determination
A Time of Horror
Did Yahshua Die on a Cross?
The Third Day
The Church of Artemis
Being Established

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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In the Wilderness



When Moses fled to Midian, after slaying the Egyptian, he helped some women water their flock. And finding favor, he received of their father, Zipporah to wife. In turn, Moses became a shepherd for the elder's flock. After forty years had passed, Yahweh appears to Moses in the burning bush, as it is written:

Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of Elohim, [even] to Horeb. And the angel of Yahweh appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed, Exodus 3:1-2.

Word Analysis:

הֲרֵב Horeb #2722: desolate

שֵׁנַב Bush #5572: *seneh*: thorn-bush

סִינַי Sinai #5514: thorn-bush

(From the *Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexico*—Davidson, p. 575)

The mountain of Elohim is where Moses brought Israel to when leaving Egypt, then called Sinai because of the thorn-bush which Moses saw burning. It was here that Yahweh gave Israel the Ten Commandments, and where the everlasting covenant was made. Though some attempt to explain Mount Horeb and Mount Sinai as being two different locations, such as Sinai being a summit on Mount Horeb, others view the names as being

interchangeable for the same mountain. Moses had the burning bush experience at Mount Horeb and thus referred to it as Mount Sinai (thorn-bush).

Throughout Scripture, there are many shadows and types, and in doing word analysis, a better understanding may be gained into things that occur later on, like the significance of a burning bush.

Exodus 19:18 records that, *And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because Yahweh descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.*

Another parallel to the thorn-bush would be the crown of thorns placed on Yahshua's head - *And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put [it] upon His head, and a reed in His right hand: and they bowed the knee before Him, and mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" Matthew 27:29.*

It was Yahshua Who spoke to Moses from the burning bush (see our In-Depth Combined Studies, *Did the Savior Pre-Exist?*), for Yahshua is the Word of Yahweh (John 1:1-3, 14), and upon saying, "It is finished" at Calvary (John 19:30), the earth quaked (Matt. 27:51).

It was in the wilderness, the land of Midian (#4080, contention) that Moses spent forty years before Yahweh sent him to Egypt. It was in the wilderness, that Israel spent forty years before entering the promised land. And it was in the wilderness, that Yahshua spent forty days before His ministry began.

The Wilderness to the Promised Land

Hebrews 5:8-9 asserts that, *Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; And being made perfect He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him.* And James 1:2-4 counsels:

My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations; knowing [this], that the trying of your faith works patience. But let patience have [her] perfect work, that you may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

It is in this present life that some are brought into the wilderness for refinement. *For, many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand,* Daniel 12:10.

The promised land is always, on the other side of the wilderness. Israel stumbled at the Promise, when 10 of the 12 sent forth into Canaan, did not share in Caleb's urging the people, *Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it,* Numbers 13:30 instead, returning with a bad report:

We be not able to go up against the people; for they [are] stronger than we ... And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, [which come] of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight, Numbers 13:31, 33.

The subsequent punishment for Israel's unbelief, was 40 years wandering in the wilderness until they should be reduced to carcass.

A Faith-Walk, Not a Sight-Walk

Though obstacles before us may look like giants, things or situations which appear too difficult to overcome, nevertheless we are instructed to walk by faith and not by sight (2 Cor. 5:7)... *While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen [are] temporal; but the things which are not seen [are] eternal,* 2 Corinthians 4:18

In speaking of faith, Hebrews 11:6 says, *But without faith [it is] impossible to please [Him]: for he that comes to Elohim must believe that He is, and [that] He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.* The choices made, the words spoken, and the actions done, attest to one's belief/faith or lack thereof. While in the dry and barren land, do you give way to temptation or seek Yahweh's guidance?

The bottom line is, Whom do you serve? And where do the desires of your heart abide?

Yahweh's commandments, which He wrote upon the stone tablets with His own finger, are the essence of the everlasting covenant made with Israel on Mount Sinai (Exod. 19:5-8; 31:18). They are the standard by which all men will be judged.

But sad to say, most people when asked to recite the Ten Commandments cannot. Yes, pastors included! This is due to the deception of the adversary and a willing ignorance of people (2 Pet. 3:5):

For My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because you have rejected knowledge, I will also reject you, that you shall be no priest to me: seeing you have forgotten the law of your Elohim, I will also forget your children, Hosea 4:6.

Yahweh's hand of judgment will soon go forth upon the disobedient as read in Isaiah 24:5-6:

The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore has the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left.

Conclusion

If you are in a state of slumber, it is time to awaken! Embrace the everlasting covenant, learn the Ten Commandments and walk each day in obedience (Exod. 20:2-17; Deut. 5:6-21). Therein is the pathway of sanctification; (Yahshua is the gateway of justification by Whom all must enter for salvation). *Now therefore, if you will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then you shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people: for all the earth [is] Mine: And you shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. These [are] the words you shall speak unto the children of Israel,* Exodus 19:5-6.

This is repeated in 1 Peter 2:9-10, where we read, *But you [are] a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, and holy nation, a peculiar people; that you should show forth the praises of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light: Which in time past [were] not a people, but [are] now the people of Elohim: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.*

Once again, Malachi 4:4 says, *Remember you the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, [with] the statutes and judgments.*

The shofar is sounding, a warning cry is made: Take heed, judgment is at hand!

Come My people, enter you into your chambers, and shut your doors about you: hide yourself as it were for a little moment until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, Yahweh comes out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain, Isaiah 26:20-21.

And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which stands for the children of your people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation [even] to that same time: and at that time your people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book, Daniel 12:1.

May Yahweh guide you through the wilderness and bring you safely into the promised land.

The trumpet now is sounding
Lift up your voice and sing
For soon Yahweh is coming
To reign on earth as King
Where will you be in
judgment,
Still in the wilderness, or
found obedient in Yahweh's
righteousness?
Come now and do take shelter
and leave all sin behind
Beware of helter-skelter, in
darkness don't be blind
(1 Thessalonians 5:1-9;
1 John 2:3-11)

-Brother Richard Anderson



Today's Gregorian calendar, introduced by Pope Gregory XIII in 1582 updated its predecessor, the Julian calendar introduced by Julius Caesar in 45 B.C.E., and made three main changes to the Julian calendar:

- New formula for calculating leap years:
 1. The year is evenly divisible by 4.
 2. If the year can be evenly divided by 100, it is NOT a leap year, unless.
 3. The year is also evenly divisible by 400: Then it is a leap year.
- 10 days were dropped in October 1582.
- New rules for calculating the date of Easter.

Source: <https://www.timeanddate.com/calendar/gregorian-calendar.html>

The First Month of the Year

The Biblical new year does not begin in January, however, but after the dead winter season has ended in Israel and new life is 'springing' forth. It is when the trees start to produce buds, leaves and life is renewed in the creation. Yahweh is all for life and light, not death and darkness. This is another reason the new moon cannot be the conjunction (the astronomical 'new moon' when nothing can be seen) as many believe, but rather the first visible *light* (Gen. 1:14-16).

After Yahweh had sent nine plagues, prior to giving Moses instructions about the Passover – a memorial of redemption from slavery in Egypt (ultimately redemption from sin through Messiah, the true Passover Lamb), Yahweh showed Moses that Israel was to have a different calendar system from what was familiar in Egypt. *This month shall be to you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you, Exodus 12:2.* The phrase "This month" in Hebrew is *ha-hodesh ha-zeh* literally interpreted, "This new moon." Two things are implied:

1. The Egyptians began their new year on a different month, easily understood from the passage.
2. Yahweh Himself was showing Moses the new moon. If someone

says, “this house” or “this car,” it is clear the object referred to is in proximity and that the other person can see it with their eyes (unlike the astronomical conjunction).

Four passages clearly identify this month in which Israel was granted redemption from Egypt, “the month of Abib” (Exo. 13:4; 23:15; 34:18, Deut. 16:1). But how do we know when it is?

What is “The Month of Abib?”

The very first place the term “abib” (*aviv* in Modern Hebrew) is used is in reference to the seventh plague of Egypt, fire and hail. *And the flax and the barley was smitten: for the barley [was] in the ear, and the flax [was] bolted*, Exodus 9:31.

The phrase “for the barley was in the ear” in Hebrew is *ki ha-seorah aviv*, that is “for the barley was *aviv*.” Barley is the only cereal grain that is described as in the state of “*aviv*.” Famous 11th century Jewish scholar Rashi (acronym for Rabbi Shlomo Yitzhaqi) wrote a detailed commentary on the “Old Testament,” used even today by the Jews. Regarding Exodus 23:15, he wrote, Abib is “[the month] in which the grain fills out in its greenness (*be-ibeah*). *Aviv* is an expression [related to the word for] a father *av*, the firstborn and the earliest [month] to ripen fruits.”

Just as Yahweh gave no names to the days of the week except for the seventh day (*shabbat*), likewise the months too are numbered and not given names. However, the first month in Hebrew is repeatedly called *hodesh ha-aviv*, literally “new moon of the *aviv*”. Notice the definite article, “the *aviv*” showing *aviv* is not a proper noun (i.e., the first month *Aviv*), but an adjective referring to the new moon coinciding with the first harvestable barley crop.

First of the Firstfruits

If you offer a cereal offering of first fruits to Yahweh, you shall offer for the cereal offering of your first fruits crushed new grain from fresh ears, parched with fire, (Lev. 2:14, RSV).

“Fresh ears” in the above passage is the same Hebrew word *aviv*. This was describing the first ripe grain offering individuals could present to Yahweh at the start of the new year, to acknowledge His providence. Notice the level of maturity of the new grain. It should be “parched with fire,” and not explode. Once parched, it should be “crushed” into flour.

Barley grows in a few key stages:

- Head emergence (no substance inside)
- Milk development (milk-like substance inside)
- Dough development (dough like texture)
- Ripening (difficult to divide with the thumb nail)

Only the last two stages are mature enough to be parched and afterwards crushed into flour.

Before individuals could present their new grain offering, the *omer* offering (*korban ha-omer* in Hebrew, about 2 kg dry weight of new barley), was to be offered by the high priest on behalf of Israel. No one could eat of the new produce until this *omer* offering was first accepted by Yahweh (Lev. 23:14). The lesson is simple: The first fruits (the *YisraEl* of Yahweh – Rom. 11; Gal. 6:16) cannot be accepted by Him, until the First of the first fruits (Yahshua Messiah) had first been accepted (at His resurrection):

And He is the Head of the body, the assembly: Who is the Beginning, the Firstborn from the dead; that in all [things] He might have the preeminence, Colossians 1:18.

This *omer* offering could not be performed in the wilderness or any other place, but only in the land of Israel. *Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them, When you come into the land which I give to you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then you shall bring an omer of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest*, Leviticus 23:10. This is the land which Yahweh cares for and provides rain and growth according to His timing and blessings for obedience.

For the land which you go to possess is not like the land of Egypt from which you have come, where you sowed your seed and watered it by foot, as a vegetable garden; But the land which you cross over to possess [is] a land of hills and valleys, which drinks water from the rain of heaven, a land for which Yahweh your Elohim cares; the eyes of Yahweh your Elohim [are] always on it, from the beginning of the year to the very end of the year. And it shall be that if you earnestly obey My commandments which I command you today, to love Yahweh your Elohim and serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul, Then I will give [you] the rain for your land in its season, the early rain and the latter rain, that you may gather in your grain, your new wine, and your oil, Deuteronomy 11:10-14.

Criteria for Declaring the New Year:

1. Only the first harvestable barley can be used, not some other grain (Exo. 9:31).
2. The barley must come from the land of Israel (Lev. 23:10, Deut. 11:10-14).
3. It must be in dough or ripened stage, for parching and grinding to flour (Lev. 2:14).
4. The fields must be ready for harvest (Deut. 16:9), since the omer offering is from the first best harvest and cannot be from a bundle of barley picked from here and there.
5. *Aviv* state should describe the general season of the land (at least half of the field should be *aviv*) and not just small pockets of the field.
6. Two or more fields (as in, two or three witnesses) must satisfy the above criteria (Num. 35:30, Deut. 17:6-7; 19:15). Even though only an *omer* is required for the *omer* offering, *aviv* **cannot** be declared unless the land has reached the state of harvesting (demonstrated by at least two fields meeting the Biblical criteria).
7. The new moon seen after *aviv* is confirmed, is the first month of the year. If at the end of the 12th month *aviv* is not reached, another month is added giving 13 months for that year which ensures each year begins in the correct season (around March-April on the Gregorian calendar).

It is also important barley is sourced from naturally growing fields, where man has not manipulated growth with chemicals, fertilizer, etc. Barley grown on the sides of roads (influenced by car exhaust), or other places where it would not be harvested (e.g., gardens, dry wilderness, hills or stony ground) is also not suitable. *Aviv* barley must be from the first and best of untampered produce which Yahweh has blessed Israel with rain in due season.

So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but Elohim Who causes the growth, 1 Corinthians 3:7 (NASB).

Does It Really Matter?

Observe the month of [the] abib and keep the passover to Yahweh your Elohim: for in the month of abib Yahweh your Elohim brought you forth out of Egypt by night, Deuteronomy 16:1.

The word “observe” comes from the Hebrew *shamar* and is first used to describe the command Yahweh gave to Adam, to look after the garden of Eden – “keep it” (Gen. 2:15). What is intended is a physical watching with the eyes. It is as though a friend has given us something very valuable to

them, to look after. Are we going to give this to others to protect and let them report to us whether it is still safe and not stolen? No, but we ourselves will watch over that very carefully, to make sure nothing happens to it and that we do not disappoint our friend when they expect it back. Similarly, the new moon (once *aviv* is declared) is a very important marker for Yahweh’s servants. We cannot be lazy expecting others to report the new moons on our behalf, but we ourselves need to go out and look with our eyes. Yahweh has given these signs to His servants, that they may know His appointed times (Psa. 104:19).

Keeping a festival one or two days earlier (if one follows the Jewish calendar), or even a month off (because of not looking to the agricultural signs Yahweh provides) is not a small matter. Imagine the Prime Minister or President of your country sending you and a very few others a personal mail saying they will be at a certain location, providing the date and time expecting your audience. If you go to that location, at the time specified, but one or two days earlier or even a month out, that ruler will not be there!

You see, the festivals of Yahweh are not about us. They are predetermined meetings that the Most High has organized to have His trusted servants appear and hear His words. Many of us have left organizations which have followed the Jewish calendar rather than the calendar Yahweh has given and are familiar with the excuse, “but unity is more important.” Not so. **If we are united in disobedience to the King’s command, we should not expect His presence nor favor.**

Conclusion

Yahweh is actively revealing Himself to His servants in many ways, including through His creation. To ignore Yahweh’s signs and rely on pre-calculated calendars of men, is to say Yahweh has no role in setting His clock; that He is sitting back to let man scratch their heads and build complicated formulas to establish a ‘biblical calendar.’ How ridiculous!

Yahweh does not give us Truth which can be discerned by wisdom of men, but simple words which those simple of heart will understand. Don’t neglect the signs He gives – the new moons and the first harvestable barley in Israel, so that you may come into the palace of the Great King at His appointed times, by royal decree.

-Brother Rohan John (Australia)

A TIME OF HORROR

Slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, [and] women: but come not near any man upon whom [is] the mark; and begin at My sanctuary. Then they began at the ancient men which [were] before the house, Ezekiel 9:6.

This is the judgment hand of Yahweh, instruction given to his angels to go forth and destroy. And yet, there is a remnant, a set apart few who have been sealed with an identifying mark, protecting them from the destroyer's hand.

Rahab's Deliverance Parallels Passover

A parallel to this great destruction and deliverance is seen with the destruction of Jericho and the redemption of Rahab and her family:

And Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father's household, and all that she had; and she dwells in Israel [even] unto this day; because she hid the messengers, which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho, Joshua 6:25.

They whom Joshua had sent had given Rahab instruction:

Behold, [when] we come into the land, you shall bind this line of scarlet thread in the window which you did let us down by: and you shall bring your father, and your mother, and your brethren, and all your father's household, home unto you. And it shall be, [that] whosoever shall go out of the doors of your house into the street, [his] blood shall be upon his head, and we [will] be guiltless: and whosoever shall be with you in the house, his blood [shall be] on our head, if [any] hand be upon him, Joshua 2:18-19.

This was an echo of the warning Yahweh gave Israel in Egypt, before the angel of death passed over the land, saying, *And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where you [are]: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy [you], when I smite the land of Egypt, Exodus 12:13.*

Passover's Memorial Sign and Seal

In both events, the first Passover and Rahab's deliverance, there was a physical sign the destroyer looked for to determine whether to let live or to kill. And for Yahweh's remnant, a sign has been given and a seal placed upon them for their protection, too. But should one go astray, and step outside His protection, they, too, will perish in the time of judgment.



With Israel in Egypt, it was the blood of the lamb upon the framework of the door. As a memorial, the observance of Passover was to remain an everlasting ordinance (Exod. 12:14), followed with seven days of unleavened bread which follows Passover:

In the first [month] on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month at evening. Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses: for whosoever eats that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off

from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a stranger or born in the land, Exodus 12:18-19.

Chapter 13:9-10 goes on to say:

And it shall be for a sign unto you upon your hand, and for a memorial between your eyes, that Yahweh's law may be in your mouth: for with a strong hand has Yahweh brought you out of Egypt. You shall therefore keep this observance in His season from year to year.

A Scarlet Thread, Atoning Blood

A sign upon your hand and a memorial between your eyes—one that has been sealed with this sign will remember to keep this all-important festival in its appointed time. The Passover lamb in Egypt was a type pointing to Yahshua, for it is only by the atoning blood of Yahshua that one is saved from pending destruction, as it is written:

But with the precious blood of Messiah, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot: Who

verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by Him do believe in Elohim that raised Him up from the dead, and gave Him glory; that your faith and hope might be in Elohim. Seeing you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, [see that you] love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of Yahweh, which lives and abides forever, 1 Peter 1:19-23.

In the Passover service both unleavened bread and grape juice are used as seen in 1 Corinthians 11:23-26:

For I have received of the Master that which also I delivered unto you, that the Master Yahshua the [same] night in which He was betrayed took bread: And when He had given thanks, He broke [it], and said, "Take, eat: this is My body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of Me." After the same manner also [He took] the cup, when He had supped, saying, "This cup is the New Testament in My blood: this do you, as often as you drink [it], in remembrance of Me." For as often as you eat this bread, and drink this cup, you do show the Master's death till He come.

The Passover service is a memorial of Israel's deliverance from Egypt as well as a memorial of Yahshua's death which provided man's deliverance from the penalty of death (Rom. 6:23).

As Yahshua died on Passover day, so it is the memorial to be observed at its appointed time, unlike the manner of some who take "communion" every week, monthly, or quarterly, and which is contrary to the Scriptural command.

We should not be remiss in noting also, the scarlet thread which Rahab hung out the window in hope of the promised redemption. Like the blood of the lamb on the door's frame protected those inside the house from the angel of death, Rahab and those with her inside her home were protected as well.

For instruction had been given to Israel that those inside their houses must not venture out lest they perish. Obedience to instruction was essential for their deliverance.

Yahweh has also provided instruction for His people to follow, and for those who disregard the instruction, death awaits. *For Yahweh has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Master Yahshua ha Maschiach, 1 Thessalonians 5:9.*

Nevertheless, for those walking outside the instruction given in Scripture, a last plea is made:

And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, "Come out of her, My people, that you be not partakers of her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues," Revelation 18:4.

Isaiah 26:20-21 reads, *Come My people, enter you into your chambers, and shut your doors about you: hide yourself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be over past. For, behold, Yahweh comes out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.*

The sign and the seal, are the Sacred Names, Yahweh and Yahshua, and obedient observance of the Sabbath, as it is written:

And I gave them My statutes, and showed them my judgments, which [if] a man do, he shall live in them. Moreover also I gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I [am] Yahweh that sanctify them, Ezekiel 20:11-12.

And it shall come to pass, [that] whosoever shall call on the Name of Yahweh shall be delivered: for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as Yahweh has said, and in the remnant whom Yahweh shall call, Joel 2:32.

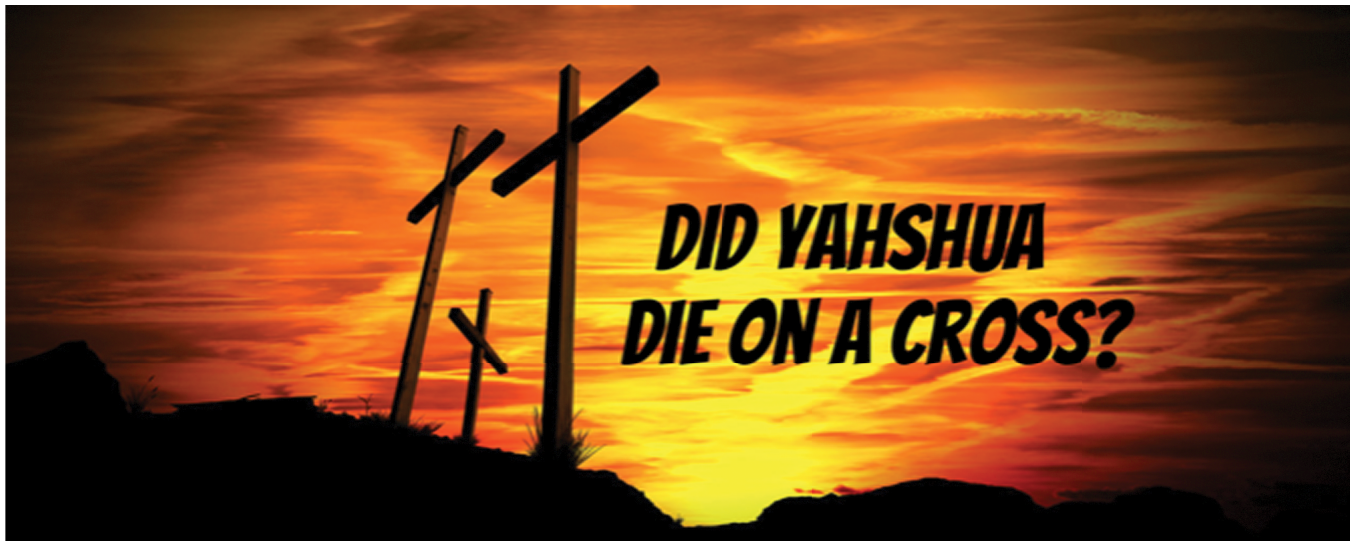
And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on Mount Zion, and with Him an hundred [and] forty four thousand, having His Father's Name written in their foreheads, Revelation 14:1.

Conclusion

Do you have ears to hear, and an understanding heart? Look closely at what is said, and consider. Are you looking to Yahweh for salvation, or are you calling upon replacement titles (L-rd, G-d), or hybrid representations of the Savior's Name (J-sus) which fall short and are not rooted in truth? Are you keeping Yahweh's commandments, statutes, and judgments, or are you walking another way? Are you living in obedience, or are you on the outside having a false hope given by those teaching salvation some other way?

Following after lying pastors who teach doctrine rooted in the tradition of man, rather than the commandments of Yahweh, is a death sentence. The call goes forth to come out of Egypt (apostasy) and don't be a partaker of her sins.

-Brother Richard Anderson



The Iconography of Pagan Worship

Those who have come from nominal Christian backgrounds would be familiar with the iconography in worship. Paintings, statues, candles, crucifixes, popes, “saints,” virgin Mary and just about everything that is created, rather than the Creator Himself (Rom 1:25), Who forbids idols and pagan practices.

The Bible does however give a few symbols which are permitted in worship such as the shofar (ram’s horn) for declaring the new moons and appointed times; the menorah (lampstand); oil for anointing, and lambs for Passover. Yet none of these ever became the focus of worship, but were used as commanded during worship.

What about the cross? Is there Biblical evidence that Yahshua really died on the T-shaped cross? Is this an appropriate symbol in worship? Did the first century believers in Messiah walk around with crucifix necklaces or have crosses in their assembly halls? What does the Bible say concerning this matter?

Roman Methods of Execution

The Romans had many gruesome penalties for executing unruly subjects including burning alive, impalement-crucifixion. In the New Testament, the word “cross” is from the Greek word σταυρός *stauros*, which Dr. James Strong defined in his *Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, as “a stake or post ... a pole or cross.” Similarly, Dr. Joseph Thayer in his lexicon translated this word as “an upright stake, especially a pointed one ... a cross.” Notice the primary definition both scholars give is “stake” but “cross” is a secondary translation.

When the apostles referred to the execution of

Messiah, the other word used is clearer. In the Greek manuscripts, it is ξύλον (*xu-lon*) which means wood (i.e. timber) or a tree:

- *The Elohim of our fathers raised up Yahshua, Whom you slew and hanged on a tree, Acts 5:30.*
- *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.*
- *And when they had fulfilled all that was written of Him, they took [Him] down from the tree, and laid [Him] in a sepulcher, Acts 13:29.*
- *Messiah has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, “Cursed [is] every one that hangs on a tree,” Galatians 3:13.*
- *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 you were healed, 1 Peter 2:24.*

These verses prove that Yahshua was executed either on an upright piece of timber (stake or wood) or on a tree itself. Since Yahshua had to carry His stake (Luke 23:26), it is probably more likely that “wood” is the best translation. Further since vinegar was given to quench Yahshua’s thirst by attaching a sponge to the end of a stick (Matt. 27:48, Mark 15:36), this suggests the wooden pole for execution was probably suspended from some height. *If a man has committed a sin deserving of death, and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, his body shall not remain overnight on the tree, but you shall surely bury him that day, so that you do not defile the land which Yahweh your Elohim is giving you as an inheritance; for he who is hanged is accursed of Elohim, Deuteronomy 21:22-23.*

Torah Prescription for Execution

Notice how criminals were punished under Torah. “he is [first] put to death, and [then] you hang him [i.e. display his body] on a tree.” They were not to kill by hanging, but rather their dead bodies were hanged afterwards to serve as a deterrent to sin (Deut. 13:11; 17:13; 19:20; 21:21).

An example: When the Jews executed judgment on Haman’s ten sons, they afterwards displayed their bodies on the gallows as a warning to the other Jewish enemies (Est. 9:5-14). Interestingly, this is contrasted with Haman who wanted to kill Mordecai by hanging (Est. 5:14), yet instead it fell on Haman’s own head by the king’s command (Est. 7:9-10).

The Jewish leaders understood the Torah that a criminal’s body could not remain displayed overnight on the tree but had to be taken down and buried before sunset, otherwise the land would be defiled.

Leaving Yahshua’s body on the stake would be a violation of this command. Thus, though the Sanhedrin transgressed the Torah by urging Pilate to execute Yahshua by impalement, they regarded the immediate removal of His body, as it is written:

*It was the day of preparation, and the Jewish leaders didn’t want the bodies hanging there the next day, which was the Sabbath (and a very special Sabbath, because it was the Passover week [actually, the First Day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread). So they asked Pilate to hasten their deaths by ordering that their legs be broken. Then their bodies could be taken down, John 19:31 (NLT). (For further study, read our mini-study entitled **Why Passover is NOT a High Day**).*

This is further evidence that Yahshua was executed on a wooden pole or tree according to the Torah, not a cross. Simply put, the Torah was prophesying the very form of death Messiah should suffer! Indeed, the penalty that should have been exacted upon our body for sin, was inflicted upon the Master’s body, and so He bore our punishment as a criminal.

For He (Yahweh) has made Him (Yahshua) [to be] sin for (instead of) us, Who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of Elohim in (through) Him, 2 Corinthians 5:21.

Messiah has redeemed us from the curse of the

law (i.e., the punishment for sin), being made a curse for (instead of) us: for it is written, “Cursed [is] every one that hangs on a tree,” Galatians 3:13.

Like the apostle, who said, “I, Sha’ul (Paul), became a servant ... fill up in my flesh what is lacking in Messiah’s afflictions” (Col. 1:23-24), we need to be walking in the footsteps of Yahshua and carrying our own burden.

“*Whosoever will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his [own] stake, and follow Me,*”

-Mark 8:34b

And when He had called the people [to Him] with His disciples also, He said to them, “Whosoever will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his [own] stake, and follow Me, Mark 8:34.

We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of Elohim, and take every thought captive to obey Messiah, being ready to punish every disobedience, when your obedience is complete, 2 Corinthians 10:5-6 (ESV).

Conclusion

So how do we carry the stake of Messiah and our own? We carry our own by the putting away of sin and walking in Yahweh’s righteous laws. We carry the stake of Messiah by suffering for righteousness’ sake. This is what Yahweh wants, not for us to embrace images and worship with outward show. “These are the ones I look on with favor: those who are humble and contrite in spirit, and who tremble at My Word,” (Isa. 66:2).

-Brother Rohan John (Australia)



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The Third Day

The land of Israel (Palestine region) was already occupied and controlled by the Romans even before the birth of the Messiah. According to the Scriptures, the Jewish people were expecting a Savior, a King like Solomon to come and free them from the hand of their oppressors and rulers. Even though the people from the east recognised the event of the Messiah's birth, none of the people in Israel realized that the Messiah was born among them except for few shepherds. According to the command of Yahweh (Lev. 12:6), Mary and Joseph brought the infant to the temple to present their firstborn Son before Yahweh. At that time two more people recognised that the Messiah was present among them – the two elderly individuals, Simeon and a widow named Anna (Luke 2:25 & 36), but who would listen to them?

Very Few Believed!

When Yahshua started preaching the good news of the coming Kingdom of Yahweh, He showed many miracles and provided healing to the people. However, there was much doubt among the people and His disciples, whether He was indeed the true Messiah or not. Even the people who saw the miracles and received healing did not believe that he was the Messiah, instead they asked for more signs from Him (John 6:30). Above this, the scribes and the Pharisees were also demanding a sign from Him so that if He COULD show them an instant sign they would believe, or else they would destroy Him (Matthew 12:38). At the end they all cried with one voice to kill the Messiah (the Innocent One) and to release the criminal Barabbas.

The Sign

Yahshua provided a sign for the people living at His time

as well as for the people who are now, that He is the Messiah they were looking for. It was not an instant sign, rather He prophesied His death and resurrection in a 3 full day (72 hr period) time frame. The Messiah Yahshua gave one more sign, *“For as Jonah was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation”* Luke 11:30. It is a comparable event which happened to Jonah when he was sent to preach the destruction of Nineveh. At first, he did not obey the voice of the Almighty, but went his own journey. As the boat was troubled by the raging sea, the passengers cast lots to find who was responsible, and the lot fell on Jonah. He was thrown out of the boat and was swallowed up by a great fish. The Scripture says, Jonah spent 3 days and 3 nights in the belly of the fish (Jonah 1:17).

Jonah was the sign to Nineveh, what was that sign? He was vomited out by the fish, after **3 days and 3 nights** inside its stomach. Covered with darkness, without food and water, unable to see outside world. **Jonah's body did not suffer decay in the belly of the fish.** Jonah might have shared this experience to the Ninevites, how Yahweh delivered him from death. So, the people in Nineveh believed his preaching and acted based on Jonah's single line proclamation, *“Forty more days and Nineveh will be overthrown.”* (Jonah 3:4)



Scriptural Proofs

There are 15 Scriptures I was able to find regarding this. All point out that the Messiah died and was buried 3 days and 3 nights and resurrected at the end of that period. None support a Friday death and Sunday resurrection.

1. Matthew 12:40: *As Jonah was **3 days and 3 nights** in the belly of a fish, so the Son of Man will be 3 days and 3 nights in the heart of the earth.*

2. Matthew 16:21: *From that time forth began Yahshua to shew unto His disciples, how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again **the third day.***

3. Matthew 17:22-23: *Yahshua said unto them, "The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men: and they shall kill Him, and **the third day** He shall be raised again."*

4. Matthew 20:18-19: *Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to impale Him: and **the third day** he shall rise again.*

5. Matthew 27:63-64: *Saying, "Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, 'After **three days I will rise again.**' Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until **the third day,** lest his disciples come by night, and steal Him away,*

and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first."

6. Mark 8:31: *And He began to teach them, that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and **after three days** rise again.*

7. Mark 9:31: *For He taught His disciples, and said unto them, "The Son of Man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill Him; and after that He is killed, He shall rise **the third day.**"*

8. Mark 10:33-34: *Saying, "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles: and they shall mock Him, and shall scourge Him, and shall spit upon Him, and shall kill Him: and **the third day** He shall rise again."*

9. Luke 9:22: *Saying, "The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised **the third day.**"*

10. Luke 18:33: *And they shall scourge Him, and put Him to death: and **the third day** He shall rise again.*

11. Luke 24:7: *Saying, "The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be impaled, and **the third day** rise again."*

12. Luke 24:21: *But we trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, today is **the third day** since these things were done.*

13. Luke 24:46: *And said unto them, "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Messiah to suffer, and to rise from the dead **the third day.**"*

14. Acts 10:40: *Him Yahweh raised up **the third day,** and shewed Him openly.*

15. 1 Corinthians 15:4: *And that He was buried, and that He rose again **the third day** according to the Scriptures.*



Timing of these events

As you may know, according to the Creator of the universe, a day begins at evening and ends at the following sunset which is a 24-hour period. The account of the creation of the days can be read in Genesis chapter 1 (but man invented different ways to determine when a day begins and ends).

We know from the Scriptures that the Messiah was resurrected at the end of Sabbath (Saturday), which leads to the beginning of the 1st day of the week. He appeared first to Miriam at the beginning of the 1st day of the week which is after the sunset of the 7th day (Sabbath). Counting 3 days and 3 nights backward from the end of the Sabbath reaches to Wednesday (not Friday). So, the Messiah died on a Wednesday afternoon around 3:00pm and His body was laid in the tomb just before the sunset.

According to Luke's account, Yahshua's body was placed in the tomb on the "Preparation day, and the Sabbath was approaching" (Luke 23:54). Those who don't know which Sabbath is mentioned here would normally think it is the weekly Sabbath (Saturday), hence the 'Preparation day' mentioned is naturally Friday. But that's not the case here, the 'Preparation day' is the day prior to the first day of the 'Feast of Unleavened Bread' when all preparations were to be completed before the High Sabbath.

When one reads and compares Leviticus 23:7 and John 19:31 this same Sabbath is mentioned as a

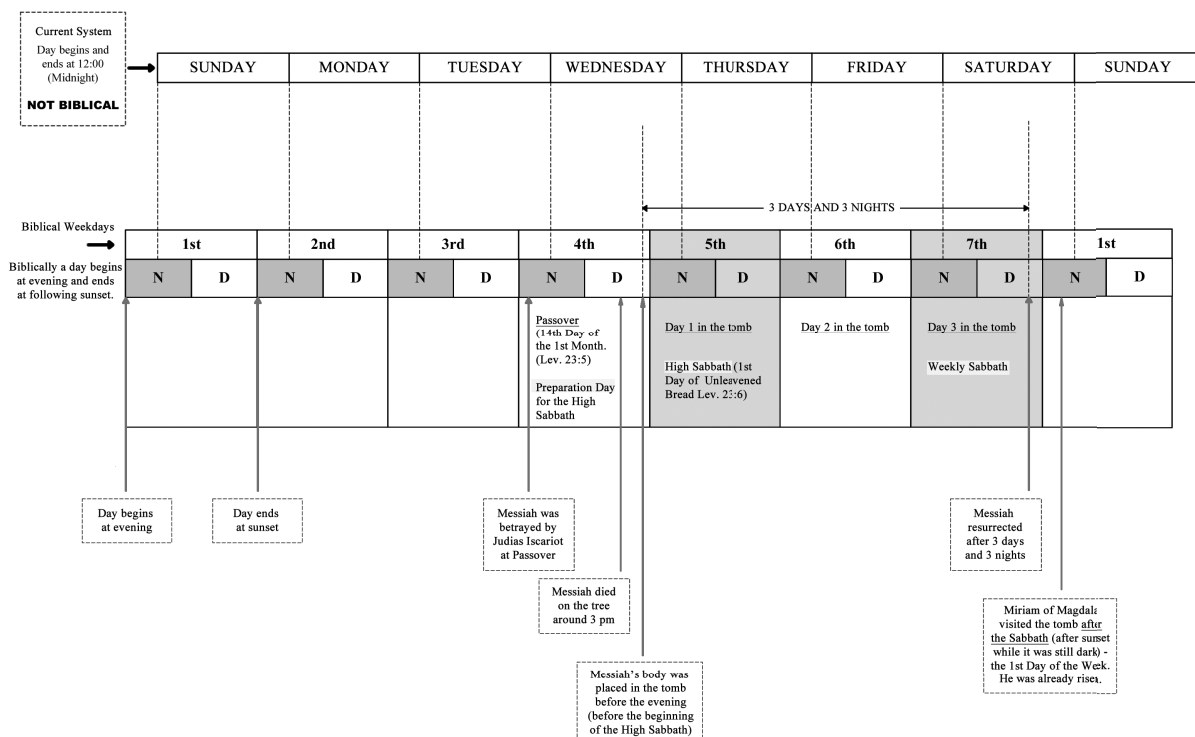
'High day,' which is the 1st day of the Unleavened Bread (i.e., an annual Sabbath, of which there are seven each year), in which people are assembled before Yahweh and refrained from doing their regular work. The weekly Sabbaths are not described as being High days. Before the High day begins, the people were to make ready all their preparations so that they could rest from their work on the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. So, there were two Sabbaths (days to cease from regular work) occurred in the same week when the Messiah was impaled:

- (1) High Sabbath (1st day of Unleavened Bread, on 5th day of Messiah's passion week) and
 - (2) Weekly Sabbath (the 7th day of that week).
- Diagram below depicts the events in sequence. -

Conclusion

There is no command in the Bible to celebrate Good Friday or Easter as a memorial to the death and resurrection of the Messiah. However, Messiah specifically commanded to remember His sufferings, which He suffered and died for ours sins and for the world. It was a specific night which Apostle Paul pointed out in 1 Corinthians 11:23 *That the Master Yahshua the same night in which He was betrayed took bread.* Note the emphasis on "the same night," it was the Passover evening.

This was the same night when the first born of the Egyptians were killed by the Angel of Yahweh,



and those who had the blood of the lamb on their door posts were protected. If the Israelites were not keeping that night according to the command, or if they were observing it another night their firstborns would have been killed together with the Egyptians. This night falls on the 14th day of the 1st month according to Yahweh's calendar. Exodus 12:5-8 *Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats: and ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it. And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it.* In the same manner the Messiah commanded us to remember His death on the same night in which He suffered.

Now we don't need to kill a lamb again on the same night, because **Yahshua was that Lamb** who was sacrificed once for all. He gave us the command to remember that specific day on which He suffered and died for our sins, that is the 14th day of the 1st month, the Passover day.

What do you believe?

If you don't believe that Messiah died, and was resurrected after 3 days and 3 nights, then you don't believe His message either, which is Yahshua the Messiah and the coming King. Even now people don't believe the sign which Messiah provided; hence, they celebrate Good Friday and Easter Sunday in remembrance of the death and resurrection of the Savior, which is only 1 day and 2 nights!

-Brother Mathew John (Australia)



When people inquire of us, “What church do you belong to?” or “What religion do you follow?” how should we respond? Is there a name for this faith? Did Messiah come to establish a new religion, Christianity? Did He give Peter permission to start the Catholic church and become the first pope as many firmly believe?

What is a Church?

The underlying root word in the Greek manuscripts which is translated as “church” is *ekklesia*, which simply means a calling out to gather, an assembling of people. It is not a building, but rather the word implies a group of people gathered for a purpose, either good or evil. An example to demonstrate is found in Acts 19, where a silversmith Demetrios (Demetrius, in some translations) concerned about losing his business (through Paul's teaching against idol worship), stirred the Ephesians to riot:

- Verse 32: *Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was confused; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together.*
- Verse 39: *But if you enquire anything concerning other matters, it shall be determined in a lawful assembly.*
- Verse 41: *And when he [the city clerk] had thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly.*

Ephesus (a city near the western coast of modern-day Turkey) was the home of one of the infamous “seven wonders of the ancient world”—the Temple of Artemis (the Roman goddess, Diana, in some translations). She was a Greek goddess, greatly revered and so the Ephesians were very upset when they heard Paul preaching that Artemis and their other idols are not mighty ones. For the defense of Artemis and the other idols, an *ekklesia* was called. For about two hours, the mob cried out “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!” (Acts 19:34).

In the above verses, the same word *ekklesia* is used. If the translators were being consistent with the English translation, they should have translated it as “church” (like the 115 other occurrences

of the word *ekklesia* in the KJV). But how bizarre it would be to call this riot in Ephesus a “church!”

Did this “church” have a steeple and stained-glass windows inside with statues of Joseph and Mary? Or crucifixes and paintings of Jesus? Were its congregants coming on Sunday mornings to receive holy communion with the accompaniment of organs playing hymns? Or, if perhaps “filled with the Spirit,” were they shaking violently on the stage speaking words ‘*hard to be understood,*’ if words at all?

The concept of “church” referring to a physical structure or even a group of believers is not accurate. It simply means an assembling of people, which in the above example was a city in uproar against the apostle Paul and other believers.

The Israelites in the wilderness under Moses’ direction were called “the church in the wilderness” (Acts 7:38), so this was certainly not a new concept, but purely denotes an assembled people. Furthermore, Scripture shows the early assemblies often met in houses, not church buildings (Acts 20:20; Rom. 16:5; 1 Cor. 16:19; Col. 4:15; Philem. 2; 2 John 10). This does not mean having a hall is wrong, it simply shows that the commonly-held belief of “church” being a building or even a group of righteous individuals only, lacks Scriptural validation.

Is Messiah the Founder of Christianity?

In the mainstream “churchianity”, it is held that Yahshua came to shake the Jewish faith by creating a new religion and establishing a church which focuses on love and grace, where all are welcome to come as they are, and stay as they are.

After a sleep-deprived night in the mountains of intense prayer to the Father (Luke 6:12-16), Yahshua chose twelve apostles to go and preach a message of repentance exclusively to the twelve tribes of YisraEl (Israel) scattered throughout the earth. *Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel,* Matthew 10:5-6.

In a conversation with a Samaritan woman, Yahshua said “Salvation is of the Jews” (John 4:22). Remember what Yahshua’s Name means—Yahweh is salvation. That is, Yahshua was, and still is, a commandment-keeping Jew! Notice some examples of Yahshua, the Lion of the tribe of Judah (Revelation 5:5):

- Yahshua kept the sabbath (Matt. 24:20; Mark 2:28; Luke 4:16, 31).

- Yahshua kept the festivals of Yahweh (Luke 2:41, 22:7; John 7:1-14, 37; Lev. 23).
- Yahshua being a Jew observed Hanukkah – the feast of dedication (John 10:22).
- Yahshua wore tassels (Matt. 9:20-22; Num. 15:37-40).
- Yahshua told the leper He healed to show himself to the priest and offer the gift according to the law (Matt. 8:1-4).

But some of these requirements are no longer required since the Holy Spirit is now given to believers fulfilling the same purpose—that the Law may be written on our hearts (Jer. 31:33; Ezek. 36:27; Heb. 8:10). Moreover, the Levitical priesthood and sacrifices are replaced through Yahshua’s sacrifice with the original Melchisedec priesthood (Hebrews 7).

The Jewish religion, however, has many added traditions which are not found in Scripture and many times, even contradict Scripture, such as: head coverings for men during worship; following a precalculated astronomical calendar that is in contrast to the Biblical calendar, and restrictions of conduct on the sabbath. If we identify ourselves as Jewish to unbelievers, though according to its definition it would be true, yet we may unwittingly be promoting doctrines which are contrary to the Scriptures.

Nevertheless, certain Jewish national celebrations (such as Purim and Hanukkah) **specifically** remind Jews of how Yahweh has delivered them out of many troubles throughout history.

The early believers were simply viewed as another branch of Judaism like the sects of the Pharisees, Sadducees, Zealots and Essenes. This is why the famous Jewish elder and Sanhedrin member Gamaliel (GamliEl, in Hebrew), highly respected among Jews even to this day and grandson of Hillel the elder (whose disciples were known as the “house of Hillel”), was careful to not rebuke the apostles (Acts 5:33-40). They recognized that the apostles were also Jews and obedient to the Scriptures like all the Jewish elders in the Sanhedrin.



However, there were points of dispute, namely whether Yahshua was the prophesied Messiah to come.

But do not be mistaken. Yahshua did NOT come to start a new religion, but certainly took every opportunity to clarify how one must worship the Father “in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24).

For several years, *the ekklesia* was exclusively a Jewish assembly. But Peter was given to understand in a vision in Acts 10 that other sheep which were not of this fold (John 10:16) should be permitted to come into the faith. And subsequently, his rehearsal of events occurring in Acts 10 to the elders of *the ekklesia* at Jerusalem confirmed that now, “even to Gentiles Elohim has granted repentance that leads to life” (Acts 11:18). Nevertheless, conflict remained among the apostles and elders whether adult non-Jews males should be required to keep the Law and be circumcised for salvation (Acts 15; Galatians 2).

Are You a Jew?

In Corinth, many issues had to be addressed by the Apostle Paul, the chief of which was that of division within the assembly. They were quarrelling about who baptized each of them. *One of you says, “I follow Paul;” another, “I follow Apollos;” another, “I follow Kepha;” still another, “I follow Messiah,”* 1 Corinthians 1:12. To this Paul replies, *I thank Elohim that I did not baptize any of you except Crispus and Gaius, so no one can say that you were baptized in my name. Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I don’t remember if I baptized anyone else. For Messiah did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel,* 1 Corinthians 1:14-17. Division can come when following after men, which is not according to the will of Yahweh.

“Jew” in Hebrew is “Yahudi” which means one who praises Yahweh. In this sense, believers in Messiah are spiritual Yahudim (the plural of Yahudi, Rom. 2:28-29). Likewise, Revelation 2:9 says some claimed to be Jews, but were not for though they were Jews according to the flesh, by rejecting Messiah they were not praising Yahweh and thus, disqualifying themselves as true Yahudim.

Are You a Christian?

Did you know that the term “Christian” is only found three times in the whole bible?

And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and

taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch, Acts 11:26.

Then Agrippa said to Paul, “You almost persuade me to be a Christian,” Acts 26:28.

Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify Elohim on this behalf, 1 Pet 4:16.

Notice in the first example, the believers did not call themselves “Christians” but the disciples were called [by others, outsiders] Christians. In the second example, it is again a label given by an unbeliever, Herod Agrippa. In the last occurrence it is used with the connotation of suffering and persecution.

Yahshua an Hebrew, would likely never have been called “Christ” (Greek word meaning ‘Anointed’) but “Mashiach” (Hebrew) or *Meshiha* (Aramaic). Most of the disciples were unlearned men, and ***The New Testament*** is filled with Hebrew and Aramaic words and phrases. So “Messianic” would probably be a more accurate term than “Christian.” In Israel today, Jews who believe in Yahshua call themselves *meshihyim*, i.e., Messianics.

Another label given to Yahshua of Nazareth and His followers, was “Nazarene” (Matt. 2:23, 26:71; John 19:19; Acts 22:8). *For we have found this man [Paul] a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes,* Acts 24:5.

Around 52 C.E., the apostle Thomas was said to have reluctantly travelled to the southern state of India, today called Kerala. His mission was to preach Messiah to the large Jewish community there. Through his preaching and many works of miracles, not only Jews, but also the local Hindi came to believe in Yahshua. They knew Syriac (regional dialect of Aramaic) and became known as Nasrani, i.e., Nazarenes.

The Nasranis held services on the Sabbath, used Syriac manuscripts of ***The New Testament*** (since they believed Aramaic was the inspired language of ***The New Testament*** and observed Passover (*Pesaha* in Aramaic—which is akin to the Hebrew *Pesach*). By the 16th century, when the Catholic Portuguese came to India, they described the Nasranis as Sabbath-keeping Judaizers. After much persecution from the anti-Judaic Catholic powers, the Nasranis abandoned their roots and separated into many churches.

The early believers did not have a name for themselves but were called followers of “the Way” (Acts 9:2, 19:9, 23, 22:4, 24:14, 22). *I am the Way*

and the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me, John 14:6. In Hebrew the word for “way” is *derek* which literally means a way, road or path. This means not just saying, ‘I believe,’ but implies a way of life that is lived with the intention of getting into the Kingdom of Yahweh. What a marvelous descriptor for the people of Yahweh!

A Good Confession

Yahshua had a good confession before Pontius Pilate (1 Tim. 6:13). What is our confession when others ask, “What church do you belong to” or, “What religion do you follow?” If our answer is, “We belong to Yahweh’s Assembly in Yahshua” or any other organization, we are losing an opportunity to witness. Moreover, we belong to Yahweh (1 Cor. 6:19-20). Yahweh did not give mankind religion, division or labels. Yahweh wants His creation to become obedient children to Him, walking faithfully after the example of His Son Yahshua Messiah.

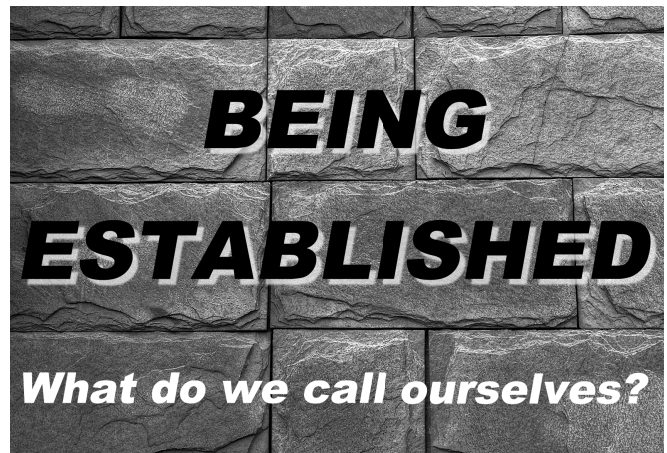
Maybe answering a Christian who believes the Law was “nailed to the cross,” replying, “I believe in the whole Bible, both Old and New Testaments,” might spark questions. Or perhaps responding to a Jew, “I believe the Torah (the Law of Yahweh) is relevant, but also that Yahshua was the prophesied Mashiach.” Or revealing Yahweh as the Creator of all living, to those from non-biblical backgrounds. The response to these questions must be appropriate to the inquirer and to their situation.

Look first to finding common ground, or to something the inquirer can relate to, and then scatter seeds here and there using the occasion to tell them of Yahweh and His ways. If any insist upon a name for followers of Yahshua, “The Way” might be best. However, even that would likely require explanation.

Give opportunity for further inquiry about the Scripture. If any are interested to know more, show them from the Scriptures what Yahweh requires of us. *What does Yahweh require of you? To act justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your Elohim*, Micah 6:8.

Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true Elohim, and Yahshua Messiah, whom you have sent, John 17:3. This is the truth people need to know, not the name of any religion or church.

- Brother Rohan John (Australia)



We had some questions that came in from someone who was ready to establish an assembly. We’ll cover these in this article.

We also talked with another individual who is planning and already working on establishing a congregation. He had even named it, and there are others in the past who have desired to start their own assemblies.

Before continuing, it should be mentioned that Scripturally we find it should be elders in the body of Messiah establishing assemblies.

In the order of headship, and other prerequisites, notably found in 1st Timothy and Titus, we receive instruction today. Part of what have become the Pastoral Epistles is a definitive guideline along with other Scriptures.

Ideally, as part of the body of Messiah we should all be working toward the same goal, unlike those at the Tower of Babel, as mentioned in Genesis chapter 11, they wanted to make a name for themselves. We are to lift up Yahweh’s Name and His Son’s Name and Their ways. Hence, that is one reason the name of the assembly here is called Yahweh’s Assembly in Yahshua.

Working with Others

There is an advantage in working with an established assembly, since everything has been already put in a proper and orderly manner (1 Cor. 14:40). Bylaws, statement of faith, documents, members, etc., and established leaders with wisdom will help new leaders along the correct path.

However, given situations as they are, brethren can meet together wherever they find others of like mind (Matt. 18:20). In some cases, it is home fellowships, because there is no other assembly nearby.

In such cases, Yahweh still provides, especially with the technology we have today. Live service

broadcasts, DVDs, CDs, are all a help in such situations.

Then, when the sojourning feasts start in the Spring, traveling to a feast site in which Yahweh's Name has been placed (Deut. 16:5-6) is advantageous, and, in fact, commanded. These sojourning feasts are Days of Unleavened Bread, Feast of Weeks and Feast of Tabernacles (Exo. 23:14-17). For a more detailed look at these and other Appointed Times of Yahweh, please read our in-depth booklet called ***Biblical Holy Days***.

Who Are We?

We know there will be large, well established assemblies at the end of the age as there was in the 1st Century.

One of the questions came in asking, "What are we to call ourselves?" To answer it, we have to get past some of the inappropriate language of the ***King James Version***.

For example, let's take a look at Revelation 2:7 KJV (unedited) *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.*

The wording "churches" and also "God" are inappropriate; "God" for the reason that Scripture identifies the word as an actual proper noun for a deity called "God" meaning Fortune. Scripture is clear that we are not to worship Yahweh with pagan ways or names (Exo. 23:13; Josh. 23:7; Psa. 16:4). Hence, we stay clear of calling Him by pagan names often thought of as mere titles.

In the Messiah's time there were synagogues. As defined here by ***Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible***:

SYNAGOGUE The place of assembly used primarily for worship by Jewish communities. Gk. *synagōgē* is originally a secular term denoting a "group of people" or a "collection of things." There is no clear reference to the synagogue in the OT. The word is commonplace in the NT, where it refers to an actual building.

Interestingly enough, "church" is the other word that seems to have an innocent meaning of a building. But, in the Word of Yahweh, the body of Messiah is referred to as the *ecclesia* or "called out ones," essentially, an "assembly" of believers. More on this shortly.

Let's look at Revelation 2:7 again, but this time another more accurate translation from ***The Scriptures***, published by the Institute For Scripture Research (South Africa), which corrects the

wording. TS (unedited) ***He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies. To him who overcomes I shall give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of Elohim.***

Here we see the word "churches" correctly given as "assemblies." And of course, a more appropriate title going back to the original for Yahweh, i.e., "Elohim" meaning "Mighty One" here in context.

Considering why "church" is also inappropriate we can read the following excerpt out of one of our booklets called ***What Happened to Christianity?*** under the subtitle Unscriptural Teachings Flourish:

That the pagan temples were turned into churches or monasteries explains the heathen derivation of the word "church" used in the King James and other Bibles. The Greek word *ekklesia* literally means "the called-out ones," which carries the same meaning as the Hebrew "kahal." *Ekklesia* refers to a body of people, not a building. The word "church" is a poor translation of *ekklesia*. Church refers to the building, coming to us through the Anglo-Saxon *circe*. *Circe* was the Greek goddess who turned men into swine. In Scottish the word is *kirk*, relating to the Hebrew *kikkar*, meaning a circuit or disc — the sun! The ancient link to sun worship (on Sun-day) is undeniable.

While some may accuse us of semantics or inappropriate word play, there are very good reasons why we speak and write the way we do. If we are to be a clean people and worship Yahweh in the way He wants to be worshiped, then we'll conform and submit to His Word and His Spirit.

Other Questions

Q. What name do we put on the deed for the ownership of the land? (a family name? A name of the assembly?).

A. If there is only a handful of brethren and it is on your property, then it might be best to have it in your personal name until there are enough brethren to have a different (and larger) location.

If there is already a large number of brethren, and you are willing to donate by subdividing the land, then the name of the group (to be decided upon, by the group) should be used.

Many overseas groups will choose to align themselves with an established group with established doctrines that are thoroughly explained and proven to be true from Scripture. This helps prevent false doctrines from forming or being promoted.

Q. If it is the name of the assembly then who owns it? Trustees? Congregation?

A. 1 Timothy and Titus are outlines for the leaders of a congregation, (that is, elders and deacons) and they would be placed in position and approved by the members to oversee operations are done in a proper and orderly manner.

Likewise, they can also be removed by said members. A Board of Directors is not to be run by one man, but collectively men (not women) make decisions to help guide and direct the assembly both physically (deacons) and spiritually (elders). However, if board members get out of line with Scripture, and need to be removed, then that can and should be done according to the bylaws. There should be a Board of Trustees, if the assembly fails for any reason, they would then typically have legal authority by the governing authorities to dispose of property, accounts, etc.

Many small groups of at least 3 or more will typically meet in a home or neutral location for Bible studies or other types of Sabbath meetings. This can be done without establishing a name for the group. As a reminder, from what we see in the Pastoral Epistles and overall Scripture, only anointed elders are to be establishing assemblies which might function like a synagogue.

Q. Where do we go to have the documents done up correctly?

A. If everything is in order, then it's just a matter of paperwork. There is to be at least an overseeing elder (ideally, there is to be more than just one). Hopefully, there are enough members to help with the work (some being able to be placed as deacons). There should be enough to have legal right to benefit from the government and to help expedite further growth and outreach of Yahweh's Word.

For example, here in America, we receive

tremendous help through tax relief. The members are also able to take tax write-offs from their contributions to the work. It's a win-win situation for Yahweh's work and His people.

Honoring the King and the laws of the land are difficult for some who feel that we are somehow submitting to the "Beast" power if we submit to governmental legal policies set in place. Yet, they are ignoring what was inspired to be written by both Apostles' Peter and Paul who were clearly in pagan societies. The most evident one is the Roman Empire:

Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for Yahweh's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of Yahweh, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: As free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of Yahweh. Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear Yahweh. Honour the king, 1 Peter 2:13-17 ASV.

Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from Elohim, and those which exist are established by Elohim. Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of Elohim; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves. For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same; for he is a minister of Elohim to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword for nothing; for he is a minister of Elohim, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil. Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience's sake. For because of this you also pay taxes, for rulers are servants of Elohim, devoting themselves to this very thing. Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor, Romans 13:1-7 NASB.

In the United States, when we did the paperwork for the assembly, we were automatically given 501(c)3 status. It has been a blessing and not a curse, and it also has allowed us to be good stewards with Yahweh's work.



However, it has been pointed out that since we are 501(c)3 status, we are now somehow going to be ruled and told how to preach and teach. So far, that has not happened. If it does, we will obey Yahweh rather than man (Acts 5:29), as the prophet Daniel and others have done in the past. Read our free in-depth booklet entitled *Honour The King* for more information.

Yahweh's Assembly

In our *Quick Bible Verses* (QBV) under the section (Names: Our name?) We have as follows:

Proverbs 10:29; Acts 18:25 “The way of Yahweh”

Matthew 7:14 “The Way” is narrow

John 14:6 Yahshua declares He is the Way

Acts 9:2 Followers of the way

Acts 11:26 First time called Messianic

Acts 16:17 “The way of salvation”

Acts 18:26 “The way of Elohim”

Acts 24:1-9 Called “Sect of Nazarenes”

We failed to add one other identifying name. That is, “Yahweh's Assembly” or “Assembly of Elohim,” as we find numerous references to in the New Testament. Even in *The Scriptures* we find reference to a called-out people to which we see a parallel today.

In Acts 7:38 KJV (unedited), it says:

This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sinai, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us.

In Acts 7:38 TS (unedited), it says:

This is he who was in the assembly in the wilderness with the Messenger who spoke to him on Mount Sinai, and with our fathers, who received the living Words to give to us.

Here, again, we have the correct and more accurate word meaning a called-out people, not a building or an adopted pagan name.

The other interesting thing here is: Stephen, who is speaking and who is saying the living words presented by Moses to the people were handed down to “us,” indicating they are NOT somehow done away with, but as words from Yahweh are, in fact, to be obeyed.

In the *New Testament*, however, there is a change in the law and the structure of the Temple, for those in Messiah, accepting of His sacrifice. Other laws specific to war or civil matters have to be considered

in the governing laws we find ourselves in today, though, the 10 Commandments and other eternal principles and laws apply and do not break current laws of the land.

Head of the Body

Yahshua is the head of the body, so if we are scattered abroad, which we are, then we are still under Yahshua and Yahweh is over Yahshua. The point is, we are one in purpose, goals and aspirations, following in the Master's footsteps as He followed in His Father's ways.

And He is the Head of the body, the assembly, Who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that He might become the One Who is first in all, Colossians 1:18 TS.

Paul elaborated these things to Timothy in speaking on how an assembly should function.

If I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in Yahweh's household, which is the assembly of the living Elohim, the pillar and foundation of the truth, 1 Timothy 3:15 NIV.

Paul had just written about elders and deacons regarding what their requirements are so the functioning of an assembly can be good and healthy, providing a good report in the community, uplifting Yahweh and His Son and Their ways of life to the world.

For I am the least of the emissaries, who am not worthy to be called an emissary, because I persecuted the assembly of Elohim, 1 Corinthians 15:9 TS.

Emissary is translated as “apostle” in other translations, which is fine. But we do understand that the Scriptural definition of an apostle is one who is sent and has seen the risen Messiah. The Apostle Paul fits those requirements, so anyone calling themselves an apostle today is inappropriate, as we have not seen the risen Messiah and, no doubt, won't until He returns at the second coming.

Identifying Attributes

Identifying those in Yahweh's Assembly is pretty easy. The qualifications are clearly laid out for us. As Paul addressed in his letter to those in Corinth, we find him addressing the members as those who are called saints.

To the assembly of Elohim that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Messiah Yahshua, called saints, with all those calling upon the Name of our Master Yahshua Messiah in every place — both theirs and ours, 1 Corinthians 1:2 YLT.

To call upon Yahshua is a bit of a Hebrew idiom or way of saying and confirming we are acknowledging Him and His sacrifice in our lives.

The same phrase is used in Acts when speaking of those being baptized. It has been asked if we are actually to pray to Yahshua, but Yahshua's own words are clear. We are to worship Yahweh and Him only. Yahshua is our High Priest, He is NOT the Father. We do NOT pray to the High Priest, but we do go through Him to the Father.

Paul is addressing the saints as the Assembly of Elohim in the verse. Elohim can be plural, which is another reason we are called Yahweh's Assembly in Yahshua. A very fitting designation or name, lifting up Yahweh and Yahshua's Names.

But Paul also calls the assembly members, Saints. In identifying who are in Yahweh's Assemblies, we can turn to Revelation for a revealing answer:

Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of Elohim and their faith in Yahshua, Revelation 14:12 ESV (see also Acts 20:21; Rev. 12:17).

Saints are defined as commandment keepers, having their faith in the Salvation Yahweh provides in His Son.

Truly, *being established* is what Yahweh and Yahshua are doing for us and others around the world. Yet, we are sojourning and not putting roots down. Rather, we are going about our Father's business until Yahshua returns to establish the

Kingdom of Yahweh.

We are forerunners of that kingdom, looking forward to its establishment. In the meantime, we gather together, the best we can, to worship Yahweh and to share the undefiled Word as witnesses to the world.

As the body of Messiah reaches out, we are described as light and salt on the earth. Let's do our best to align ourselves in Yahweh's Spirit and be found promoting and living in His Truth, because this is what He is looking for (John 4:23-24).

And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of Elohim, you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to Elohim through Yahshua Messiah, 1 Peter 2:4-5 NASB. Skipping down to verses 9-10: You are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR Elohim's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him Who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; for you once were NOT A PEOPLE, but now you are THE PEOPLE OF ELOHIM; you had NOT RECEIVED MERCY, but now you have RECEIVED MERCY, 1 Peter 2: 9-10 NASB.

In the end, it's not so much what we are called. Rather, it is what attributes we are known by.

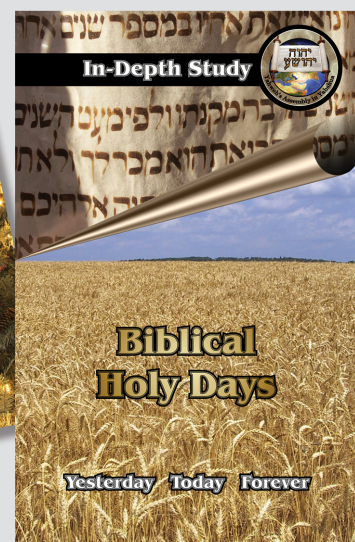
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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q Paul in 1 Corinthians 5:7 asserts that Yahshua is our passover, and was sacrificed at the same time that the four-footed passover lambs were slain at the ninth hour on Passover day. Then in Luke 22:15, Yahshua says, “With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer.” So, how are His eating the passover memorial with His disciples before He suffered, reconciled with His sacrifice hours later, and His statement in Luke 22:16, “I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the Kingdom of Yahweh?”

A You will notice in the Evangel John, the texts read severally, “the Jews’ passover,” 2:13; “the passover, a feast of the Jews,” 6:4; “the Jews’ feast of tabernacles, 7:2; “the Jews’ passover,” 11:55; “the Jews preparation day,” 19:42, which stand in marked contrast to delineating the *moedim*, as the Feasts of Yahweh belonging to Yahweh, and given by Yahweh.

A point worthy of notice, is that Pharisaical Judaism coming out of the Babylonian captivity, had themselves, convoluted Yahweh’s calendar—supported in Luke 22:1, where it is recorded: *Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover...some today, have also subverted the calendar, observing the memorial established in Exodus 12 as the first day of unleavened bread, and thus a high Sabbath. And, became the reason, moreover, since “it is not lawful for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation” (Acts 10:28), the chief priests and elders would not defile themselves by presuming entrance into the Roman praetorium, that they might partake of the Passover between the evenings at the end of the 14th and the beginning of the 15th.*

Query: So, what in Matthew 26:20 was He eating

if it was not the Passover with His disciples? Why would Yahshua dispatch His *talmidim* to make preparation for the Passover (Luke 22:7), and then declare, *And when the hour was come, He sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him. With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer* Luke 22:24-15, if He did not in fact eat the Passover with them?

We acknowledge that Luke 22:16-17 is a problematic parallel to the other synoptic accounts, and would make it read that Yahshua had dispensed with the Passover, knowing that He Himself, as it was later written of Him by Sha’ul in 1 Corinthians 5:7, should become our Passover—called out from darkness into marvelous light, passed (over) from death to life, (1 Pet. 2:9, John 5:24). And the fact that He died at the precise hour the Passover lambs were sacrificed can be understood in the context of Pharisaical Judaism’s practice, and not of the Biblical order. Ironically, the fact that His death occurred concurrently with Judaism’s passover offerings, and the attendant rending of the veil between the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place; the earth quaked, the rocks rent; and darkness over all the earth (at midday) lends credence to Him saying, *IT IS FINISHED*, John 19:30.

It is certain that the institution of the New Covenant occurred (but is not fully consummated) that evening: *And as they were eating, Yahshua took bread... Mathew 26:26; Mark 14:22; Luke 22:26. But when He affirmed, I will not any more eat thereof until it be fulfilled in the Kingdom of Elohim...I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the Kingdom of Yahweh shall come* (Luke 22:16, 18) is speaking futuristically...may we say, at “the marriage supper of the Lamb is come...” (Rev. 19:7).

So, *until the Kingdom of Yahweh is come*, we are continuing to observe the Passover memorial—hardly a feast, much more, like the somber annual observance of *Yom Kippur* (see 1 Corinthians 11:20-30).

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“And he told them a parable: Look at the fig tree, and all the trees; as soon as they come out in leaf, you see for yourselves and know that the summer is already near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of Yahweh is near. Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away till all has taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.” - Luke 21:29-33

