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A Need to Separate
Exposing and Removing
Roadblocks to Unity
Is Your Heart Right?
To Serve and To Protect
Holy vs. Unholy
Backsliding

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.

- 2 - Introduction
- 3 - A Need to Separate
- 9 - Exposing and Removing Roadblocks to Unity
- 11 - Is Your Heart Right?
- 13 - To Serve and To Protect
- 15 - Holy vs. Unholy
- 20 - Backsliding
- 26 - Questions & Answers

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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A NEED TO SEPARATE



“A Need to Separate,” though a negative concept in many ways, is actually a positive step in coming together with like minds in Spirit and in Truth.

One does not need to look very hard to see that there are many separate groups in religion. There are, as you know, Catholics, Orthodox Jews, Quakers, Methodists, Baptists, Messianic Jews, and Lutherans, to name just a few. And there are those that have even been called Separatists.

There are a few that look at the Sacred Name groups (Assemblies) from the outside, and some even from within, wondering why there isn't unity. Why are we all separated into different groups? Especially if we're of the same Spiritual Body, the Body of Yahshua Messiah. We could ask, “Why is it that the scattered religious groups mentioned above are separated?” It's due to the beliefs or doctrine that is held by each. Many, in fact, are infused with paganism, but don't see it.

Also, each one is different because of how they interpret the Word of Yahweh. Many do not go back to the originally inspired Word and end up getting lost in the translations of uninspired men. We must look carefully at the original wording and see what it says:

For precept [must] be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, [and] there a little, Isaiah 28:10. (King James Version used throughout, unless otherwise noted)

This is where the rubber meets the road – where one needs to study and make sure he's not supporting impure doctrine. In 2 Timothy 2:15 we read, *Study to shew thyself **approved** unto Elohim, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

The Apostle Paul who was inspired to write that, also wrote this:

*For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are **approved** may be made manifest among you, 1 Corinthians 11:19.*

Did Paul know something we don't? I ask this question more or less for those looking out, rather than those looking in. Nevertheless, it's a question we all need to ask ourselves and meditate upon.

As we continue, we are going to see the necessity at times, for individuals to separate from their present group or Assembly. We will see that at times, one will need to seek out another Assembly that teaches Truth, and the love described in the Bible.

What We Do Does Matter

In overcoming all that is of the world – the opposite of being overcome by the world – Revelation, chapters 2 and 3, show attributes both individuals and Assemblies must have. In the end, if they do overcome, they might be awarded a crown and everlasting life (Rev. 2:7, 10, 11, 26, 3:5, 12, 21).

People both present, and from the past, as you know, will stand before the Throne in the light of His Word. People will be judged individually rather than collectively.

When we repent of past sins, are baptized into Yahshua's Name, and receive a portion of Yahweh's Spirit (Acts 2:38, 8:17), we are entered into a period of judgment. Many fail to see this, but it's clearly spoken by the Apostle Peter: *For the time [is come] that judgment must begin at the house of Elohim: and if [it] first [begin] at us, what shall the end [be] of them that obey not the good news of Elohim?* 1 Peter 4:17.

It's especially important that we who have been baptized into Yahshua's Name know what His Word actually says, since we are being judged right now. We will be rewarded while walking correctly and overcoming in His Word – basically, walking in Yahshua's footsteps and being conformed into His image. He is our Perfect example to emulate.

Everything we do or say comes into play, and we either confirm our allegiance to Yahweh through Yahshua and walk according to the Word, or we don't. If one doesn't conform, then he or she will eventually drift away.

An analogy can be made of our judgment by looking at two different books, one written before we were baptized and one that is written anew afterwards. Our former book with its sins written in ink, is ceremonially dipped in water which washes the ink clean so that the pages are blank. Then a new ink-filled pen is put to the new blank pages and the things we now do and say are entered thereon.

Our High Priest Yahshua intercedes daily for us, but we must continually strive to do better and live accordingly, otherwise upon His return, we may be judged unacceptable (Matt. 7:21-23, 25:11-13) and therefore lose our part in the *firstfruits* resurrection. We will be judged innocent or guilty when Yahshua returns. It is that serious!

It's a Social Thing

A minister once proclaimed to his entire congregation, "If you're here because it's a social gathering, there's the door!" In pointing to the exit,

he had everyone's attention. His point, as he further explained, was that we should not be coming to service because it's some sort of social event; that is, a means to cultivate friendships or to play "church" under the pretense of "love."

TRUE

FALSE

"Oh, but that's not what I do!" Are you sure? Do you believe that all the doctrine that is taught where you attend is correct? Have you proved it? Is there a potpourri (syncretism of false mixed with the truth)

of doctrine where you are? Are you concerned about it? You should be! Bad character (or doctrine) can, and often does, effect negatively those around it.

There doesn't need to be a lot of differences to make certain ones stand out, but when the whole congregation is divided on certain doctrinal issues, how can that be right? You might say, "Yes, there are differences in belief, but we're all of the same Body!" But note the Apostle Paul's reply: "Is Messiah divided?" (1 Cor. 1:13).

Understand that the Messiah Yahshua is NOT divided. That was Paul's point! This particular Assembly he was addressing needed to shape up and get the doctrines straight, because they were not in line with the Scriptures, neither were they in line with Messiah who is the Head of the Body! They were divided, even though they professed themselves of the same Body. The Apostle Paul saw that they were very wrong in what they were doing. He knew there would be a separation, if the brethren did not come together in oneness with the Written Word. In other words, oneness of doctrine with love among the brethren is oneness with Messiah.

Socialization in the Assembly should be primarily founded on the oneness of correct doctrine and true teaching of the Word, and not because of just wanting to "get together" at the expense of teaching or supporting false doctrine. There needs to be separation from false doctrine.

Understand that Yahshua came in service to Yahweh. They are not divided, because they have the same mind and purpose (John 15:10, 17:16-26). But today, the Body is divided; it is divided because the teachings are divisive. The Word of Yahweh divides. It divides, unless you're being just a loving, social kind of guy or gal.

The Word Guides and Divides

Yahshua said, *Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword*, Matthew 10:34. This is speaking of those who would deny the Messiah and even His saving Name, Yahshua. But there is another lesson to be learned and a principle that applies to us. The sword that Yahshua speaks of is, quite literally, the Word of Yahweh (Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12). It can, and does, divide those who follow Him and for the reason that the Apostle Paul observed, “that they which are **approved** may be made manifest **among you**” (1 Cor. 11:19).

Know, however, we can't just obey the laws alone and figure all will be well. Remember the Assembly of Ephesus, in Revelation chapter 2? Evidently, they *left* off doing good works of serving and loving one another. They were told to repent, and return to the works they had started.

We all desire to do what we can to serve when we first come to an understanding of the truth, right? Ephesus knew how to keep false doctrine out, but lost or rather, as stated, they *left* the first love they once had. We need to strive to have both pure doctrine and love, as evidently the Assembly of Philadelphia of Revelation 3 had. If we have pure doctrine, then love should be evident. And, *vice-versa*, if you have continuing agape love then the doctrine should be pure. This is what we strive for, to be Philadelphian, in both word and action.

Though we are not judged collectively, the Bible makes it clear that bad company corrupts good character: *Do not be deceived: Bad company corrupts good morals*, 1 Corinthians 15:33, NASB. If this is the case, then individuality could very well be affected adversely. That makes it important to separate and be with others of the right heart and mind. Then the question arises; “There are different Assemblies, so of which one should we be a part?” And, “How does one know?”

Before we answer these and other questions, it should be noted that since we're at different levels of understanding, we sometimes need guidance from those that are older. Elders in the Assembly have many years of studying and other life experiences under their belt and can help one study into a matter to prove a subject one way or the other, and the Bible is the final authority (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

A Study of The Word

In the patriarchs' time, when they bridled a horse, they did so as we do today, with a bit in the mouth.

It is, in fact, the most important part of equestrian equipment, as it guides the horse. Without it, the horse cannot be directed! Do you know what bridles us? Isn't it the Word? Certainly, if we've taken the proper steps, Yahweh's Spirit gives us understanding and brings to remembrance His Word (John 14:26), but we need to study to find out just what that Word says.

Considering further the bit in the horse's mouth, take note what is written: *For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same [is] a perfect man, [and] able also to bridle the whole body. Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body*, James 3:2-3. Clearly, we are turned and led by the Word as it is instructions for life – thoughts, speech, and deeds that preclude following our own desires.

We are admonished to live by the Word. Yahshua Himself said, It is written, “*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of Yahweh*,” Matthew 4:4 (see also Luke 4:4; Deut. 8:3). We find, that the Word Incarnate is Yahshua (John 1:1-2) and that He is in complete agreement with the Father (John 5:30) even unto death (Matt. 26:39).

Let us embark upon an interesting word study, from ***Strong's Exhaustive Concordance***, both in the Hebrew and Greek lexicon. In the Old Testament, H.3050 is “Yahh” *yaw* meaning, “the shortened independent form of the divine name, Yah, occurs primarily in poetry and in the exclamation, Halleluyah, praise Yahweh. It serves also as a terminal element in proper nouns like Elijah: ‘eliya (or ‘eliyahu),’ ‘[El] (is) Yahweh, ***Theological Word Study of the Old Testament***.

Strong's G.3050 in the New Testament, *log-ik-os*, from the root, *log'-os*, meaning the Word. Moreover, from ***The Scriptures, Explanatory Notes***, we find the following elaboration: “Yahshua is the Word, the embodiment of the Word, for the Word became flesh. He also said that the Words He spoke are Spirit and they are life (John 6:63).”

The same reference also says, “‘word’ and ‘command’ and ‘teaching’ are often used synonymously.” And is it any wonder? Yahweh's Word has His Name written all over it, i.e., every single word of the Bible, both Old Testament and New (*Tanakh* and *B'rit Hadasha*).

But what does this all mean? It means we need to study and know what the whole Word says, and then separate the Truth from the error out of our lives.

Does this mean we need to separate from brethren? It means we cannot support an Assembly teaching major error. It's one thing to have some differences in opinion, and another to be teaching outright heresies. If that means separating ourselves from others, then that is what we must do. It means choosing an Assembly that is fixed in the Word; that has retained their first love and is not willing to compromise. It's not to say that new understandings can't come, but it is unlikely anything fundamentally known (e.g., 7th Day Sabbath, Yahweh and Yahshua's Names, Seven Annual Feasts, Clean and Unclean Food Laws, etc.) would change. Fundamentals of Faith, are just that: Fundamentally understood and known by everyone to be true and necessary for salvation.



The Assemblies

In looking at the different Assemblies of today one could look at the Assemblies of Revelation chapters 2 and 3 and say there are parallels in today's Assemblies that hold to fore-mentioned foundational teachings.

The right Assembly will have Love. It should be noted that love is defined by the following: *And this is love, that we walk after His commandments. This is the commandment, that, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it,* 2 John 1:6 (see also John 14:15; 1 John 5:3).

Of course, there is more to love than obedience to the letter of "from the beginning" the law. Compassionate, or fervent love, toward one another is actually the by-product of coming together in obedience to Yahweh's Word, or should be, if we keep our first love intact. Plus, we need to remember the new command of loving as Yahshua loved us (John 13:34), following His example of even laying down our own lives for one another (1 John 3:16).

The Elders and Deacons of the assemblies are responsible for maintaining order and not allow false doctrine (under cover of Truth) to find admittance. The Apostle Paul said that false doctrine is like

gangrene (or cancer). Such a thing is to be avoided and cut off if necessary. *Their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, men who have gone astray from the truth saying that the resurrection has already taken place, and thus they upset the faith of some,* 2 Timothy 2:17-18 NASB.

For the sake of love for others, and for the love of Yahweh, at times separation must take place. This is the loyalty and love of which the Bible speaks. We must serve Yahweh and neighbor, but not at the expense of promoting or allowing false doctrine to be taught or followed.

An Oxymoron: "We're of Messiah, not an Assembly"

There seems to be confusion, and some personal ideas, on how one should worship today. Some think that all one should do is stay home, study and pray, either because they think that's all they need to do or they don't feel very capable and wouldn't be of much help in a gathering anyway.

However, Paul says all members are important. *And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you;" or again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." On the contrary, it is much truer that the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary,* 1 Corinthians 12:21-22 NASB.

For some, it's only when the *appointed times* of Yahweh come that they look for an Assembly to attend, and even then, they sometimes decide to stay home. Is that what the Bible tells us to do? Some haven't considered that the weekly Sabbath is one of the *appointed times* (Lev. 23:2-3), a commanded and holy convocation or gathering. Thank Yahweh for live services, since many of us are far from the Assembly and can't always make it in person.

But, when we have good health and the financial means, we need to ask, "Is being in an Assembly working together, the right thing to do?" The answer is, that the assembling of brethren in an organized and structured manner is indeed the example given to us.

The "Pastoral Epistles" (letters), as they began to be called around the 18th century, were clearly written to help structure some working, viable, and healthy Assemblies. Paul directed Timothy and Titus in personal letters to look for individuals that had certain qualifications, who would be good servants, and overseers of each Assembly that he had established.

Paul had given Timothy and Titus the authority to appoint and anoint those that were needed

in the Assemblies (1 Tim. 1:18, 5:22; Titus 1:5). In Acts, Chapter 14, we read that the Apostle Paul and his companion Barnabas journeyed throughout Asia Minor confirming and exhorting the disciples and anointing elders in every city where they had established Assemblies (Acts 14:20-28).

Be encouraged to read through all three of these letters, 1 & 2 Timothy, and Titus, seeing as you proceed, the emphasis to keep pure doctrine and good works. *In all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified, sound in speech which is beyond reproach, in order that the opponent may be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us,* Titus 2:7-8, NASB.

The Pastoral Letters clearly show organized Assemblies are, in part, purposed for teaching pure doctrine to those that had, and have, ears to hear. Titus was even told, “speak the things which are fitting for **sound doctrine**” (Titus 2:1 NASB).

Though there are different scattered Assemblies, claiming salvation can only come through one Assembly fails to recognize the different Assemblies mentioned in the Bible and the diverse giftings of ministries in those Assemblies (1 Cor. 12). Though there are many Assemblies, yet is there but one Body; one Spirit; one hope of our calling; one Master; one faith; one baptism, and one Elohim and Father of all, Who is above all, and through all, and in all (Eph. 4:4-6).

Praise be to Yahweh through Yahshua Messiah for Assemblies that teach the same true doctrine as we do. That is only possible through Yahweh’s Spirit.

The Apostle Paul gives credit to Elohim, *I have planted, Apollos watered; but Elohim gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but Elohim that giveth the increase,* 1 Corinthians 3:6-7.

Assemblies built by Apostles and Elders

Some come to an Assembly with, or eventually get the idea, “Can’t I establish my own Assembly?” They think that somehow, they have that authority, similar to Simon the Sorcerer:

And when Simon saw that through laying on of the Apostles’ hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money, saying, “Give me also this Power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Spirit,” Acts 8:18-19.

Simon was neither learned in the Scriptures, nor had the right attitude. In the same way, some who desire to set up an Assembly are also neither learned in the Scriptures, nor have the right attitude. They

think, “Hey, there’s no Assembly in this area, so I’ll start one.” But, with process there is order.

As we’ve seen in the Pastoral Letters, only one who has the authority – either an Apostle or an Elder – can establish or direct another to establish an Assembly. One credential of an Apostle, by the way, is having seen the risen Messiah (1 Cor. 9:1; Acts 1:22). That would leave Elders to direct Assemblies today.

Some are obstinate like Diotrephes who would not listen to those over him. John, his Elder and the Apostle, wrote, “but Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, does not accept what we say” (3 John 1:9 NASB). There are, sad to say, parallels today of this type of “little Caesar,” as Herbert Lockyer refers to in his book, *All the Men of the Bible*.

One Man Show?

Paul tells us that the Body is a functioning, active Body and if something is missing, then it’s not going to be as vital and viable as it could be. Some, unauthorized and unblessed, would conduct *a one man show*, teaching things they ought not, beginning with various so-called Sacred Names.

Since the inception of the Internet, there is literally no end to various pronunciations and other false teachings accompanying them.

Be aware of false teachers. Some, even now using the correct Names, proclaim six billion people will die this year, 2021. It is just a regurgitation of past-failed personal prophecies and private interpretations with no inspiration at all. One would think people would stop following such individuals parading as “Prophets of the Most High!” But it appears more are showing up in these end times, even confessing themselves to be the Messiah (Matt. 24:4-5).

False prophets aside, concerning those actually in the Body of Messiah, the Apostle Paul helps us to understand how It should function, saying, *The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up only one body. So it is with the Body of Messiah. Some of us are Jews, some are Gentiles, some are slaves, and some are free. But we have all been baptized into Messiah’s Body by one Spirit, and we have all received the same Spirit. Yes, the body has many different parts, not just one part. If the foot says, “I am not a part of the body because I am not a hand,” that does not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear says, “I am not part of the body because I am only an ear and not an eye,” would that make it any less a part of the*

body? Suppose the whole body were an eye – then how would you hear? Or if your whole body were just one big ear, how could you smell anything? But Elohim made our bodies with many parts, and **He has put each part just where He wants it. What a strange thing a body would be if it had only one part!** Yes, there are many parts, but only one body. The eye can never say to the hand, “I don’t need you.” The head can’t say to the feet, “I don’t need you,” 1 Corinthians 12:12-21 NLT.

Can *one man* working alone, or someone not given authority by an Elder today, establish a working Assembly? Can such an individual be a *vital* part of the Body? Don’t get me wrong, such an individual may be part of the Body. However, such an individual has not received a “blessing” to do what he is doing.

Conclusion

This is not our way, but rather Yahweh’s Way. *And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Messiah,* Ephesians 4:11-12 (see also 1 Cor 12:28). These gifts, if you will, are for the building up of something already in place. Paul says, “for the edifying of the Body of Messiah.”

The Body of Messiah works in the form of Assemblies today as it was in the New Testament times, some of whom you do not want to support, as already pointed out. That’s right, that you do “NOT” want to support! Revelation 3:14-16 says, *And unto the angel of the Assembly of the Laodiceans write; “These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of Elohim; ‘I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of My mouth.’”*

So, should ours be a Laodicean attitude? Should we support false doctrine, or an Assembly that lacks its first love? Of course not, this is why there needs to be a separation from what is not pure. Support what is right, and your reward will be great. Support false doctrine, or be lukewarm, and Yahshua will give you a just recompense for your error.

Neither are we to support “spiritual” dictatorships. The Assembly serves Yahweh through Yahshua. A board of Elders (and even deacons, for physical matters) is structured to prevent “one-man rules.” Acts 15 gives clear indication Elders are set in

place to work together, overseeing the teaching of doctrine and the settling of spiritual issues. They are anointed with oil for those positions, while deacons are appointed by the laying on of hands and prayer.

The Navy Seals provide us with an example of how Ministry should work. They are renowned for the hard tasks they undertake, together supporting and helping one another as a team, each member doing his part toward getting the job done.

We are in a spiritual war ourselves, and we need to come together as a working Body in Messiah to fight the good fight. Our job is twofold: (1) To present the Good News of the coming Kingdom and the Messiah Yahshua who will be ruling in that Kingdom (Mark 16:15), and (2) To baptize (Matt 28:19) them whom Yahweh calls and Yahshua chooses, like He chose His first disciples (John 6:70).

We do *not* claim to be “IT” when it comes to being the only Assembly doing this work. Neither do we claim to be the “Philadelphian” Assembly. Only Yahweh and Yahshua can really say who that is today. We are in fact but *one* assembly, trying to do the work as best we know.

If someone feels we are in error in our teaching, or if one has come up with some new “truth,” we insist it not be spread among the brethren. Instead, we ask that this be written and submitted to the Elders on the *Standing Committee for Doctrinal Review* for study and evaluation with a decision subsequently provided the submitter. If what is considered is believed a valid doctrine, it should be taught to the entire assembly, not just a few.

Finally, brethren and friends, if we strive to do what is right, Yahweh through Yahshua will help us. We must never give up, nor compromise.

All should seek Yahweh’s will, but not all do. If you learn that what you thought was correct, is in fact incorrect, then start doing what is right in Yahweh’s sight. Study, seek out and prove Yahweh’s will!

*And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: **Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together,** as the manner of some [is]; but exhorting [one another]: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching,* Hebrews 10:24-25.

Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward [is] with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done, Revelation 22:12 NASB.

- Elder David Brett



Exposing and Removing Roadblocks to Unity

I once heard a message entitled “Building the Assembly That Matters.” Many define the building in which the people meet for services, as the church. But in truth, the Assembly is the people who have collectively made Yahshua the Messiah their Master and Savior through confession of sin and profession of faith and are allowing Him to transform them, renew their mind, and conform them into His image (Rom. 8:29, 12:2).

A roadblock is something that impedes progress or prevents accomplishing an objective. And with respect to this roadblock to Spiritual unity, I considered that division is owing to a people not receiving a love of the Truth that they might be saved (2 Thess. 2:10). Instead they’ve allowed themselves to be tossed to and fro by every wind of diverse and strange, false doctrine (Eph. 4:14; Heb. 13:9). These are the principal roadblocks toward building the Assembly.

A Carnal Mind Works the Flesh

From these impediments, spring a carnal mind – defined as crude bodily pleasure, appetites, and desires (Rom. 8:5) – that are severally expressed in the works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21) which are set at enmity against Yahweh, and are neither subject to His Law (Rom. 8:7).

And today, standing among particular works of the flesh of hatred, variance, strife, and envyings is respect of persons and which is expressly forbidden in Holy Scripture (Lev. 19:15; 1 Tim. 5:21; James 2:1, 4).

Indeed, as this nation becomes increasingly polarized politically, some are marginalizing cultures and ethnicities different from themselves, and others professing themselves believers are disallowing the Evangel of love to find Its rest among these same cultures and ethnicities with the outcome, that even among men of religion, prejudice and racism are flourishing. But Yahweh doesn’t look at nationality, color or even culture.

Different from men, He looks upon the heart of a people, not upon their ethnic origin or the color of their skin (1 Sam. 16:7).

Tradition, an Obstacle

Tradition, defined as an inherited, established or customary pattern of thought, action or behavior, has become a preventative to a people growing in grace and in knowledge of the Savior and Master, Yahshua the Messiah (2 Pet. 3:18). Traditions have stunted the growth and development of many. For instead of moving forward to live by faith in Messiah, many are being taught they are sinners saved by grace and that all which is required of them, is simply trusting in, and accepting into their heart, J-sus as l-rd and savior – whatever that means!

However, they need to be at least as honorable as the Apostle Paul who, in having counted all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Messiah Yahshua his Master (Phil. 3:8), came to visions and revelations (2 Cor. 12:1). But instead of moving on, people are being taught that they are sinners saved by grace which not only brings forth a false sense of humility and even, self-righteousness, but also keeps them in bondage to their sin. In Truth, Salvation is achieved, not received. A person doesn’t work for righteousness, but a righteous person works righteousness (Acts 10:35) – that is, the righteousness of Yahweh through Yahshua, without condemnation, because they’re not walking after the flesh but after the Spirit (Rom. 8:1; Gal. 3:26). And IF, they which are righteous should fall short of His glory and confess their sin to Him, yet is He able to make them stand (Prov. 24:16; Rom. 14:4) through forgiving their sin and cleansing them of all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).

Ignorance, an Obstacle

As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby, 1 Peter 2:2.

A baby doesn’t drink milk forever, but grows and

develops through eating solid food. In the same way, once the foundation of salvation has been laid, we must move on to maturity not continuing as babes (Heb. 6:1-3). For we know from the Word, that everyone that uses milk is unskillful in the Word (Heb. 5:13). Only they which are becoming of full age, even those who by reason of living by the Word, have their senses exercised to discern good and evil (Heb. 5:14) and Truth from error (1 John 4:6).

The secret of Yahweh is reserved to them who will fear Him (Psa. 25:14); to them who study to show themselves workmen who may rightly divide the Word of Truth (2 Tim. 2:15). Only they who dare to do go down in ships to do business in great waters, see the works of Yahweh (Psa. 107:23). Men do well to follow Yahshua's instruction, therefore: *Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught* (catch), Luke 5:4.

For though Yahweh is not willing any should perish (2 Pet. 3:9), yet people are destroyed for a want of knowledge (Hos. 4:6) and perish for a lack of vision (Prov. 29:18). They which are void of knowledge and understanding – often because of self-righteousness – are so, because of not allowing the Holy Spirit to teach them all things (John 14:26) and to guide them into all Truth (John 16:13), but are instead leaning to their own understanding (Prov. 3:5).

Ignorance is not, however, just laid at the door of them who occupy the pew. Preachers, too, bear responsibility. For “if they speak not according to This Word, *it is because there is no light in them*” (Isa. 8:20). When preachers without an anointing speak out of their intellect (head knowledge), they open the door for another spirit. Always, where there is a fog in the pulpit, will there be a mist in the pew.

Indistinguishable from the World, an Obstacle

Worldliness in the lives of believers has become, unfortunately a common thing. Instead of believers standing out from the world, many are blending in with the world, making themselves indistinguishable from all that is of the world. The Apostle John declared, *Love not the world, neither the things [that are] in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that [is] in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world,* 1 John 2:15-16.

The Apostle Peter spoke of adorning one's self,

not with “the putting on of apparel, but *let it be of the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of Yahweh of great price*” (1 Pet. 3:3-4).

Nevertheless, some in the Assemblies of Yahweh have followed the world in the way they dress and permitted the spirit of the age to find its place in the Assembly. This act of indecency has caused many believers to fall, because they have yielded themselves to the spirit of lust and perversion. When Paul spoke on this subject, he was not talking to the world, but to the Assembly (1 Thess. 4:1-8). The lusts of the flesh have caused much confusion and destruction – without respect to gender or age – even among spiritual leaders.

Brethren, we must “work” (Phil. 2:12), “give diligence” (2 Pet. 1:10), and “earnestly contend for this faith” (Jude 1:3), daily keeping our minds renewed (transformed) – better to be transformed, than entertained – so that ha Satan isn't given place (Eph. 4:27). We as the body of believers must be like Messiah in every way. We should not cause our Brothers or Sisters to fall into temptation, as it is written:

“... that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in *his* brother's way” (Rom. 14:13).

Conclusion

Yahweh won't work amidst the obstacles than men position as impediments toward going on to perfection. Only through knowledge come of a people having their understanding enlightened, and their faith and oneness in Messiah, are people able to bring forth exploits through His body, the Assembly (John 14:12; Eph. 4:3-6, 12-13). For just as the heart needs to be in good condition for the human body to function properly, so must oneness be at the heart of the Assembly to function properly.

Let us not make of none effect, Yahshua's Gethsemane prayer,

Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be ONE; as Thou, Father, [art] in Me, and I in Thee, that they also many be one in us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. And the glory which Thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be ONE, even as We are ONE: I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in ONE; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me, John 17:20-23.

-Brother Ryan C. Irving Sr.



Is Your Heart Right?

“Is your heart right, as my heart is with your heart? If it be, give *me* your hand” (2 Kings 10:15).

These words are at the heart of unity: walking in, and beholding how good and pleasant it is for brethren (Psa. 133:1) to agree – else how can they walk together ... perfectly joined together in the same mind, speech, and judgment? (Amos 3:3; 1 Cor. 1:10).

Enter: The Spirit of the Age

And this gives us pause, for it used to be, a man’s word and his hand, were his bond. Today, however, and more than ever because of these perilous times (2 Tim. 3:1), we can scarcely afford to dwell carelessly when increasingly, the hearts of men are shown “deceitful above all and desperately wicked” (Jer. 17:9). Sadly, the age in which a man’s word and his hand were his bond and guarantee of his heart’s integrity is past. Now, it’s his collateral and a criminal background check that ensures his bond with this latter – a criminal background check – become that criterion identifying the spirit of the age and which sadly, has found its way among churches and assemblies of every stripe.

Not many years ago, a story in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch featured a suburban St. Louis County church, not because of its dynamic services; not because of its outreach ministries; not even because of its growth but rather, because during its contemporary, blended, and traditional Sunday morning services, uniformed and armed off-duty police officers provided security, and as the story went, more to prevent some person(s) with evil intent, from absconding with the offering! (The church had had that experience before).

Then, a few weeks ago, a neighbor to this author, casually-clad in baseball cap, tee shirt and shorts – but armed with a sidearm – visited briefly, before his departure to mid-week prayer meeting. Inquiring of the Glock strapped to his hip, he explained he and two other congregants supplied ‘security’ during their worship services.

Sometime following, we received an invitation-registration to meetings hosted by an Assembly in a distant city. And on the registration, was this assurance: “For the safety of the assembly, especially of our children, the Ministry will be conducting background checks ... for all those 18 years and older, and reserves the right to request official identification upon arrival.”

And one may wonder, in an age when mass shootings may occur without provocation, at anytime, anywhere, and among a peace-seeking people, was this as much a precaution, as fear? For sure, *Yahweh has*

not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind, 2 Timothy 1:7. And why? “because fear has torment” (1 John 4:18). But “He has called us to peace” (1 Cor. 7:15) which seems antithetical to armed persons patrolling the vestibules of meeting halls, the parking lot, and standing sentinel at entrances, vetting persons for admittance to services of worship.

Alas! The spirit of the age has found its way in, and among us!

And “Why,” you ask? Well, there is already, sufficient distraction to occupy minds which ought better, to be fixed on Him Who can keep us in PERFECT PEACE (Isa. 26:3).

Wise as Serpents, Harmless as Doves

Now, we want to be fair here. If indeed, we are to “know them which labor among us” (1 Thess. 5:12), it is reasonable that they which labor, should also know them among whom they labor. Indeed, as early as the first century, when believers faced extreme persecution for their faith, they used the *ichthus* – the fish symbol seen as bumper stickers or icons on the back of vehicles – as a symbol with which to discern friend and foe.

The fish, a pagan symbol of Rome, Greece, and other primitive cultures, unlike the cross, aroused little suspicion, making it a perfect secret symbol for persecuted believers who retired to the underground catacombs, which at first served as burial sites but later, as places for their meetings. Anyone unknown, and seeking admittance to their spiritual proceedings, were tested by completing the arch of the *ichthus* and might be asked moreover, to write *the first letter* of the acrostic ‘**יֵשׁוּעַ**’, Yahshua, Ben Elohim, Yasha (Yahshua, Son of Elohim, Savior) – the first letter of each word forming the acrostic. Today, we might boldly say, “The Savior, is our Helper and we will not fear what man shall do to us” (Heb.13:6).

Conclusion

So, what is the conclusion of the matter? Well, the prudent man foresees trouble and hides himself (Prov. 22:3). While we should not be inviting trouble ... or persecution for that matter – it’s a guarantee warranted by Scripture that with much tribulation we shall enter into the Kingdom (Acts 14:22) and as the righteous of Elohim, suffer persecution (2 Tim. 3:12) – we should nevertheless walk circumspectly (Eph. 5:15); look well to our going (Prov. 14:15); and guide our affairs with discretion (Psa. 112:5). But to become distracted by fear, no; and to view the stranger among us with suspicion, definitely no.

You will recall that after Yahshua’s resurrection, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, and when Yahshua Himself suddenly stood in the midst of them, they were terrified and affrighted, supposing they had seen a spirit. (John 20:19; Luke 24:37, 36). Unrestrained imagination had gripped these men which had before been given authority – and evidently exercised that authority, too – to heal the sick; to cleanse the lepers; to raise the dead; and to cast out devils (Matt. 10:8). But it took a notable Shavuot (Pentecost) to convert them from fear and doubt, to power and a sound mind (Acts 2:1-4).

Then, as now, might Yahshua Himself say, “Be strong and of a good courage; fear not, nor be afraid” and ask, “Why are you troubled? And why do thoughts arise in your hearts?” (Deut. 31:6; Luke 24:38).

Then, as now, might Yahshua be saying, *Fear not them which kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. ...But I will forewarn you whom you shall fear: Fear Him, which after He has killed is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna; Yea, I say Unto You, Fear Him, Matthew 10:28; Luke 12:4-5.*

-Elder John W. Reece



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To Serve and to Protect



Yahshua our Master affirmed this moment – He said, *It is impossible but that offences will come ... the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force*, Luke 17:1; Matthew 11:12.

Offences are still coming. “But woe *unto him* through whom they come” (Luke 17:1). And the kingdom is still suffering violence, and the violent are still seeking to take it by force.

It’s not a violence of guns and bullets. It’s a violence of words, as deadly as guns and bullets. It’s about rhetoric – contentions, strivings over Names, words, the Law, the calendar, debates, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, and tumults proceeding from men who corrupt and deceitfully handle the Word of Yahweh and bring into Assembly private interpretations (Tit. 3:9; 2 Cor. 12:20, 2:17, 4:2; 2 Pet. 1:20).

Men, first in their own cause and who are come to proclaim everyone his own goodness are become emboldened to put forth ways that seem right to them, but which are not altogether so (Prov. 14:12, 18:17, 20:6). Quite unaware are they, there are some who by reason of use, have their senses exercised to discern Truth from their error (Heb. 5:14)

And multiplied to this confusion, are four principal works of the flesh: variance, emulation, strife, heresies (Gal. 5:19, 20). Hebrew *TORAH* Restoration, for want of a better cognomen, is suffering from an identity crisis that has not so characterized the protestant Christianity from which most of these perpetrators of perverse things have come out.

Put Them On?

In some places the outward adorning of *tallits*, *tefillim*, *kippahs*, and *tzitzits* are made a test of fellowship and to become a replacement for “the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, *even the ornament* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of Yahweh of great price” (I Peter 3:4). Better to put on the Messiah!

Nomenclatures — Sacred Namers, One-House, Two-House, Messianics, Hebrew Roots, etc., etc. — many don’t know who they are, because they won’t sit still long enough under but one pulpit to find out! Too few fathers (1 Cor. 4:15); too many instructors giving out themselves as some great ones (Acts 8:9) and we need not doubt whereunto this will grow, either: those sitting under the latter’s tutelage declaring their teachers to be the great power of Elohim (Acts 8:10). Too many persuasions presented on too many YouTube Channels are tossing men to and fro and carrying them about with every wind of diverse and strange doctrine (Eph. 4:14; Heb. 13:9). Better, that men should follow the counsel of the Author of the Book: “TAKE HEED THEREFORE HOW YE HEAR ... TAKE HEED WHAT YE HEAR” (Luke 8:18; Mark 4:24).

So many choices have produced so few connections and so little commitment. Men who have not waited upon their ministering (Rom. 12:7), neither studied to show themselves approved that they might rightly divide and speak Truth as an Oracle (2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Pet. 4:11), are bent upon fulfilling Daniel’s 12:4 prophecy: “Many shall run to and fro.” But in their running to and fro, TRUTH is fallen into the streets so that equity cannot enter (Isa. 59:14).

The very thing which Yahshua and His Apostles warned against, is come to pass. Men who have been called to liberty by the Evangel of Grace, are using their liberty for a cloak of maliciousness instead of by love, serving one another as the servants of Yahweh (Gal. 5:13; 1 Pet. 2:16). Grievous wolves clothed in sheep's clothing have found entry into the sheepecote (Acts 20:29) and sowed discord among brethren (Prov. 6:19) by speaking perverse things and drawing disciples after themselves (Acts 20:30).

Indeed, is this the time, when some are compassing sea and land to make to themselves proselytes, but once when they are made, the kingdom of heaven is shut up against them and neither do their mentors enter in (Matt. 23:15, 13).

Unity?

Convocations on unity have not been able to withstand this lawless, unruly free spirit – and the reason? Because at the heart of their conventions are the very things of contentions, strivings over Names, words, the Law, the calendar, debates over whether the Son is subordinate to (1 Cor. 10:3) or coordinate with, the Father (Phil. 2:6) and other matters made subject to backbitings, whisperings, swellings, and tumults. And these things have occurred, and are occurring, because there is yet, no King in Israel that has come to rule with a rod of

iron (Judg. 17:6, 21:25). But all will see eye to eye when He brings forth Zion (Isa. 52:8).

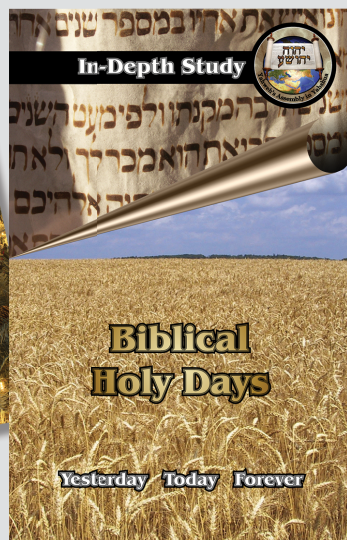
And all these things give us, and should give them, pause. For men who think themselves *somewhat in conference* (Gal. 2:6) are failing to behave themselves (1 Tim. 3:15) and behold what manner of persons they are called to be in all holy conversation and piety (2 Pet. 3:11). Unwittingly, they have given place to the adversary (Eph. 4:27) and know not, to what manner of spirit they have yielded themselves (Luke 9:55, Rom. 6:13, 16) and neither, that in so doing, they have quenched the Spirit (1 Thess. 5:19) Messiah affirmed should dwell in them (John 14:17).

Itinerating across continents and making many pilgrimages to Israel does not, any more qualify one to speak in Yahweh's stead than another who weekly, sojourns to the same Assembly to be trained up, nurtured and admonished in the Way he should go (Prov. 22:6; Eph. 6:4). Potted plants that are able to be carried about, and are "cared" for by them who care not (really!), soon become root bound. Men will grow where they are planted. Men will grow in that place to which they have committed their presence, their gifts, their service, and their prayers.

-Elder John W. Reece

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HOLY VS. UNHOLY

What is the definition of holy? What about definition of unholy? What is clean vs. unclean? Light versus darkness? Good vs. evil?

We can look around at the world today and see both, but the unholiness and darkness is growing exponentially at an increasingly rapid rate. It can remind us of the passage which says the devil knows he has but a short time (Rev. 12:12). Indeed, it is even a shorter time now.

About 35-years ago, in my late teens, I had made a wrong decision and picked up the unclean habit of smoking. A couple years after that, I then made the right decision and committed to quit smoking. To make sure I didn't retrieve the last few cigarettes from the garbage can – yes, the addiction to the nicotine is that strong – I put them into a glass of water (it's also hard to light up soggy cigarettes) which turned a dirty looking, dark brown muck. That provided me with a lasting impression. I realized then what I had been doing to my body.

Fast forward years later – I was biking and approached another. He was paused on the side of the path to smoke a cigarette. He reminded me of the clear glass of water turned into the dirty looking, dark brown muck years earlier.

Definition of Holy

What is the definition of holy? Holy means, sanctified or set apart by Yahweh for a special purpose. The Holy Spirit, for example, literally means, Set-apart Breath in the Hebrew language.

The *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, Eleventh Edition, renders holy, as “*perfect in goodness and righteousness.*”

Do you not know that you are a temple of Elohim and [that] the Spirit of Elohim dwells in you? If any man destroys the temple of Elohim, Elohim will destroy him, for the temple of Elohim is holy, and that is what you are, 1 Corinthians 3:16–17. *New American Standard Bible* used throughout, unless otherwise noted.

We are a temple with Yahweh's Spirit living inside us. We have been made holy by the blood sacrifice of the Messiah Yahshua. We abide in His Holy Word and His Holy Spirit, not walking contrary to either, but walking in Both. Each confirming the Other, and thereby confirming (and conforming) us with the Father and the Son.

We are set-apart. We don't do our own will. We study, worship, and keep our conversations set apart from the world. And we keep the Sabbath, holy.

Are we perfect? No, but we are sanctified, and we strive to live a life reflecting Yahweh and His Son in our own lives.

We seek to walk unto all pleasing (Col. 1:10), both willing and doing His good pleasure (Phil. 2:13). These are the first steps toward perfection.

Are there other things that are made holy by Yahweh?

Then he said to them, This is what Yahweh meant: Tomorrow is a Sabbath observance, a Holy Sabbath to Yahweh. Bake what you will bake and boil what you will boil, and all that is left over put aside to be kept until morning, Exodus 16:23.

Early on during the Exodus, the people had to be instructed on very basic things concerning the 7th Day Sabbath. Why? Because Yahweh set it apart and wants us, His people, to keep it holy.

Remember the Sabbath Day

Why? To keep it holy (Exod. 20:8). Of the Ten Commandments, this is a basic instruction for everyone that desires to serve the Father the way He wants us to. It's His Way, not our way.

Therefore you are to observe the Sabbath, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does any work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people. For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day there is a Sabbath of complete rest, holy to Yahweh; whoever does any work on the Sabbath day shall surely be put to death, Exodus 31:14–15.

Is Yahweh serious about us keeping the Sabbath holy? His Word is clear.

So the sons of Israel shall observe the Sabbath, to celebrate the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between Me and the sons of Israel forever; for in six days Yahweh made heaven and earth, but on the seventh day He ceased [from labor], and was refreshed, Exodus 31:16–17.

This passage may bring up the question, "Isn't this just for Israel and a covenant specifically with them?" Yahshua affirmed the Sabbath was clearly given to all mankind.

The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath, Mark 2:27.

He did not say, the Sabbath was made for Israel alone. In fact, in other places in the *Torah*, Yahweh decreed that whosoever of Israel and the stranger among them would serve Him, there should be one law for both the native-born and the stranger (Exod. 12:49; Num. 15:15–16). Sabbath observance is given as the sign that one is obedient to the One Who gave the instruction in the first place. It identifies us, like a sign identifies a people who are of Yahweh.

Yet, there are those that will argue we don't need to keep the Sabbath holy or that we can keep another day holy. However, Yahweh clearly shows there are six days to work during the week, but the 7th day in particular is set apart.

To make the 7th Day common, by regarding it as every other day is to disobey Yahweh. And disobedience to Yahweh is not a good place to be.

Who Are We, Really?

Israel is mentioned 2,583 times throughout Scripture: as the land, as a people, as a person (Jacob's name was changed to Israel). And ancient Israel was to be holy unto Yahweh.

And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel, Exodus 19:6.

This verse speaks to us today, as a people – once not a people; not having received mercy; separated, and far off and excluded from the Commonwealth of Israel; strangers to the Covenants of Promise having no hope and without Yahweh in the world (Eph. 2:12-13). But now they are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, the people for Elohim's own possession; called out of darkness into marvelous light; brought near by the blood of Messiah, and become fellow citizens with the saints in Yahweh's household (1 Pet. 2:9–10; Eph. 2:13, 19). This process of becoming grafted into Israel is explained in Romans, chapters 9–11, and is the fulfillment of the promises made to Abraham through Isaac that they should be the progenitors of many nations.

We are a holy people, partakers of a heavenly calling (Heb. 3:1), and committed to a life without sin. It's still a mystery to many who claim they know the Messiah of Israel. (Read our free mini-study entitled, *The Hope of Israel*).

Israel repeatedly failed to adhere to Yahweh's Word, transgressing His commandments. So, He divorced them because of their sins (Isa. 50:1). But He has made a way back through faith in Messiah.

For with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. For the Scripture says, "WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED," Romans 10:10–11.

Who forgives us of confessed sin and Whose Spirit enables us?

We can be thankful that our names are written in the *Book of Life*. We adhere to Yahweh's Word, not only out of love for the Father and Son, and what They've done for us, but also because "man is to live by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of Yahweh" (Deut. 8:3, see also Matt. 4:4; Luke 4:4). And, as already mentioned, we do this with the help of Yahweh's Spirit.

The Holy Spirit, called the Helper, is sent to help us to "abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul" (1 Pet. 2:11); to maintain such behavior, so that they which would speak evil may observe

our good deeds and have reason to glorify Yahweh in the day of visitation (1 Peter 2:12), and to live a holy life in Him, to the glory of the Father.

Understanding the Word

There is also the need to rightly divide (2 Tim. 2:15 *KJV*) or understand the Word of Truth, as Timothy was instructed to do:

Be diligent to present yourself approved to Elohim as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the Word of Truth, 2 Tim. 2:15.

The Word of Truth is the Word of Yahweh, the Scriptures which are in your hands today. We read It. We study It. We live by It, in the Spirit of Yahweh.

Understanding the Word is a process for us. Its entrance into our hearts, enlightens our understanding (Psa. 119:130). The Holy Spirit was first poured out in the first century upon those who accepted (and who were obediently keeping the Day of Pentecost) and received Yahshua the Messiah.

The purpose of the Word today, in addition to reproving the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:8–11), is to,

- teach us all things (John 14:26);
- bring to our remembrance all things spoken by the Master (John 14:26);
- guide us into all Truth (John 16:13);
- disclose to us what is to come (John 16:13).

Among these things which the Spirit will teach, guide, and disclose to us what is to come, is an understanding of the priesthood during the Millennial reign of our Messiah. That is, the re-institution of the Levitical Order with its regulatory practices as outlined in the Torah and foretold in the prophecies of Ezekiel, chapters 40-46. The priesthood after the Melchizedek Order, will also be there for the spiritual people brought into Messiah.

As for the physical people, under the Levitical priesthood, during that time, all people will learn that sin causes death, and learn from the sacrificial process. They will be tutored in the Levitical laws, all the statutes which Yahweh has spoken through Moses (Lev. 10:11). They will need to distinguish “between the holy and the profane, and between the unclean and the clean” (Lev. 10:10). Because then, the Law (*Torah*) will go forth from Zion. Priests of both the Levitical and the Melchizedek Order (i.e., we who have endured and overcome to the end, neither quenching the Spirit nor forsaking Yahweh’s Word or His Messiah) will be helping the physical people.

Good Deeds Follow

He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Yahshua Messiah our Savior, so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to [the] hope of eternal life. This is a trustworthy statement; and concerning these things I want you to speak confidently, so that those who have believed Elohim will be careful to engage in good deeds. These things are good and profitable for men, Titus 3:5–8.

We must follow the lead of His Spirit. It is not our own deeds which make us holy. For we become defiled (made unholy), in continuing to do unrighteousness.

How should a holy people be unto Yahweh? Do we need to even change our previous associations to be on the right road with Yahweh? The word is clear, *Do not be deceived: bad company corrupts good morals,*” 1 Cor. 15:33. We must then, change various things to be in line with Yahweh’s Way.

Today, there are many who disregard Yahweh’s Word. They cast it into the street to be trampled upon, and trodden under foot. From such, withdraw and do not participate in their unfruitful deeds of darkness (Eph. 5:11).

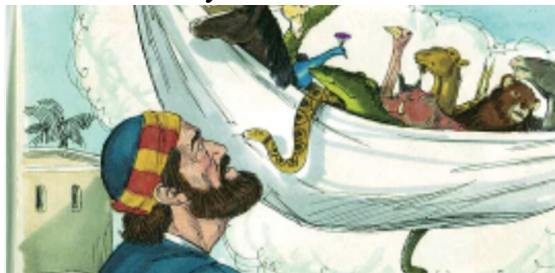
Yahshua declared this of Himself, “the ruler of the world is coming, and he has nothing in Me” (John 14:30). Our walk is different from the world’s walk. The ruler of the world is coming, and is here now, seeking to distract, draw away, tempt, entice, beset, and pierce us through with many sorrows before drowning us in perdition.

Even men of the apostate religion who, through their tradition transgress the Commandment of Yahweh (Matt. 15:3), invalidate the Word of Yahweh for the sake of their tradition (Matt. 15:6). They teach as doctrines the precepts of men and honor Him with their lips (Matt. 15:9), manifesting their separation from Him by those things which proceed from the abundance of their hearts (Matt. 15:18–19).

Surely, these in their day (and maybe more in our day, claiming Messiah) standing before that Just Judge, will receive their commendation, “I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS” (Matt. 7:23). Their lawlessness, is a testimony against them. Today, they put forth much effort to explain away Yahweh’s Word.

Food Laws Explained Away?

Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14 – the food laws – are essentially canceled out, taken out of the way, and nailed to the tree (Col. 2:14), they claim! They further explain away the law, by Paul’s writing to Timothy that *everything created by Elohim is good, and nothing is to be rejected, if it is received with gratitude*, 1 Timothy 4:4.



Moreover, proponents of this error like to substantiate their having twisted the Word by citing Peter’s vision. And beholding the sky opened up with a great sheet coming down and in it, all *kinds* of four footed animals and crawling creatures of the earthy and birds of the air and a Voice saying, “Arise, Peter, kill and eat” and the Apostle protesting, “I have never eaten anything unholy and unclean” and the Voice’s reply, “What Elohim has cleansed, no longer consider unholy” (Acts 10:9 –14). Is that really a green light to eat unclean foods? (Read our in-depth study called, *Yahweh’s Food Laws*.)

They find further support from some of the erroneous translations they prefer, too. For example, note the parenthetical content added to Mark 7:18–19 by the *New American Standard Bible*:

And He said to them, “Are you so lacking in understanding also? Do you not understand that whatever goes into the man from outside cannot defile him, because it does not go into his heart, but into his stomach, and is eliminated?” (Thus He declared all foods clean.)

The Message Bible version adds this: “(That took care of dietary quibbling; Yahshua was saying that all foods are fit to eat.)”

Incidentally, in the *New American Standard Bible*, the translators’ parenthetical comment attached to Mark 7:19 is not found attending the parallel account in Matthew 17:17, thus confirming their hypocrisy. Perhaps it was an oversight, but we think not.

What does Yahweh say about adding to or taking away from His Word? Don’t do it?

Nevertheless, Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14 are avenged by verses 4–5, of 1 Timothy chapter 4: *For everything created by Elohim is good, and*

nothing is to be rejected, if it is received with gratitude; for it is sanctified by means of the Word of Yahweh and prayer.

In other words, we can’t sanctify by our prayer what has not first been sanctified by the Word of Yahweh.

A proper appreciation of, and a more accurate translation of Mark 7:18–20 comes from *The Scriptures*, and expresses well that it is not so much what enters into a man by way of his mouth, as what proceeds from his heart.

And He said to them, “Are you also without understanding? Do you not perceive that whatever enters a man from outside is unable to defile him, because it does not enter his heart but his stomach, and is eliminated, thus purging all the foods?” And He said, “What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. For from within, out of the heart of men proceed evil reasonings, adulteries, whorings, murders, thefts, greedy desires, wickednesses, deceit, indecency, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these wicked [matters] come from within and defile a man,”

Nevertheless, Yahshua intended to get to the heart of the matter, which is the matter of the heart. That is, becoming defiled spiritually!

In doing so, the defiled heart continues to reason away even The Family Name.



His Name Is Holy

You shall not take the Name of Yahweh your Elohim in vain, for Yahweh will not leave him unpunished who takes His Name in vain, Exodus 20:7.

This Third Commandment says one will not go unpunished who uses His Name in a vain way. But the very word vain (*Strong’s H.7723 shauv*) means to cover up, bring to nothing, make worthless so as to have no purpose.

L-rd is not His Name! L-rd is connected to the deity, Baal, as in “Baalzubub,” L-rd-of-the-flies. And G-d, “the deity of fortune,” finds its origin in Genesis 30:10–11:

Leah’s maid Zilpah bore Jacob a son. Then Leah said, “How fortunate!” So she named him Gad, Genesis 30:10–11 pronounced **Gawd**.

One wonders how any could think that L-rd and G-d are innocent titles, when these are used to

cover up the Creator's Name and thus, transgress the Third Commandment which if broken – and it is by many – will not go unpunished.

Some, out of a false respect toward the “ineffability” of His Name – a taboo against using the Proper Names of Father and Son – substitute titles of Elohim and Adonai, to the utter exclusion of Yahweh's and Yahshua's Proper Names. But Yahweh commands us to use His Name and with respect to His Son Yahshua, *There is salvation in no one else; for there is no other Name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved*, Acts 4:12. (Read our free booklet, **The Mistaken 'J'** to find out more details.)

Those who indiscriminately use titles of G-d and L-rd, don't realize the damage they are doing. They even think that is the Sovereigns' Names. Perhaps, withholding this knowledge from them, who would profane what is Holy – the Names of Father and Son – fall under the instruction of Matthew 7:6:

Do not give what is holy to dogs, and do not throw your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces.

Given all of this, shouldn't a Holy people be using His Holy Name?

Keep His Moral Laws

- “... obtained the witness that ... he was pleasing to Yahweh” (Heb. 11:5);
- “... found favor in the eyes of Yahweh ... blameless in his time; walked with Yahweh” (Gen. 6:8, 9);
- “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 ...” (Gen. 18:19 KJV);
- “... and that man was blameless, upright, fearing Yahweh, and turning away from evil” (Job 1:1);
- “... righteous in the sight of Yahweh, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and requirements of Yahweh” (Luke 1:6);
- “... righteous and devout ...” (Luke 2:25);
- “... serving night and day with fastings and prayers ...” (Luke 2:37).

Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Job, Zacharias and Elizabeth, Simeon, Anna – but common, ordinary people throughout the ages who were more than moral people. They were wholly consecrated and set apart for Yahweh.

So, can a person be moral without walking with Yahweh? Yes. Can a moral person be holy without

walking with Yahweh? NO.

A person becoming reformed (changed) to be a good upstanding citizen may be moral, but is not considered holy unless he fully submits to Yahweh's Word.

It's human nature for people to make private interpretations of what constitutes morality. It is possible to keep the moral aspects of the law for example, without keeping the spirit of the law just as it is possible for one to demonstrate his good works without faith (James 2:18). It is understood, a man is justified by his faith with works and not by his works without faith!

“Moral relativism” is a morality of convenience – so long as what is thought or done doesn't impose much upon one's will. Thus the Commandment, “And do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him” (Prov. 3:5, 6). (Please be sure to read our mini-study called, **Why Biblical Law?**)

Conclusion

Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His Bride has made herself ready. It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright [and] clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the Saints, Revelation 19:7–8.

Rejoicing, being glad and giving glory to Him; clothed in fine linen, bright and clean – this is the estate of the Bride-Saints, made ready by her righteous acts for the marriage with the Lamb.

Should we ask, how can one be blameless righteous, holy? The short answer is, walk according to the Word of Yahweh.

And put on the new self, which in [the likeness of] Elohim has been created in righteousness and holiness of the Truth, Ephesians 4:24.

Once cleansed of sins by the Blood of Yahshua (1 John 1:7), and kept clean by the pure washing of the Word (John 15:3; Eph. 5:26; Heb. 10:22), Yahweh promises to perfect the good work He has begun in us (Phil. 1:6).

We are well equipped to take down strongholds and to put away anything that would exalt itself against the Truth (2 Cor. 10:4–5). But to turn again to, and become overcome by the defilements of the world (2 Pet. 2:20) is spiritual suicide – making our last state of uncleanness and unholiness worse than our first. *Remember Lot's wife*, Luke 17:32. Therefore, we are instructed, be Holy as He is Holy.

-Elder David Brett



BACKSLIDING

...and why you don't want to do it!

We've all heard of slippery slopes. In fact, we may have been on one or more in our youth. Both physically and figuratively, the analogy can be applied to the idea of going backwards rather than forward or upward.

With youth, there are lessons that are learned the hard way, but parents try to spare them such troubles by guiding and directing them in the way they should go. Yahweh does this for us from His Word and the many instructions we receive from It.

*My son, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep My commandments; for length of days and **years of life and peace they will add to you.** Do not let kindness and truth leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. So you will find favor and good repute in the sight of Elohim and man. 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. It will be **healing to your body and refreshment to your bones,** Proverbs 3:1–8. (New American Standard Bible used throughout, unless otherwise noted.)*

There are conditions for receiving the blessings. Making our path straight is a process for receiving these blessings. For example, Obedience to the Ten Commandments promises blessings – those that tithe will be blessed rather than cursed (Mal. 3:8–10).

And who doesn't want good health? "Years of life?" "Healing to one's body?" Sounds good to me. That's what moving forward and upward provides.

Yes, we eventually wear out and we end up in the ground as dust, but beyond this is eternal life for those who overcome. That is the ultimate blessing and reward.

Cause and Affect

Backsliding can lead to apathy and not really caring. Neglect of Yahweh's Word in one's life is a sure way to end up in the wrong place and in not very good shape. The Apostle Paul, in fact, said it can make one sick physically. For example, speaking of the Passover Memorial, he says,

Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Master in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Master. But a man must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself if he does not judge the body rightly. For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep, 1 Corinthians 11:27–30.

Not a good place to be. Weak, sick, dead (contextually, the meaning of "sleep).

We have Yahshua's own words saying, in Luke 9:62, *No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of Elohim.* As Corinthian brethren were encouraged to examine themselves and repent, Paul made sure he himself didn't backslide (1 Cor. 9:27).

Move Forward and Grow

In speaking to those at Philippi, he said, *Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of [it] yet (i.e., eternal life and perfection); but one thing I do: forgetting what [lies] behind and reaching forward to what [lies] ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of Elohim in Messiah Yahshua, Philippians 3:13–14.*

Paul said he pressed forward. That means it took effort on his part, just as it will take effort on our part. Effort in learning, in practicing what we learn, and helping others to do the same.

Those who look back have character flaws on which they need to work in overcoming. Our character and nature should reflect that of the Messiah's Who did not sin at all.

We are given help with the Spirit of Yahweh. Having the mind of Messiah, we can make the right decisions and maintain our focus, going in the right direction.

Yahshua, in speaking to us of the end times, says to remember Lot's wife.

It was the same as happened in the days of Lot: they were eating, they were drinking, they were buying, they were selling, they were planting, they were building; but on the day that Lot went out from Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. It will be just the same on the

day that the Son of Man is revealed. On that day, the one who is on the housetop and whose goods are in the house must not go down to take them out; and likewise the one who is in the field must not turn back. Remember Lot's wife. Whoever seeks to keep his life will lose it, and whoever loses [his life] will preserve it, Luke 17:28–33.

The Beast System will be appealing, with all of its lustful attributes. But, we must see it for what it is and reject it. In doing so, we will shine forth as the stars of heaven and be forevermore with the Master.

Reject Sin

Flee immorality. Every [other] sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from Elohim, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify Elohim in your body, 1 Corinthians 6:18–20.

Glorify Elohim, not just in our bodies, but in our minds and hearts as well. That was the problem with the assembly at Corinth. They were permitting members to continue in sin, and with such sin that isn't even heard of among the gentiles.

Backsliding has the effect of producing a bad character, bad fruit, a bad life, and a bad outcome. Bad things generally occur with backsliding.

Example of Saul

King Saul disobeyed a direct command from Yahweh. He was told to completely destroy everything of Amalek. Because of such disobedience, the people of the land were withstanding Israel in their wilderness sojournings. Thankfully, with some lessons learned, Yahweh provided victory (Exod. 17:8–13).

So Saul defeated the Amalekites, from Havilah as you go to Shur, which is east of Egypt. He captured Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword. But Saul and the people spared Agag and the best of the sheep, the oxen, the fatlings, the lambs, and all that was good, and were not willing to destroy them utterly; but everything despised and worthless, that they utterly destroyed. Then the word of Yahweh came to Samuel, saying, "I regret that I have made Saul king, for he has turned back from following Me and has not carried out My commands." And Samuel was distressed and cried out to Yahweh all night, 1 Samuel 15:7–11.

Samuel, who had anointed Saul as Israel's king, was told by Yahweh that He was grieved with having made Saul king (1 Samuel 15:11). This occasion is but the second record of Yahweh expressing His regret with His experience with man – the first, in the flood narrative of Genesis 6:5-7.

Yahweh was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. Yahweh said, "I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky; for I am sorry that I have made them, Genesis 6:6-7.

For one hundred and twenty years while he prepared the ark, Noah, who had found favor in Yahweh's sight (Gen. 6:8), had been a preacher of righteousness (2 Pet. 2:5). And now, Samuel grieved also with Yahweh over Saul's and the people's sins, appealed to Yahweh's mercy (1 Sam. 15:10-20).

Example of David

King David was not perfect, yet he became a man after Yahweh's own heart (1 Sam. 13:14; Acts 13:22).

He said, *I will set no worthless thing before my eyes; I hate the work of those who fall away; it shall not fasten its grip on me. A perverse heart shall depart from me; I will know no evil, Psalm 101:3-4.*

He became resolute and determined not to fall back into sin. He said in Psalm 51, that his sin was ever before him. He didn't forget, but he made sure he didn't backslide again.

Both he and King Saul, were two of the very few anciently, to have experienced Yahweh's Spirit within themselves, and while Saul did not repent from his backsliding, King David did.

If we find ourselves backsliding, we are to be like King David, repent and overcome, rather than being overcome by sin(s).

On the other hand, it appears King Saul became indignant and pride had overtaken him. Whatever the reason, his example stands as to what not to do when convicted of sin. He continued in sin to his death and it wasn't too long after he continued in unrepentant sin that the Spirit left him and an evil spirit came to take its place.

Example of Solomon

Another example of backsliding producing a bad outcome is found with King Solomon. We read in 1 Kings 11:9-11, *Now Yahweh was angry with Solomon because his heart was turned away from Yahweh, the Elohim of Israel, who had appeared to him twice, and had commanded him concerning*

this thing, that he should not go after other mighty ones; but he did not observe what Yahweh had commanded. So Yahweh said to Solomon, "Because you have done this, and you have not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you, and will give it to your servant."

Solomon backslid when his heart was influenced by multiplying to himself many wives from among the pagan peoples. It was foretold in Deuteronomy 17:15-17, that Israel would demand a king over them like all the nations about them (1 Sam. 8:5). But its kings were warned, *Neither shall he multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away; nor shall he greatly increase silver and gold for himself, Deuteronomy 17:17.*

With the warning, was a foretelling of the outcome of the king's disobedience (i.e., the king's heart would be turned away from Yahweh). That is exactly what happened (see 1 Kings 11:1-11).

Example of Israel

Israel, too, turned away. Moses had to intercede for the people more than once. Yahweh speaking to Moses, said.

They have quickly turned aside from the way which I commanded them. They have made for themselves a molten calf, and have worshiped it and have sacrificed to it and said, "This is your elohim, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt!" And Yahweh said to Moses, "I have seen this people, and behold, they are an obstinate people. Now then let Me alone, that My anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them; and I will make of you a great nation," Exodus 32:8-10.

Israel backslid and tested Yahweh ten times. Yahweh allowed those of the age of accountability (twenty years and older) to die in the wilderness. But He brought their descendants into the promised land. Only Joshua and Caleb, who though having attained the age of accountability, were permitted entry because they were of a different spirit. They obeyed and trusted in Yahweh. Please read our mini-study called, ***The Age of Accountability.***

Judah, but one tribe of twelve of Israel, is often referred to as the "chosen people" today. But their transgressions were even worse than those which had settled in the northern parts of Israel.

And Yahweh said to me (Jeremiah), "Faithless Israel has proved herself more righteous than treacherous Judah. Go and proclaim these words toward the north and say, 'Return, faithless Israel,' declares Yahweh; 'I will not look upon you in anger.

For I am gracious,' declares Yahweh; 'I will not be angry forever. Only acknowledge your iniquity, that you have transgressed against Yahweh your Elohim and have scattered your favors to the strangers under every green tree, and you have not obeyed My voice,' declares Yahweh," Jeremiah 3:11–13.

Example of Some Believers

Israel and Judah have backslidden for thousands of years. It's human nature to do so. But as believers, we must master our nature and submit to Yahweh through His Son with the help of Yahweh's Spirit. So, let's not think we are invulnerable and invincible and actually find ourselves backsliding without realizing it.

Because you say, "I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing," and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked, I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and [that] the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see. Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent, Revelation 3:17–19.

Be zealous and repent? Do the brethren need to be told this? We already read how Paul had to deal with the brethren in Corinth. They weren't the only assembly needing to repent. Others then, and others today, also need to. Individually and collectively, we need to do better — even, sometimes, when we think we're doing well.

I know your deeds and your toil and perseverance, and that you cannot tolerate evil men, and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and you found them [to be] false; and you have perseverance and have endured for My Name's sake, and have not grown weary. But I have [this] against you, that you have left your first love. Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place — unless you repent, Revelation 2:2–5.

We can think we are doing alright, when in reality we are not doing well at all. Yahshua with His Word and Spirit convicts each of us where we are in our spiritual walk.

We are a work in progress — at times becoming side tracked — but maturing over time into the image of the Messiah.

Once we see our errors and heed the warnings from Scripture, we need to correct them lest we backslide.

I will hear what Elohim Yahweh will say; for He will speak peace to His people, to His righteous ones; but let them not turn back to folly, Psalm 85:8.

These are comforting words of peace for those that turn to Yahweh, but death for those that turn away from Him.

Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall, 1 Corinthians 10:12.

Sometimes, we don't know what we should know. And other times, we know what we should, but have a hard time executing it properly. Sometimes we fall, not from our own actions, but by the actions of others. Either way, we will overcome if we continue in righteousness: keeping the commandments of Yahweh and maintaining our focus on the Messiah as the Author and Finisher of our faith.

Yahweh gives us hope through His Word.

For those blessed by Him will inherit the land, but those cursed by Him will be cut off. The steps of a man are established by Yahweh, and He delights in his way. When he falls, he will not be hurled headlong, because Yahweh is the One who holds his hand. I have been young and now I am old, yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken or his descendants begging bread, Psalm 37:22–25.

Staying faithful can be challenging — for a righteous man falls seven times, and rises again, but the wicked stumble in time of calamity (Prov. 24:16).

We are told the end from the beginning. We know we have the victory if we remain faithful and don't fall away. We are overcomers in Messiah. The wicked are not so and will, therefore, be destroyed. Therefore, *Do not fret because of evildoers or be envious of the wicked; for there will be no future for the evil man; the lamp of the wicked will be put out,* Proverbs 24:19–20.

Do NOT Quench the Spirit

Losing the Spirit of Yahweh in one's life is a main reason we are warned not to quench the Spirit of Yahweh (1 Thess. 5:19). If we lose the Spirit, then things can get really ugly as other evil spirits can move in (Luke 11:24–26).

That is the danger of backsliding, as one may never recover themselves.

You who have forsaken Me, declares Yahweh, you keep going backward. So I will stretch out My hand against you and destroy you; I am tired of relenting! Jeremiah 15:6.

The prophet is speaking to Judah, before that people went into captivity. But these words can speak to anyone of us who chooses to return to sin. Continuing to backslide ultimately leads one to forsaking Yahweh and His Son Yahshua Messiah, as well. However, so long as one cares about his spiritual estate, then there is still hope.

This is why we have an obligation to help, if we see someone getting off track or going back to old ways. We can help others to care, by caring for them.

Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; [each one] looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Messiah. For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. But each one must examine his own work, and then he will have [reason for] boasting in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another. For each one will bear his own load, Galatians 6:1–5.

The law or instruction of the Messiah was to first love and obey Yahweh, but then secondly to love our neighbors as ourselves. Yahshua gave His life for us – our lives purchased with His blood – so that we can give our lives for each other. We are not our own. We are obligated to serve one another.

My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth and one turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins, James 5:19–20.

We assume the position of a savior when we help turn one from his/her sin. Ultimately, we are allowing the Savior to work in us to accomplish Yahweh's will.

Yahweh's Will

What is Yahweh's will? Yahweh tells us plainly what He wants. Briefly comprehended, REPENT. He also says what He will do to those who do not repent.

"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 Master Yahweh, "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 Master Yahweh. "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 Master Yahweh. "Therefore, repent and live," Ezekiel 18:20–32.

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For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone who dies," declares Master Yahweh. "Therefore, repent and live,"
-Ezekiel 18:32

Two in One

The word of Yahweh came again to me (Ezekiel) saying, "And you, son of man, take for yourself one stick and write on it, 'For Judah and for the sons of Israel, his companions'; then take another stick and write on it, 'For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim and all the house of Israel, his companions.' Then join them for yourself one to another into one stick, that they may become one in your hand. And when the sons of your people speak to you saying, 'Will you not

declare to us what you mean by these?’ say to them, ‘Thus says Master Yahweh, “Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel, his companions; and I will put them with it, with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they will be one in My hand.”’ The sticks on which you write will be in your hand before their eyes. And say to them, ‘Thus says Master Yahweh, “Behold, I will take the sons of Israel from among the nations where they have gone, and I will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land; and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and One King will be king for all of them; and they will no longer be two nations and no longer be divided into two kingdoms. And they will no longer defile themselves with their idols, or with their detestable things, or with any of their transgressions; but I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them. And they will be My people, and I will be their Elohim,” Ezekiel 37:15–23.

The hope for Israel and all mankind is that Satan and his fallen angels will be put away and that there will be peace and the knowledge of the truth around the world. Yahweh will accomplish this through Yahshua the Messiah Who is likened unto the Hand of Yahweh in Scripture. All of Israel will be put into Yahweh’s Hand, into Yahshua’s charge and keeping because He will be King of kings and Sovereign of sovereigns when He returns. And the physical people coming into the Kingdom at that time will be led to Living Waters and by accepting Yahweh’s covenant/agreement will become a part of His Spiritual Family – their change into becoming spiritual beings, reserved to the end of the Messiah’s millennial reign.

Nevertheless we who now have this knowledge and the opportunity to become firstfruits in the first resurrection, are urged to forget what lies behind and reach forth and press toward the mark (Phil. 3:13–14). We are to overcome rather than becoming overcome on the slippery slope of backsliding. (Read our free mini-study called, ***Just One Resurrection?*** and ***The Hope of Israel.***)

Make Your Calling Sure

While Yahweh does provide, we also have to do our part. We have every reason to be diligent and to put forth the effort, knowing the prize that lays ahead. As Paul told those at Corinth,

Do you not know that those who run in a race all

run, but [only] one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then [do it] to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified, 1 Corinthians 9:24–27.

Disqualification from what? From the prize of eternal life. It is something we are to seek after.

Suffer hardship with [me], as a good soldier of Messiah Yahshua. No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier. Also, if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not win the prize unless he competes according to the rules, 2 Timothy 2:3–5.

Being obedient children abiding by the rules, we have everything to gain by doing Yahweh’s will. We also have everything to lose by not doing it. If we backslide, we risk losing it all, hence the principal reason not to backslide.

He promises not to give us more than we can handle (1 Cor. 10:13), so we can be faithful and stand at His return (Luke 21:36).

For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of Elohim, you may receive what was promised. FOR YET IN A VERY LITTLE WHILE, HE WHO IS COMING WILL COME, AND WILL NOT DELAY. BUT MY RIGHTEOUS ONE SHALL LIVE BY FAITH; AND IF HE SHRINKS BACK, MY SOUL HAS NO PLEASURE IN HIM. But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul, Hebrews 10:36–39.

Now to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him [be] the glory in the Assembly and in Messiah Yahshua to all generations forever and ever. Amen. Ephesians 3:20–21.

How about you? Are you willing to make your calling and election sure (2 Pet. 1:10)? We pray that you are! Because, if you are, He promises to strengthen you. And strengthened, you will overcome to the end.

- Elder David Brett



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Q Can believers today have demons? Is deliverance HOLY? Is casting out demons HOLY?

A The short answer to your first question is found in Romans 6:1-17. One is a servant to whichever, to Satan or to Yahweh, he chooses to obey (Rom. 6:13, 16). That is the reason we are told in this chapter, that we cannot continue in the sin (Rom. 6:1) that had so easily beset (Heb. 12: 1) us, lest we are overcome and brought into bondage (2 Pet. 2:18-19). For the heart can become hardened through the deceitfulness of sin (Heb. 3:12-13). The Spirit can leave, as it left King Saul due to unrepentant sins and overall rebellion.

We are told therefore, in Proverbs 4:23 to keep our hearts with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life ... and death. Messiah confirmed this in Matthew 12:34-35 and in 15:18-19 when He spoke of what proceeds from the abundance of the heart. The Apostle Paul, too, in 2 Corinthians 10:4-5 tells us that the weapons of our warfare (Eph. 6:11-19) are mighty through Yah to the pulling down of strongholds (demons).

Men open the door to Satan and his minions when they fail to put on the whole armor (Eph. 6:11) – truth, righteousness, the Evangel of peace, faith, salvation, the Word of Yahweh, prayer and supplication and intercession – wherewith they are able to quench the fiery darts of the wicked one, and, moreover, accomplished by casting down imaginations and every high thing that would exalt itself against the knowledge of Yah. (Eph. 6:14-18; 2 Cor. 10:5)

Men open the door to Satan and his minions when they fail to think upon things true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report, of virtue and praise (Phil. 4:8).

Men open the door to Satan and his minions when they fail to add to their faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance (self-control), patience, righteousness, brotherly kindness, love (2 Pet. 1:5-7).

What we're saying here, is what the Scripture is saying. Occasion can be cut off from him (Satan) who is seeking occasion (2 Cor. 11:12) when, through obedience to what has been provided in the Scripture, place is not being given to Satan (Eph. 4:27).

Obedience to Yahweh and His commands – without which no one can please Him (Heb. 11:6) – are the means by which we resist the devil (James 4:7). Obedience to Yahweh and His commands are the means by which Satan and his minions flee (James 4:7).

Yahshua was tempted of the devil for forty days in the wilderness. We have only three of those temptations recorded in the Scripture: Matthew 4:1-11 and Luke 4:1-13. And how did the Master resist the devil? He spoke the Word to him.

We need not be ignorant of Satan's devices (2 Cor. 2:11). The tempter comes presenting all that is in the world – the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life (1 John 2:16) as good, pleasant, and desired (Gen. 3:6). And most men fall into temptation (Matt. 26:41) because they aren't watching and praying – fall, because they're not walking circumspectly (Eph. 5:15). They fall, because they're not taking heed to themselves, neither to the Wholesome Words of Scripture. They fall, because they're not giving diligence to make their calling and election sure (2 Pet. 1:10) They fall, because they're not earnestly contending for



the faith that is delivered (Jude 3), and manifested through preaching (Titus 1:3).

And may we say here, that the blood of Yahshua applied in the circumcision made without hands (Col. 2:11-12) through water immersion in that none other Name (Yahshua) under heaven given among

men, whereby we are saved (Acts 4:12) for the remission of sins that are past (Rom. 3:25).

We who are believers can deliver ourselves from demons – we can do all things through Messiah Who strengthens us (Phil. 4:13) ... “Physician heal thyself” (Luke 4:23) – And we can IF, we will give ourselves to obedience to His Word and do not quench the Spirit of Yahweh (1 Thess. 5:19).

Please understand the key is PREVENTION, not exorcism. We can live a Messiah-like life – in fact, we’d better, if we expect to receive an inheritance that is undefiled and incorruptible (1 Pet. 1:4).

So, in answer to your next two questions, “Is deliverance HOLY? Is casting out demons HOLY?” Emphatically as we said before, PREVENTION is MORE HOLY than EXORCISM, simply because PREVENTION signals to Yah that we have overcome sin, and not been overcome by sin (Rom. 12:21). They which have overcome, are the same who have done business in great waters and there, seen the works of Yahweh (Psa. 107:23).

One other point, we’ll make here, about this demon business – a PREVENTION measure, really. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 4:15, “For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Messiah, yet have ye not many fathers ...” In other places, we read phrases like “damnable heresies” (2 Pet. 2:1), “giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of demons” (1 Tim. 4:1), “lies in hypocrisy” (1 Tim. 4:2) which are cloaked in smooth (Isa. 30:10) and feigned (2 Pet. 2:3) fair speeches (Rom. 16:18) and great swelling words of vanity (2 Pet. 2:18) that toss men to and fro and carry them about with every wind (Eph. 4:14) of diverse and strange doctrine (Heb. 13:9) before drowning them in destruction and perdition (1 Tim. 6:9).

Giving audience to many **different** “ministries” leads to confusion. But Yahweh is not the Author of confusion (1 Cor. 14:33), but we know who is. Yahweh chooses (Isa. 66:4) and sends delusion to them who will not receive to themselves a love of the Truth (2 Thess. 2:10-12). We don’t need to be giving ourselves to the “private interpretations” (2 Pet. 1:20) of them which “corrupt” (2 Cor. 2:17) and “deceitfully handle” the Word of Yahweh (2 Cor. 4:2). In fact, we are instructed to mark and avoid them which cause division and offense contrary to the doctrine we have learned (Rom. 16:17). Why? Because it is Yah’s good pleasure, that His children be established, strengthened, and settled (1 Pet. 5:10) in present Truth (2 Pet. 1:12) in Which, there is no lie (1 John 2:21).

Yahshua said to His disciples, Now ye are clean through the Word which I have spoken unto you John 15:3. And from henceforth, we are kept clean through the washing of the pure water (Heb. 10:22) by the Word (Eph. 5:26) ... again, IF we give the more earnest heed to how (Luke 8:18) and to what we hear (Mark 4:24).

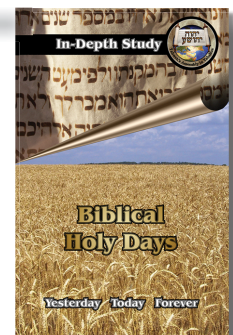
Yes, we Grow Where We Are Planted. Others are like potted plants – able to be carried here and there – and will become root bound, wither and die.

Q In Matthew 4:1-12, it says that immediately after His baptism, Yahshua was tempted by Satan in the wilderness for 40 days and 40 nights. And when He heard that John was cast into prison, Yahshua returned to Galilee (after which He called His disciples). But in John 3:22-24, it says that Yahshua ministered with His disciples before John was in prison. How are these two harmonized?

A We believe there is a distinction between the two accounts, one placed in Galilee (northern Israel, near the Sea of Galilee) and the other in the land of Judea (southern Israel, near the Dead Sea); respectively, Matthew 4:12 and John 3:22, the latter account being an earlier date. (While Matthew does not give any details between the testing the Savior went through in the wilderness and then going into the region of Galilee, there must have been given the account of John.) Maybe this is why John noted in 21:25 that there is not enough space given to write all the details. He must have realized how some things written may have appeared to contradict other areas in which accounts were written, but since he noted the land of Judea, he clarified his account was at a different time and place than what Matthew had written. Scholars believe that all the evangels were written many years after the time when the actual events occurred.

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And let us not lose heart in doing good,
for in due season we shall reap if we do
not grow weary. -Galatians 6:9